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**Commercial Violin: Creating a Hybrid Twenty-First Century**

**Collegiate Violin Curriculum**

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the School of Music  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Music Education

by

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COMMERCIAL VIOLIN: CREATING A HYBRID TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY  
COLLEGIATE VIOLIN CURRICULUM

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## **Abstract**

Despite the stylistically diverse professional music opportunities available to twenty-first century violinists, modern collegiate violin students are most often exclusively trained through traditional classical pedagogy. Conversely, violinists who perform commercial music often do not experience formal classical training, which provides functional foundational skills required of the professional violinist. There has yet to be a collegiate violin curriculum developed that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music, allowing for diverse musical opportunities through structured and sequential pedagogy. This qualitative research study identifies, examines, and compares current classical and commercial collegiate violin methodologies simultaneously as a framework for the development of a new hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum. It identifies ways that the commercial violinist might be underprepared for commercial viability when training exclusively with a traditional curriculum, and it defines areas in which the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles. The scope and sequence of traditional classical violin pedagogy, when paired with structured commercial violin studies grounded in stylistically diverse listening, provide viability to the twenty-first century violinist throughout the modern and diverse professional music landscape. This study encourages further research into the relationship between classical and commercial training throughout collegiate instrumental music education.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Despite widespread performance of the violin, it can be learned through diverse methods. Throughout history, the prevailing attitude between classical and commercial violinists has been one of contempt from both sides. Classical violinists have often regarded commercial violinists as unschooled and therefore not as authentic musicians. For example, the classical virtuoso Alberto Bachmann once penned, “Any person desiring to study the violin in a serious way is entitled to receive from the teacher who proposes to instruct him real proof in some form that the instruction which he proposes to impart will be of high character and capable of forming the student into a violinist rather than a fiddler.”<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Bachmann claimed, “Teachers who make light of scale study, chord practice, the use of exercises and etudes, but who substitute a slovenly system of easy pieces or recreations are to be avoided because the student who wastes time with them only finds later that he must begin his work all over again if he desires to become a finished player or teacher.”<sup>2</sup> In contrast, violinists such as Julie Lyonn Lieberman, who are versed in commercial styles, have critiqued classical players for their inability to play by ear and improvise. She declared, “If the only way a musician can play his or her instrument is to stare at dots on a piece of paper, something is terribly wrong.”<sup>3</sup> Azzara and Grunow further stated, “When not encouraged to improvise as a part of our formal music education, the very thought of improvisation invokes fear. If we let go of that fear, we find that we are improvisers. Improvisation enables musicians to express themselves from an internal source and is central to

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<sup>1</sup> Alberto Bachmann, *An Encyclopedia of the Violin* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1966), 155.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Julie Lyonn Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum* (Milwaukee: Amadeus Press, 2004),

developing musicianship in all aspects of music.”<sup>4</sup>

In recent years, classical and commercial music studies have begun to merge. Because of blues fiddlers such as Eddie South, Stuff Smith, Joe Venuti, and Stéphane Grapelli, the violin has been carried out of European classical literature and developed into an improvisational voice in music.<sup>5</sup> Currently, many students interested in studying the violin at the collegiate level are also attentive to various styles of music. Therefore, they are much more open to incorporating elements of commercial playing into their classical studies and acknowledge the benefits of each. Conway has asserted, “Schools of music are sometimes steered deeply in classical music traditions and it is important to help students be more aware of musical styles and genres outside of that tradition. If students can have the opportunity to experience diverse musical traditions, they may be able to bring this experience into their future musical profiles.”<sup>6</sup>

For a violinist in the twenty-first century professional music world, skillset diversity is significant to success. The accomplished string player of the twenty-first century is creative, is adept at a number of styles, and has brewed their own amalgam to play from an individualized voice – whether traditional, classical, innovative, or all three.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, a collegiate violin curriculum that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music, allowing for diverse musical opportunities through structured and sequential pedagogy, would be beneficial for the next generation of professional violinists.

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<sup>4</sup> Christopher D. Azzara and Richard F. Grunow, *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011), iv.

<sup>5</sup> Julie Lyonn Lieberman, *Improvising Violin* (New York: Huksi Music, 1995), 14.

<sup>6</sup> Colleen M. Conway, *Teaching Music in Higher Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 86.

<sup>7</sup> Julie Lyonn Lieberman, *How to Play Contemporary Strings* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2016), 5.



## Background of the Topic

The preeminent violin pedagogue Ivan Galamian wrote, “In violin playing, that which can be formulate is not a set of unyielding rules but rather a group of general principles that are broad enough to cover all cases, yet flexible enough to be applied to any particular case. The teacher must realize that every student is an individual with his own personality, his own characteristic physical and mental make-up, his own approach to the instrument and to music.”<sup>8</sup> Despite the stylistically diverse professional music opportunities available to twenty-first century violinists, modern collegiate violin students are most often exclusively trained through traditional classical pedagogy. Conversely, violinists who predominately perform commercial music often do not experience formal classical training, which provides functional foundational skills required of the professional violinist.

In support of a comprehensive musical education, Moore has argued, “We suggest that European music, while an important form of heritage, represents but one of many styles of music that present-day performers need exposure to, that they require additional skills and experiences.”<sup>9</sup> There has yet to be a collegiate violin curriculum developed that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music, allowing for diverse musical opportunities through structured and sequential pedagogy. As Liebermann has declared, “Clearly, a philosophical base that promotes condescension and competitiveness is the product of an older style of thinking that we must consider shedding at this point in human history. You have an opportunity to help foster a major shift in our educational system. As an educator, you are in a position to help create a system that embraces all cultures and their unique creative contributions

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<sup>8</sup> Ivan Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Robin D. Moore, ed., *College Music Curricula for a New Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 10.

to life and music.”<sup>10</sup> Exposure to compositional, musical, harmonic, rhythmic, and technical concepts reaching beyond a single genre or style nurtures experimentation and growth which fuels the music that students perform throughout their lives.<sup>11</sup>

Classical violin instructional literature reached a level of expertise at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In concordance with Bachmann, “When we consider the time which has elapsed from the creation of the violin, properly speaking, to the appearance of Paganini, it must be admitted that the evolution of progress was slow up to the moment when the tremendous genius of the great Italian illumined the firmament of art by deployment of his magic powers.”<sup>12</sup> Because of this, many of the étude books and technical studies composed at this time are still in use at the collegiate level, including Kreutzer’s *Etudes*, Gavinies’ *Les Vingt-quatre Matinees*, Rode’s *24 Caprices*, Mazas’ *75 Etudes*, and Paganini’s *Capricci*, op. 1.

Exceptional violin instruction books were also being published and distributed in the United States during this time. Elias Howe circulated many violin tutors and sold more than 500,000 copies in the mid-1800s.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, Septimus Winner published a high volume of instructional works from 1850 to 1900.<sup>14</sup> The works of Howe and Winner show the direct influence of Francesco Geminiani’s *The Art of Playing on the Violin*, particularly in the areas of bow hold, violin hold, left-hand position, and bowing techniques. Therefore, at this point in history, most violin students in America were basing their studies on European ideas that were

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<sup>10</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 15.

<sup>11</sup> Greg Cahill, “Going it Alone,” *Strings* 33, no. 6 (November 2020): 32.

<sup>12</sup> Bachmann, *Encyclopedia of the Violin*, 188.

<sup>13</sup> Alexandra M. Eddy, “American Violin Method-Books and European Teachers: Geminiani to Spohr,” *American Music* 8, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 169, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/3051948>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

approximately 100 years old.<sup>15</sup>

In the twentieth century, several violin teachers and methods emerged that shifted the influence away from Europe and directed it toward the United States. Although many of these pedagogues were from Europe, they became world-renowned. One of the first of these teachers was Carl Flesch, who is responsible for the modern scale system that most classical violinists study today. In Flesch's opinion, "Only if one has command of a perfect technique, and is able to use it successfully and appropriately, can one achieve the freedom of spirit and soul to abandon oneself to the music and to let musical expression predominate over the technical aspect which then serves the musical and artistic ends."<sup>16</sup> Ivan Galamian began teaching in New York in 1939 and wrote *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, which is a modern standard in classical violin pedagogical literature. His most notable students include Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, and Michael Rabin, who became renowned performers.

Dorothy DeLay, one of Galamian's assistants, became one of the most famous violin pedagogues of the late twentieth century. She solidified her place in the history of classical violin pedagogy through her many years at Julliard, as she worked with numerous current concert artists and prominent teachers from around the world. Ha recognized the many strengths of DeLay's teaching when she emphasized, "The master teachers believed that good aural perception is one of the prerequisites for good intonation. In order for the students to play with good intonation, the teachers encouraged them to listen for resonance and overtones."<sup>17</sup>

Methods for learning commercial violin styles have been a more recent addition to the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>16</sup> Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing* (New York: Carl Fischer, 2000), 1.

<sup>17</sup> Joy Ha, "Teaching Intonation in Violin Playing: A Study of Expert String Teaching," *Australian Journal of Music Education*, no. 2 (2015): 235.

world of instrumental instruction. Tracy Silverman indicated that this revolution in commercial styles actually marks a return to the past.<sup>18</sup> He wrote, “All the masterpieces of the classical repertoire were written in the popular idiom of each composer’s time and place. But somewhere in the mid-twentieth century, classical music and popular music started to become two different things.”<sup>19</sup> Classical composers, feeling that the harmonic language of tonality had been fully explored, moved to writing music without a tonal center. Meanwhile, popular commercial music continued to develop, as it always does, in the vernacular idiom of its time and place, giving birth to blues, jazz, rock, and all commercial styles of the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> In 1967, the Tanglewood Declaration advocated that the musical repertory should be expanded to involve music of the time in its rich variety, including popular music.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Wiley L. Housewright insisted, “There is much to be gained from the study of any musical creation. Rock, soul, blues, folk, and jazz cannot be ignored.”<sup>22</sup>

Distinctively, commercial styles of music are learned through listening, with particular attention to stylistic intricacies absorbed through aural transmission. Nonetheless, most of the early music published for fiddle styles was comprised of transcriptions of traditional tunes that were gathered together and released as collections. These transcriptions were written by players who were versed in both classical violin and folk fiddling, but only had the use of traditional classical notation and harmony. Therefore, it was impossible to notate the appropriate phrasing,

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<sup>18</sup> Tracy Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove On Strings* (Nashville: Silverman Musical Enterprises, 2018), xiv.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Bryan Powell, Gareth Dylan Smith, Chad West, and John Kratus, “Popular Music Education: A Call to Action,” *Music Educators Journal* 106, no. 1 (September 2019): 21, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432119861528>.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

tuning, and lilt or swing of the traditional performance.<sup>23</sup> Harry Jarman, Robbins Music Corp., M. M. Cole, Canadian Music Sales, Gordon V. Thompson, and other musical authors published popular books of dance tunes in the 1930s and 1940s. According to Beisswenger, “An especially popular one of these was M. M. Cole’s 1940 collection *One Thousand Fiddle Tunes*, which was still in print in the 1990s.”<sup>24</sup>

One of the earliest instructional books for commercial violin appeared in 1990, and was specific for the Scottish style of fiddling. *A Guide to Bowing Strathspeys, Reels, Pastoral Melodies, Hornpipes, Etc.*, by J. Scott Skinner, contains detailed descriptions of bowing techniques including straight strokes, accents, slurring, loops, long bows, and doodles or four successive identical notes.<sup>25</sup> As reported by Peter Cooke, the violin vies to be regarded as the principal traditional instrument in Scotland and Ireland.<sup>26</sup> He stated, “Both countries have large and, to some extent, overlapping repertoires. They include pre-nineteenth-century dance-tune types such as reels, jigs, and hornpipes, and the later quadrilles, waltzes, and polkas.”<sup>27</sup>

In today’s digital age, however, commercial violin students have the opportunity to learn from music and video clips from anywhere in the world. Nonetheless, there are a very limited number of instructional methods targeting the violin student who is interested in expanding their stylistic skillset. Elite European music, while an important form of heritage, represents but one of

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<sup>23</sup> Paul Cranford, *The Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles* (Missouri: Mel Bay Publications, 1982), 2.

<sup>24</sup> Drew Beisswenger, *North American Fiddle Music: A Research and Information Guide* (Milton Park: Taylor and Francis Group, 2011), xxii.

<sup>25</sup> Scott J. Skinner, *A Guide to Bowing Strathspeys, Reels, Pastoral Melodies, Hornpipes, Etc.* (Edinburgh: The Hardie Press, 1984), 28.

<sup>26</sup> Robin Stowell, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 240.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

many styles of music that should be studied by present-day performers. These musicians require additional skills and experiences.<sup>28</sup> Julie Lyonn Liebermann is a multifaceted string player and pedagogue who has written resources for those interested in commercial styles of violin playing. Her books *The Contemporary Violinist*, *Improvising Violin*, and *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum* are influential additions to the pedagogy of commercial violin. They all include supplementary recordings that allow students to learn popular styles through listening. In addition, Andrew Carlson is a violinist and professor who wrote *A Guide to American Fiddling* as a means to help classical players learn to play fiddle tunes with an authentic approach. Despite these efforts, there has yet to be a structured and sequential curriculum developed that concurrently incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music concurrently.

As maintained by Galamian, an exemplary collegiate violin curriculum is one that first helps a student develop and maintain functional posture, right-hand technique, and left-hand technique on the instrument.<sup>29</sup> String pedagogues universally agree that technique is an important tool on which violinists rely to express themselves musically and to create beautiful, meaningful music.<sup>30</sup> A functional curriculum should also include musicianship skill development such as ear training, written theory, historical context, and opportunities to develop reading, composing, and improvising skills. Mio has affirmed, “In postsecondary settings, effective teachers must have the ability to diagnose problems and provide feedback in a manner that encourages self-efficacy

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<sup>28</sup> Robin D. Moore, *College Music Curricula for a New Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 10.

<sup>29</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Marianne Murray Perkins, *A Comparison of Violin Playing Techniques: Kato, Havas, Paul Rolland, and Shinichi Suzuki* (Fairfax: American String Teachers Association, 1995), 2.

and metacognition.”<sup>31</sup>

There is an evident growing trend in the popularity of teaching and learning non-classical commercial styles in the modern violin world. For example, the American String Teacher’s Association holds numerous non-classical sessions at their annual conferences. The classically trained and current jazz pedagogue Julie Lyonn Liebermann has said, “The inclusion of bowed string instruments in styles worldwide can be traced back for centuries in one form or other. We can thank the recording industry, the Internet, radio, television, publishers, and a handful of educational pioneers and eclectic performing artists for a growing interest in including the art of improvisation and multi-styles into the mainstream of string pedagogy.”<sup>32</sup> Because most violinists have been limited to learning to play the instrument through sheet music, their mental and physical training has fostered a graphic approach rather than one of origination. This form of training has weakened aural skills and strengthened visual ones. Learning how to improvise, if trained through classical pedagogy, can easily be approached with that same philosophy. It is essential, however, to approach improvisation with a different mindset and practice habits.

Improvisation requires the ability to simultaneously hear a musical line in one’s inner ear and instantaneously reproduce it on one’s instrument.<sup>33</sup> It has been considered by some to be the missing link for relevance, transference, and ultimately musical performance and teaching in the twenty-first century.<sup>34</sup> Conley has reported, “There appears to be interest and value in the

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<sup>31</sup> Vanessa A. Mio, “An Investigation of Postsecondary Violin Instructors’ Remedial Pedagogy: A Case Study,” *International Journal of Music Education* 26, no. 2 (September 2017): 299, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761417731439>.

<sup>32</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 6.

<sup>33</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, 25.

<sup>34</sup> Kristen Pellegrino, Jennifer P. Beavers, and Susan Dill, “Working with College Students to Improve their Improvisation and Composition Skills: A Self-Study with Music Teacher Educators and a Music Theorist,” *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 28, no. 1 (July 2018): 34, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1057083718787825>.

incorporation of improvisation into the music education curriculum across the country, and yet, it is not happening consistently. If music teacher educators think that improvisation is important, they must model the inclusion of improvisation for their students.”<sup>35</sup> For the modern professional violinist, it is imperative to concurrently develop skills in technique, ear training, written theory, historical context, reading, composing, and improvisation. This requires a hybrid curriculum that incorporates both classical and commercial music.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This qualitative research study identifies, examines, and compares current classical and commercial collegiate violin methodologies simultaneously as a framework for the development of a new hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum. Each collegiate classical and commercial violin methodology studied is assessed through the specific criteria of scope, sequence, technique training, written theory, music reading skill development, ear training, composition, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Moreover, the existing literature in this study is reviewed for practical learning outcomes.

Research for this qualitative study has been completed through the collection of findings while searching for theoretical constructs, themes, and patterns grounded in historical and current violin pedagogy.<sup>36</sup> This process involved using multiple stages of data collection and the refinement and interrelationship of categories of information.<sup>37</sup> As Creswell has described, “Qualitative inquiry employs different philosophical assumptions; strategies of inquiry; and

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<sup>35</sup> Nancy S. Conley, “The Use of Improvisation in Undergraduate String Methods and Techniques Courses” (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 2017), 152.

<sup>36</sup> Meredith D. Gall, Joyce P. Gall, and Walter R. Borg, *Educational Research: An Introduction* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2003), 41.

<sup>37</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), 13.



methods of collection, examination, and interpretation. Qualitative procedures rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and draw on diverse strategies of inquiry.”<sup>38</sup> Gall, Gall, and Borg have further concluded, “Qualitative historical research helps educators understand the present condition of education by shedding light on the past. It also helps them imagine alternative future scenarios in education and judge their likelihood.”<sup>39</sup> A hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum, which incorporates both classical and commercial pedagogy, is generated as the final outcome of this qualitative research study.<sup>40</sup>

### **Problem Statement**

As explained by Leo Park, “Music literacy is the ability to independently and collaboratively carry out the artistic processes of creating new music, performing existing music with understanding and expression, and responding to others’ music with understanding.”<sup>41</sup> Despite the stylistically diverse professional music opportunities available to twenty-first century violinists, contemporary collegiate violin students are most often instructed exclusively through traditional classical pedagogy. Flesch specified that this pedagogy includes general technique, applied technique, and artistic realization. He wrote, “In order to present a musical work to an audience in a convincing manner, the performer must first of all possess certain musical qualities. He needs to be a complete master of the technique of his instrument and he must also have a type of personality, which is able to capture an audience.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 173.

<sup>39</sup> Gall, Gall, and Borg, *Educational Research: An Introduction*, 513.

<sup>40</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods*, 49.

<sup>41</sup> Leo Park, “Inside Out: Integrating Creative Practices into the Orchestra Classroom,” *Music Educators Journal* 105, no. 3 (April 2019): 55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432118817813>.

Violin pedagogues throughout history have supported a diverse musical education. Advocating for the inclusion of commercial pedagogy within the curriculum, jazz violinist and educator, Christian Howes, emphasized, “The way we know ourselves and music is much deeper than what comes out of the western European canon, for as wonderful as it is, the canon is very, very limited, as is our approach to learning.”<sup>43</sup> The historic Hungarian academic, conductor, composer, and violin pedagogue, Leopold Auer, also advocated for variety in repertory as early as 1921. In his book, *Violin Playing as I Teach It*, Auer asserted, “I believe that, in order to maintain the student’s interest in his work, a competent violin teacher will make use of teaching material of as widely varied a character as possible, and that he will under no circumstances concentrate on the works of any one composer, no matter how important, to the exclusion of others.”<sup>44</sup>

In accordance with the *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, “The music program should not be a preexisting format into which students are force-fitted, or that limits students’ musical options by addressing a narrow range of possibilities.”<sup>45</sup> Music educators are needed who present students with music with which they are familiar and in which they are invested, music that will stretch their aural and technical horizons, and music whose complexity poses the right amount of challenge given their level of musical understanding, from both the classical and non-classical traditions.<sup>46</sup> Popular music integration is a vehicle to teach creativity

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<sup>42</sup> Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing, Book 2: Artistic Realization and Instruction* (New York: Carl Fischer, 2008), 1.

<sup>43</sup> Karen Peterson, “Pathways to Knowledge,” *Strings* 31, no. 11 (June 2017): 24.

<sup>44</sup> Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It* (New York: Dover Publications, 1980), 96.

<sup>45</sup> Wayne Bowman and Ana Lucía Frega, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 223.

<sup>46</sup> Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 221.

at all levels, and authentic experiences with popular music within the curriculum will expand students' understandings of improvisation, composition, music technology, world music, and the twenty-first century music business.<sup>47</sup>

However, violinists who predominately perform commercial music, on the contrary, often do not experience formal classical training, which provides foundational technical skills required of the professional violinist. According to Galamian, tone, these foundations include pitch, and rhythm, which are the basic elements of all music. He asserted, "It is only logical, then, that the technique of the violin be firmly founded on these three elements in terms of beauty of tone, accuracy of intonation, and precise control of rhythm."<sup>48</sup> A modern collegiate violin curriculum that incorporates these elements of both classical and commercial music would thus allow for diverse musical opportunities through structured and sequential pedagogy.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this research study is to identify, examine, and compare current classical and commercial collegiate violin methodologies concurrently as a framework for the development of a new hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum. The study identifies ways that the commercial violinist might be underprepared for commercial viability when training exclusively with traditional curriculum, and it defines areas in which the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles. It pursues answers to the presented research questions while approaching an innovative collegiate violin curriculum that offers viability to the twenty-first century violinist throughout the modern and diverse professional music landscape.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 3.

### Significance of the Study

The examination of existing literature and answers to the presented research questions lead to the development of an innovative violin curriculum, incorporating simultaneous instruction of classical and commercial violin. The scope and sequence of traditional collegiate classical violin pedagogy, when paired simultaneously with structured commercial violin studies, can provide sustainability to the twenty-first century violinist within the modern professional music business. Incorporating both classical and commercial violin pedagogy into a singular hybrid collegiate curriculum, this study benefits violin students and professionals who require a diverse and comprehensive musical education.

Koh has explained that today's musicians should not only be knowledgeable about the various soundscapes and styles outside the scope of classical music traditions, but also be well informed about the techniques involved in producing sounds associated with these diverse practices.<sup>49</sup> In 1916, John Dewey explained that formal education can often become separated from life experiences. Similarly, Mercado penned, "One of the weightiest problems with which the philosophy of education has to cope is the method of keeping a proper balance between the informal and the formal."<sup>50</sup> Researchers have found that popular music classrooms can provide creative and collaborative experiences for students, while offering an accessible entry into composition and improvisation activities.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Sang Kyun Koh, "Spaces in Between: A Swing-Informed Approach to Performing Jazz- and Blues-Influenced Western Art Music for Violin" (DMA diss., University of Toronto, 2017), 13, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fspaces-between-swing-informed-approach-performing%2Fdocview%2F1999397249%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

<sup>50</sup> Emily M. Mercado, "Popular, Informal, and Vernacular Music Classrooms: A Review of the Literature," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 37, no. 2 (February 2019): 30, <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123318784634>.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

This study also encourages further research into the curricular diversity of other string instruments and the relationship between classical and commercial training throughout collegiate instrumental music education. As Doke has asserted, “Although inclusion of alternative styles in formal music learning spaces has increased substantially over the years due to increased media presence, resources, and professional development opportunities, there is still a need for more professional development and teacher training opportunities for teaching strategies using alternative styles.”<sup>52</sup>

### **Research Questions**

Based on the problem statement identified, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

RQ1: In which ways can the commercial violinist be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum?

RQ2: In which ways can the structure of classical violin pedagogy impact the learning of commercial violin styles?

### **Hypotheses**

The following are the specific alternative hypotheses proposed to help answer the main research queries:

H1: The commercial violinist can be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum in the areas of ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity.

H2: The structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles through scope and sequence, technique training, and written theory skill development.

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<sup>52</sup> David Reed Doke, “Collaborative Learning among High School Students in an Alternative Styles Strings Ensemble” (DMA diss., Boston University, 2020), 23, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fcollaborative-learning-among-high-school-students%2Fdocview%2F2395320431%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

## Core Concepts

Throughout the course of this study, collegiate violin music and curricula are designated as classical or commercial. The explicit outcome is a hybrid collegiate curriculum for the twenty-first century violinist, built on the structure of classical violin pedagogy while concurrently including sequential commercial training for viability in the modern and diverse professional music landscape. As specified by *Webster's Dictionary*, classical refers to music of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, characterized by an emphasis on balance, clarity, and moderation. This type of music and pedagogy is from the educated European tradition that includes such forms as art song, chamber music, opera, and symphony as distinguished from commercial, folk, popular, or jazz music.<sup>53</sup> Estelle Jorgensen resolved that formality in classical music education “has been normative, its root ‘form’ requiring particular shape, design, discipline, system, organization, control, teacher-led induction of a student, and particular outcome.”<sup>54</sup>

While classical music has historically been associated with the upper class, commercial or popular music is often associated with the middle or lower classes. Commercial music engages a mass audience, is intended to have wide appeal, and has a sound and style distinct from classical music. According to Campbell, “Popular music embraces an array of attitudes, a family of sounds and an industry that supports it, all of which distinguish it from classical music.”<sup>55</sup> Lieberman has added, “Through the use of a well-defined system of notation, rather than the aural tradition used by most other musical styles, classical music clearly evolved to offer

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<sup>53</sup> *Merriam-Webster Online*, s.v. “Classical,” accessed June 5, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/classical>.

<sup>54</sup> Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 453.

<sup>55</sup> Michael Campbell, *Popular Music in America: The Beat Goes On* (Boston: Cengage, 2019), xiv.

an unparalleled interplay of complex and sophisticated melodic and harmonic lines. Ironically, immigrants came to America in favor of building new lives free of censorship, yet carried beliefs and attitudes about music embedded so deeply as to not be noticed, questioned, or changed.”<sup>56</sup>

Focusing on the role of commercial music and how it relates to classical music, Lucy Green has presented the means in which the school curriculum enters into, changes, and complicates musical meanings. She wrote, “One of the strongest, if perhaps implicit delineations transmitted by popular music is the notion that its musicians acquire their skills and knowledge without any apparent need for education in the first place.”<sup>57</sup> Green has described how the inclusion of informal popular music learning practices can positively affect the musical meanings and experiences of students in popular and classical music education. By allowing learners the personal autonomy to authentically explore aspects of musical autonomy, educators can open student ears/minds to the possibility of infusing music with a wide variety of delineations. According to Green, “In so doing we could also make available a new wealth of responses not only to music, but to the social, cultural, political, and ideological meanings that music carries.”<sup>58</sup>

In exploring how collegiate music programs can, using popular music, be made robust and challenging while remaining current, Larson has concluded, “Popular music is as valid as any other music, especially in terms of the creative aspect. The music is by nature ‘popular,’ and thus a needed addition in the competitive world of music employment options where classical and jazz graduates struggle to find meaningful work performing the music they studied in

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<sup>56</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 12.

<sup>57</sup> Lucy Green, “Popular Music Education in and for Itself, and for ‘Other’ Music: Current Research in the Classroom,” *International Journal of Music Education* 24, no. 2 (August 2006): 106, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761406065471>.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

college.”<sup>59</sup> Przybylski and Niknafs have further declared, “Popular music should not only be included in the curriculum, but the incorporation of learning strategies modeled after popular musicians can allow teachers and students to take full advantage of the possibilities that these musical genres offer.”<sup>60</sup>

### Definition of Terms

**Scope and sequence** – When referencing a collegiate curriculum, *scope* defines the extent and depth of content and skills to be learned. *Sequence* delineates how these skills and content are ordered and presented to learners over time. As explained by Arafah, “Best practice in curriculum development and implementation requires that both curricular and program scopes and sequences embody discipline-based standards or requirements. Ensuring these are present and aligned in course and program content, activities and assessments to support student success require formalized and systematized curriculum review and development processes. Yet these processes are not always at play in higher education.”<sup>61</sup>

**Violin technique** – In accordance with Galamian, violin technique involves physical, mental, and aesthetic-emotional factors. Galamian specified that the physical factor consists of “the anatomical make-up of the individual, in particular the shape of fingers, hands, and arms, plus the flexibility of muscular apparatus.”<sup>62</sup> In addition, he noted that technique involves “physiological functioning with regard to the playing movements and the muscular actions that

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<sup>59</sup> Robert Larson, “Popular Music in Higher Education: Finding the Balance,” *College Music Symposium* 59, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 2, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26902589>.

<sup>60</sup> Liz Przybylski and Nasim Niknafs, “Teaching and Learning Popular Music in Higher Education through Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Practice What You Preach,” *International Association for the Study of Popular Music Journal* 5, no. 1 (2015):104, <https://doi.org/10.5429/2079-3871>.

<sup>61</sup> Sousan Arafah, “Curriculum Mapping in Higher Education: A Case Study and Proposed Content Scope and Sequence Mapping Tool,” *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 40, no. 5 (March 2015): 585, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1080/0309877X.2014.1000278>.

<sup>62</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 3.



bring them about.”<sup>63</sup> Galamian defined the mental factor as “the ability of the mind to prepare, direct, and supervise the muscular activity,”<sup>64</sup> while the aesthetic-emotional factor includes “the capacity to understand and feel the meaning of the music, plus the innate talent to project its expressive message to the listener.”<sup>65</sup> Bachmann has emphasized that the instrumental artist must work with mathematic regularity if technical ability is to be preserved.<sup>66</sup>

**Improvisation** – The *Harvard Dictionary of Music* states that improvisation is the creation of music in the course of performance.<sup>67</sup> When learning to improvise, Liebermann has indicated, “Nothing can replace the aural process; this is how you learn to speak as a child. Listen to improvising musicians as often as you can, whether recorded or live. Even study their solos by learning them note for note – first vocally, and then on the violin. This is not for the sake of imitation; it is for the purpose of learning how advanced improvisers hear, phrase, interpret, and thread from chord change to change.”<sup>68</sup>

**Practice** – In both the classical and commercial pedagogical traditions, practice is the key to success. Galamian emphasized, “The road to violin mastery is long and arduous, and great application and perseverance are needed to reach the goal. Talent helps to ease the way, but in itself it cannot be a substitute for the hard work of practicing.”<sup>69</sup> He added, “One of the most

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Bachmann, *Encyclopedia of the Violin*, 199.

<sup>67</sup> Don Michael Randel, ed., *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 406.

<sup>68</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, 47.

<sup>69</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 93.

important things that a teacher ought to teach his students is the technique of good practice.”<sup>70</sup>

When addressing the practice of all styles of music, Mark O’Connor wrote, “There is no substitute for time with the instrument. More practice time will produce a rapid development of physical skill and artistic sensitivity.”<sup>71</sup> He further recommended, “Practice a piece until it is easy, not just until you believe it is correct.”<sup>72</sup>

**Assessment** – Assessment is an essential component of all university studies. In addition to providing a grade or mark to a student, assessment should also be designed to help students to learn and to engage with their studies. It is important to note that students are often strategic in their approach to university study. Many will not perform work, or spend little time on it, if it does not contribute to their grade.<sup>73</sup> Effective professors encourage all students to take a deep approach to learning. As explained by Holmes, “It is important to try to encourage deep learning through assessment, and a positive learning experience can be created through careful alignment of assessment to learning outcomes.”<sup>74</sup>

Professors of a hybrid collegiate violin curriculum measure and assess musical achievement, which refers to what a student has learned in music. It is imperative to recognize that musicianship and musical achievement can, and should be assessed. Students preeminently learn through timely and regular feedback from professors; therefore, music professors must have clear and well-articulated policies for assessment and grading. They must choose testing

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Mark O’Connor, *O’Connor Violin Method: Violin Book 1* (New York: Mark O’Connor Music International, 2009), 5.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>73</sup> Naomi Holmes, “Engaging with Assessment: Increasing Student Engagement through Continuous Assessment,” *Active Learning in Higher Education* 19, no. 1 (August 2017): 24, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787417723230>.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

and assessment strategies that best match the assignment tasks or musical skills being addressed. Conway has argued, “There is a strong connection between course planning, curriculum assessment, and student learning. Just as it takes time to learn to teach, it takes time to learn to use good assessment strategies.”<sup>75</sup> Exceptional assessment in music education goes far beyond the reporting of student work. It is used to deliver feedback to students as well as information to the instructor regarding student learning. Conway has noted, “In the effort to design useful and meaningful assessment, it is recommended that music classes include a variety of assessment measures so that learners have opportunities to represent their learning in different ways.”<sup>76</sup>

### **Chapter Summary**

Historically, classical and commercial violinists have been trained through divergent pedagogical models. Because of the stylistically diverse professional music opportunities available to twenty-first century violinists, a collegiate violin curriculum is needed that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music through structured and sequential pedagogy. This study identifies ways in which the commercial violinist might be underprepared for commercial viability when training exclusively with traditional curriculum, and it defines areas in which the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles.

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<sup>75</sup> Conway, *Teaching Music in Higher Education*, 46.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of the lack of an existing structured and sequential hybrid violin curriculum, students at the collegiate level have most often exclusively studied Western classical music. For centuries, students aspiring to be professional violinists have affiliated themselves with established conservatories or colleges of music where the courses of study are determined by the directorates of the institutions.<sup>77</sup> Pupils must take lessons at regular hours, are examined frequently by impartial persons as to their progress, and are enabled to hear others play and to observe their progress at the concerts or recitals that are a feature at all such institutions.<sup>78</sup> Most often, performers and teachers of advanced violin students in the United States use the violin treatises by Auer, Flesch, and Galamian to build their curricula.<sup>79</sup> Despite this, serious gaps in pedagogical literature exist for today's violin players and teachers, who are often offered little perspective on a wide range of issues and techniques.<sup>80</sup> A review of leading resources that currently exist both in classical and commercial violin collegiate pedagogy is essential for the development of a twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music, allowing for varied musical opportunities through structured and sequential pedagogy.

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<sup>77</sup> Bachmann, *Encyclopedia of the Violin*, 156.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Kelley M. Arney, "A Comparison of the Violin Pedagogy of Auer, Flesch, and Galamian: Improving Accessibility and Use through Characterization and Indexing" (Master's thesis, University of Texas at Arlington, 2006), 1.

<sup>80</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 92.

### Classical Pedagogy

The earliest books to reflect advanced practice on the violin appeared in the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>81</sup> The first notable author was the Italian violinist Francesco Geminiani, whose pedagogical treatise was published in London in 1751.<sup>82</sup> Primarily a book of music, Geminiani's thoroughly musical forerunners of the étude also serve as illuminating studies in composition technique.<sup>83</sup> Although Geminiani emphasizes the close connection of expression and playing style that is characteristic of his time period, his circulated pages of music are more informative.<sup>84</sup> Geminiani's historical position is identified by his warnings, on the one hand, against the steady use of down-bows for the beginning of measures (a reaction against the method standardized by Lully), and, on the other, against the accentuation of beats, which, several years later, was taken for granted by Leopold Mozart.<sup>85</sup> Geminiani's ideas can be found in many sources that either do not admit to any borrowing or do so only obliquely.<sup>86</sup> The three aspects of technique in which his influence can be seen most strongly and for the greatest period of time are holding the violin and bow, left-hand position, and bowing technique and style.<sup>87</sup>

While this prominent Italian pedagogue contributed one of the earliest books of advanced violin study in history, authors around the world subsequently began to provide additional notable works. Baillot, Rode, and Kreutzer published an early standard French violin text for

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>83</sup> Hans T. David, "Reviewed Work: The Art of Playing on the Violin (1751) by Francesco Geminiani," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 6, no. 2 (Summer 1953): 184, <https://doi.org/10.2307/829801>.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. 185.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Eddy, "American Violin Method-Books", 170.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

advanced players in 1803. Their writing focuses on artistic, technical, and aesthetic matters, while also including study material.<sup>88</sup> Authors such as Fauré and Mazas copied Baillot, Rode, and Kreutzer verbatim in their methods, which are still regularly studied by advanced violinists.<sup>89</sup> In the nineteenth century, American violinists' direction for holding the instrument and bow, as well as positions of the arms and hands, was derived from Mazas.<sup>90</sup> Kreutzer's *Etudes* are also considered required learning for modern upper intermediate-level students of classical violin.<sup>91</sup> This work includes studies addressing double stops and chords, which are often used to prepare for the study of Bach's solo sonatas and partitas.<sup>92</sup> The culmination of virtuosic technical studies on the violin eventually came from another Italian violinist, Nicolò Paganini.

Paganini is considered by many to be the father of modern violin technique.<sup>93</sup> His masterworks, likely composed in Italy between 1805 and 1809, constitute powerful musicality, originality, and invention that together make the violin sparkle with unparalleled brilliance.<sup>94</sup> His compelling virtuosity created numerous new technical and musical possibilities for the violinist. Ludwig Spohr, a German composer, violinist, and pedagogue, contributed a popular treatise in 1832, which contrasted Paganini and is considered conservative based on the technical and stylistic limitations that he imposed.<sup>95</sup> Spohr provided detailed discussions of the structure and

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<sup>88</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 227.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Eddy, "American Violin Method-Books", 180.

<sup>91</sup> Joseph Magil, "Kreutzer: 40 Etudes," *American Record Guide* 72, no. 2 (March/April 2009): 163, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fmagazines%2Fkreutzer-40-etudes%2Fdocview%2F223348117%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Bachmann, *Encyclopedia of the Violin*, 193.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

care of the violin, the suggestion of a non-standard chin position partly on the tailpiece and partly to the left of it, and a bow-hold like that of the French teachers.<sup>96</sup> He also objected to many of the technical effects presented by Paganini.<sup>97</sup> Other notable Austro-German writers of violin treatises in the second half of the nineteenth century included Zimmerman, Dont, Kayser, Courvoisier, and Schradiek.<sup>98</sup> Schradiek, along with the Czech violinist and pedagogue Ševčík, wrote chiefly mechanical exercises for the left hand. Their treatises offer a subordination of musical values in favor of minute technical detail for the development of facility on the instrument.<sup>99</sup>

A student of Dont, Leopold Auer is considered one of the most influential teachers of the twentieth century. In his text from 1921, he addresses matters relating to bowing technique and basic requirements for playing the violin.<sup>100</sup> To develop basic tone on the violin, Auer recommends slowly playing the notes of a G-major scale using the entire length of the bow.<sup>101</sup> His greatest gift was his ability to inspire in each of his pupils the will to achieve maximum potential and self-expression on the instrument.<sup>102</sup> He insisted that intuition, instinct, physical equipment, and intellectual bias must precede any predetermined laws of violin playing and teaching.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 227.

<sup>96</sup> Eddy, “American Violin Method-Books”, 190.

<sup>97</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 227.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>100</sup> Stefan Knapik, “Vitalistic Discourses of Violin Pedagogy in the Early Twentieth Century,” *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* 38, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 171, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/ncm.2014.38.2.169>.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>102</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 228.

<sup>103</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 99.

Following Auer, Carl Flesch promoted dividing the art of violin playing into general technique, applied technique, and artistic realization.<sup>104</sup> First published in 1928, he asserted that technique is learned and developed, while artistry requires a degree of inborn musical ability.<sup>105</sup> While Flesch taught that violinists in decades past could afford to add ornaments freely, he contended that modern violinists must have ornaments dictated to them, either by scores or treatises.<sup>106</sup> He also included that singing tone on the violin, as primarily produced by the right arm and hand, redeems the various iniquities of the left hand.<sup>107</sup> According to Flesch's pedagogical resources, rhythm and meter act as stabilizing influences in music, but they are often undermined in performance as melody and dynamics are primary areas of focus.<sup>108</sup>

In summary, Flesch sought to provide guidance to teachers on the most suitable methods of instructing pupils in the latest developments of violin technique.<sup>109</sup> His focus was on equipping violinists with tools that allow them to think logically and analyze technical problems of the violin in depth.<sup>110</sup> Flesch's methodology was grounded in nineteenth-century violin pedagogy, while Galamian is symbolic of the twentieth century.

Galamian is seen as a culmination of the best traditions of the Russian and French violin schools.<sup>111</sup> In 1962, he provided a rational and analytical approach to violin pedagogy.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 228.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Knapik, "Vitalistic Discourses", 187.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>108</sup> Stefan Knapik, "The Mastered Violinist: Carl Flesch's Pedagogical Treatise and Memoirs," *Music & Letters* 96, no. 4 (November 2015): 572, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/610001>.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 568.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. 569.

<sup>111</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 228.



According to Galamian, teachers must be good psychologists, practice flexibility in their teaching, and encourage independence in interpretation.<sup>113</sup> He recommended a practical method but also recognized the importance of flexibility, naturalness, and the promotion of the utmost musical and technical development in each individual.<sup>114</sup> Galamian advocated for comfort and efficiency of posture. Regarding left-hand position, he taught that the fingers should determine the place of the left elbow.<sup>115</sup> His resources discuss the interdependence of the bow's speed, pressure, and contact point and the importance of skillful bow division for optimum tone production.<sup>116</sup> Along with the pedagogical works of Auer and Flesch, Galamian's writings have had a great impact on modern violin pedagogy at the collegiate level.

### **Classical Repertoire**

While classical violin students at the collegiate level practice and prepare to become performers and educators, they also develop a suitable repertoire of musical works for their instrument.<sup>117</sup> Auer asserted, "In order to maintain the student's interest in his work, a competent violin teacher will make use of teaching material of as widely varied a character as possible, and that he will under no circumstances concentrate on the works of any one composer, no matter how important, to the exclusion of others."<sup>118</sup> Although Auer presented a specific sequence of musical study from the Kreutzer études to the Paganini caprices, he recommended developing a

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Robin Stowell, "Violin Pedagogy Through the Ages 6: Galamian and Fischer," *Strad* 119, no. 1 (February 2008): 60.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>117</sup> Arney, "A Comparison of the Violin Pedagogy," 64.

<sup>118</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 96.

personal repertory for each student based on their preferences and capacities, while extending or reducing the repertory list that he described.<sup>119</sup> Auer penned, “Like all else that pertains to art, though an order of succession for the study of repertory may be planned on certain principles based on generally accepted laws, it is the individual factor which must be the determining one in the end.”<sup>120</sup>

Like Auer, other influential pedagogues have supported diversity in repertoire. Flesch’s writings demonstrate a repertoire sequence that is thorough and varied. In a detailed discussion on performance recital literature, he presented five specific categories: works with piano accompaniment, works for solo violin, duets for piano and violin, duets for violin and another instrument, and chamber music.<sup>121</sup> Subsequently, Flesch outlined the contents of a standard recital including concerti, arrangements of violin solo sonatas with figured bass, works for the violin alone, character pieces in small form, and transcriptions.<sup>122</sup> While Flesch endorsed the study of seventeenth and eighteenth-century sonatas, he believed that cadenzas are inappropriate.<sup>123</sup> He also warned students that the violin is a homophonic instrument and chords are not natural for it.<sup>124</sup> Bach’s Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo have been central to violin pedagogy for more than two centuries.<sup>125</sup> With Bach solo violin works considered exceptions, Flesch declared most chordal works for violin as unacceptable because the chord is not a part of

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 65.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Joel Lester, *Bach’s Works for Solo Violin: Style, Structure, Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 3.

a larger melody.<sup>126</sup> He taught that the aspiring performing artist is obligated to perform and study contemporary works; nonetheless, the old avant-garde must not be disregarded for the modern trend.<sup>127</sup>

Although Galamian did not personally provide comprehensive writings about selection and sequence of repertoire in the curriculum, Dorothy DeLay, his assistant at Julliard, provided a detailed sequence of violin repertoire that teachers and students often follow.<sup>128</sup> DeLay's sequence of etudes begins with Wohlfhart's *Op. 45 Book 1* and concludes with Dont's *Op. 35*.<sup>129</sup> Her sequence of concerti is separated into three distinct groups. It begins with Bach's A minor concerto and E major concerto and ends with concerti by Stravinsky and Shostakovich.<sup>130</sup> DeLay required a five-hour practice day from all of her collegiate students, two hours of which were to be dedicated to concerti, Bach, and recital repertoire.<sup>131</sup> The first hour was to be spent on articulation, shifting, vibrato exercises, and bow strokes, while the second hour was for passages from repertoire, arpeggios, and scales.<sup>132</sup> The third hour was to be dedicated to etudes or Paganini, before working on concerti and recital repertoire during hours four and five.<sup>133</sup> DeLay's teaching and writings directly reflect Galamian's influence on violin pedagogy.

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Flesch., *The Art of Violin Playing*, 65.

<sup>128</sup> Barbara Lourie Sand, *Teaching Genius: Dorothy DeLay and the Making of a Musician* (New Jersey: Amadeus Press, 2000), 67.

<sup>129</sup> "Sequence of Violin Repertoire," String Academy of Wisconsin, accessed September 30, 2021, [https://www.stringacademyofwisconsin.org/resources/violin-music-repertoire/#sequence\\_of\\_rep](https://www.stringacademyofwisconsin.org/resources/violin-music-repertoire/#sequence_of_rep).

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Sand, *Teaching Genius*, 69.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

### Commercial Pedagogy

String playing, pedagogy, and curriculum come principally from the classical tradition, which is grounded in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European music.<sup>134</sup> Tracy Silverman has written, “The era of post-classical string playing is so new that a comprehensive pedagogy hasn’t yet been developed, and there is a palpable need for a simple, unified approach.”<sup>135</sup> Commercial music education materials such as method books and curricular guides, while potentially helpful to teachers and students alike, might not be fully capable of capturing the nuances of traditionally aurally transmitted popular music.<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, an exploration of what is currently available in collegiate commercial violin methodology provides a stimulus of what can presently help teachers and students deepen the professionalization and musicianship of commercial music-making.<sup>137</sup>

*Ryan’s Mammoth Collection*, published in 1883, is considered by many to be the ultimate reference on historic fiddle tunes.<sup>138</sup> Over a century later, Skinner’s publication focusing on Scottish fiddling was one of the earliest instructional books introduced in traditional fiddle pedagogy. His resource’s scope and sequence encourage stylistic authenticity, as it focuses on specific traditional fiddle bowing techniques.<sup>139</sup> Leon Grizzard supported the learning of music theory and scales as applied to fiddle tunes in the American and Celtic traditions, the learning of fiddle improvisation, and the presentation of supplemental material to help the fiddler who wants

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<sup>134</sup> Silverman, iii.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Radio Cremata, “The Schoolification of Popular Music,” *College Music Symposium* 59, no. 1 (Spring 2019): 2, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26650720>.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>138</sup> Matt Combs, Katie Hartford Hogue, and Greg Reish, *John Hartford’s Mammoth Collection of Fiddle Tunes* (Franklin: StuffWorks Press, 2018), x.

<sup>139</sup> Skinner, *A Guide to Bowing Strathspeys*, 28.

to play in other popular styles.<sup>140</sup> His pedagogical contributions teach students the theoretical framework of fiddle tunes and fiddle soloing, in addition to the scales and arpeggios that fiddlers use in context.<sup>141</sup> Violinist and collegiate professor Andrew Carlson also offered a manual to aid primarily classical players in playing fiddle tunes authentically. These twentieth century educators initiated a gateway into commercial string pedagogy.

Julie Lyonn Liebermann's variety of commercial string texts guide students to honor and include all musical traditions in their studies, as well as the art of improvisation.<sup>142</sup> First published in 1979, she provided students with the historical roots of improvisation and a musical and technical context for the development of style and technique.<sup>143</sup> Lieberman emphasized listening as the primary mode of learning style, writing, "If you want to really get inside a music connected with a specific culture, get inside the culture. Find the oldest, authentic recordings of the style. The history of the violin in salsa, swing, bluegrass and country are all well documented on record." She additionally included supplementary recordings for her texts, accentuating the requirement of listening in the learning of commercial styles.

In 1984, Lieberman provided violinists with a widespread resource with which they can develop their improvisational abilities in blues, swing, jazz, rock, folk, and new age music.<sup>144</sup> Defining these nonclassical styles as commercial music, she advocated for the achievement of stylistic diversity in the string area and proclaimed, "The future is at our doorstep and my vision is of the contemporary violinist. One who knows fiddle styles (Irish, bluegrass, old-time,

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<sup>140</sup> Leon Grizzard, *Hokum: Theory and Scales for Fiddle Tunes and Fiddle Improvisation* (Pacific: Mel Bay Publications, 1997), 5.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Liebermann, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 3.

<sup>143</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, vi.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., v.

Scandinavian, Cajun, country, et al.); can improvise in any style; greets odd meter such as 5/8 or 11/8 with expertise; can play rhythm on the violin; wails on the blues with lightning and thunder, and is equally at home with the classics.”<sup>145</sup> Liebermann’s most comprehensive text, written in 2004, recognized the need for a sequential commercial violin educational plan in the future.<sup>146</sup> She encouraged, “Rather than waiting for the next publication, approach this as a creative challenge: invent your own next steps. Let go of the old model that made us fearful of proceeding incorrectly or making mistakes, and blaze your own trails. Encourage your students to pursue quality while enjoying the rich treasures music has to offer.”<sup>147</sup> A celebrated commercial styles author, Lieberman also often taught at Mark O’Connor’s fiddle camp on an annual basis.

O’Connor, a student of distinguished violinists such as Benny Thomasson and Stéphane Grappelli, became one of the most prominent violinists of America’s rich aural folk tradition and classical music in the twentieth century.<sup>148</sup> He asserted, “American pieces of music are meant to be recreated, not just replicated. American music comprises of what I believe to be the richest, most diverse, and most exciting body of material in the world, and the O’Connor Method harnesses it to promote mastery of technique as well as individual creativity and expression like never before.”<sup>149</sup> While the O’Connor method has been developed for all levels, books five and six are specifically geared toward the collegiate music student. He explained, “The musical literature and learning philosophies presented are wide-ranging, and the level of playing

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<sup>145</sup> Julie Lyonn Lieberman, *The Contemporary Violinist* (New York: Huiksi Music, 1999), 7.

<sup>146</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 187.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Mark O’Connor, *O’Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5* (New York: Mark O’Connor Musik International, 2016), 5.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 4.

demand of the student is very high. The scope of the repertoire is as broad as ever: it includes both traditional and modern pieces from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and South America, an American interpretation of a European classical piece, and several original compositions.”<sup>150</sup> O’Connor delineated his method as a framework of a new American classical music, and he included audio access for all included works to allow students to learn musical style through listening.<sup>151</sup>

Three select commercial violinists and pedagogues who have provided other important resources specifically within the jazz idiom are Matt Glaser, Christian Howes, and Martin Norgaard. Glaser’s contributions were co-authored with Stéphane Grappelli. His books guide the development of jazz solos using familiar melodic material, the creation of coherent improvisations built on melodic cells and chord progressions, and the groove of the swing feel of jazz.<sup>152</sup> Creator of the Creative Strings Academy, jazz violinist Christian Howes has released books on jazz scales and arpeggios, harmony, tonal improvisation, chromatic études, and quartal études. Using these resources, Howes advocated for practice into two fields: creative (which involves improvisation, composition, and arranging), and internalization, where students work on intonation, vibrato, shifting, bow control, and sound.<sup>153</sup> These two areas often overlap, and they enable students to create problems on the violin and solve them themselves, which gives an increased sense of ownership and retention.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Matt Glaser, *Fiddle Tunes on Jazz Changes* (Boston: Berklee Press, 2014), iv.

<sup>153</sup> Pauline Harding, “Christian Howes: Notes on Rhythm, Harmony and Improvisation from the US Jazz Violinist,” *Strad* 127, no. 1519 (November 2016): 22.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 22.

Like Glaser and Grappelli, pedagogical and improvisational collaboration has also developed between Howes and Martin Norgaard. Norgaard included theory and simple exercises in his volumes, guiding students in taking steps from written music to jazz.<sup>155</sup> His roots in commercial violin began when he first heard Jean-Luc Ponty play acoustic violin in jazz on the 1967 album *Sunday Walk*.<sup>156</sup> His performances and writings are influenced by the work of Stuff Smith, Joe Venuti, Svend Asmussen, and Stéphane Grappelli.<sup>157</sup> Tunes and lessons guide Norgaard's sequential pedagogy, with each lesson organized in a theory and exercise section.<sup>158</sup> He has stated, "Even the greatest players in jazz are always working on new ways to play that perfect solo. Enjoy the journey, because it will never be finished."<sup>159</sup> Norgaard's resources are deeply grounded in the history of jazz violin playing.

The technique of chopping is seminal in the performance of various types of commercial violin, pervading bluegrass, new acoustic music, Celtic music, and chamber jazz ensembles.<sup>160</sup> David Wallace has written, "Of all of the amazing new timbres and string techniques that have emerged since the music of Béla Bartók, chopping stands as one of the most universal and potentially transformative developments. No other extended technique has been so broadly incorporated into as many genres, or has become such an increasingly necessary part of our pedagogy and professional vocabulary."<sup>161</sup> Casey Driessen, with the assistance of Oriol Saña,

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<sup>155</sup> Martin Norgaard, *Jazz Fiddle Wizard: A Practical Guide to Jazz Improvising for Strings* (Pacific: Mel Bay Publications, 2000), 2.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>160</sup> Casey Driessen and Oriol Saña, *The Chop Notation Project* (Boston: Casey Driessen, 2019), v.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., v.



has presented a detailed, specific, and efficient method for capturing chopping performance practice across a diverse variety of genres.<sup>162</sup> While the technique of chopping is reasonably simple, incorporating percussion, melody, and harmony requires fine motor movements that must be refined by even experienced bow hands.<sup>163</sup> Driessen and Saña's body of work included an introduction to all symbols they deem necessary to communicate the current state of percussive string playing.<sup>164</sup> This is followed by a set of 10 sequential exercises and grooves, which are supplemented through a complete video series.<sup>165</sup> The technique of chopping on the violin is supplemented by further rhythmic-specific writings of Tracy Silverman.

Silverman guided students to rhythmically revolutionize their violin performance through his pedagogical treatise, initially published in 2018. In it, he proclaimed, "String playing, as taught in conservatories all around the world, became frozen in time and remained more or less in a state of arrested development with an overwhelming emphasis on the European styles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."<sup>166</sup> While even the masterpieces of the classical repertoire were written in the popular idiom of each composer's time and place, Silverman recognizes that classical music and popular music started to become two different entities in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>167</sup> While strings have often been overlooked in popular music since this time, Silverman has declared, "The new role for strings must include a vernacular melodic voice, one that is closer to a pop vocal style and contemporary melodic instruments like electric guitar and

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., ix.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, xiv.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

saxophone. It must also include the ability to reflect the rhythmic character of these groove-based styles.”<sup>168</sup> This requires listening to music of various styles from the initial stages of development.

A graduate from the Julliard School, Silverman, is a model hybrid twenty-first century professional violinist and pedagogue. His resources include the aforementioned pedagogical treatise, akin to those previously penned by classical pedagogues such as Auer, Flesch, and Galamian.<sup>169</sup> Moreover, he has published étude and chord jam companion books, with listening supplements, that reinforce and utilize the techniques that he imparts. Silverman presents his resources with the overarching objective of helping string players clearly develop a natural approach to groove.<sup>170</sup>

### **Commercial Repertoire**

Historically, commercial violin music repertoire has been aurally transmitted. Lieberman has emphasized, “When tunes are taught by ear, it is up to the memory and taste of individual musicians to carry those tunes forward, each in a somewhat different way. If they forget sections, they can replace them with variations; if they don’t remember how their mentors ornamented them, they can add a few embellishments of their own. On the other hand, if that same tune is written down and a student learns it by reading it, the melody is more likely to forever be cast in stone.”<sup>171</sup> With a diverse set of commercial styles including American folk, contemporary, and world genres, the repertoire is available for learning aurally through countless recordings, the internet, and radio.

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., xv.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., viii.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., xvi.

<sup>171</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 8.

There are also supplementary printed resources of transcriptions, such as the historic *Ryan's Mammoth Collection* from 1883, that allow collegiate students to complement their aural learning of commercial violin repertoire. Craig Duncan is one of the preeminent authors of such resources, and he is recognized internationally for his numerous books and arrangements of fiddle music published by Mel Bay Publications.<sup>172</sup> Within the jazz idiom, *The Real Book* series is used in the string family as it is regularly applied in other families of instruments. When compiling this set of volumes, various recordings and alternate editions were consulted to create the most accurate and user-friendly representations of the included tunes, whether used in a combo setting or as a solo artist.<sup>173</sup> This process places an emphasis on the aural transmission of commercial music.

### **Related Studies**

While violin pedagogy at the collegiate level and, more recently, commercial violin styles have been studied, there has yet to be a report answering the research questions presented in this thesis, leading to a hybrid, stylistically diverse twenty-first century collegiate curriculum. Hsuan Lee has asserted in a doctoral dissertation, “It is my belief that there is no one method that can cover the needs of every student. That one student learns well under a certain method does not guarantee that other students will do the same. Each student possesses a different degree of physical strength and agility, different modes of learning and intellectual reception, and different ways of expressing themselves. It is important that the teacher recognizes that all students do not

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<sup>172</sup> Craig Duncan, *The Craig Duncan Master Fiddle Solo Collection* (Pacific: Mel Bay Publications, 1999), 3.

<sup>173</sup> Hal Leonard, *The Real Book* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004), 1.

learn and process information in the same way, and that there is no one ‘meta-method’ applicable to all.”<sup>174</sup>

Lee’s study serves as a reference tool for violin teachers who wish to explore the diverse approaches in resolving the technical difficulties that violin students encounter.<sup>175</sup> To deliver a comprehensive understanding of the principles of contemporary violin technique, Lee analyzed the fundamental mechanisms of basic technique and surveys a wide range of pedagogues under each topic, including Leopold Auer, Ivan Galamian, Shinichi Suzuki, Paul Rolland, Kato Havas, Ronald Patterson, and Kek-Tjiang Lim.<sup>176</sup> He has concluded that after years of lengthy practice, violinists’ bodies adapt to the way they play, for better or worse. Lee stated, “It is my contention that by exploring and analyzing the principles of basic technique, violin teachers will realize that what informs the various methods is the same goal; namely, that the student will develop a correct posture, free of tension and stress, and cultivate a relaxed and flexible approach to all the intricacies of fingering and bowing.”<sup>177</sup> Brenda van der Merwe has further addressed the technical aspect of contemporary violin pedagogy in her doctoral dissertation focusing on extended techniques of the twenty-first century violinist.

Through van der Merwe’s in-depth analysis of contemporary technique, including harmonics, scordatura, microtones, technology, polyrhythm, and unusual rhythmic subdivisions, her study culminates with the composition of supplementary materials to train the contemporary professional violinist in extended techniques.<sup>178</sup> As stated by van der Merwe, “The violinist

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<sup>174</sup> H. A. Lee, “Towards a Dynamic Pedagogy: Contemporary Pedagogical Approaches to Basic Violin Techniques” (doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 2009), 109, Proquest Dissertations & Theses Global.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 95.

trained for a professional career in the twenty-first century must not only have constant exposure to extended techniques, but must be adaptable to any new form of technological equipment which may alter or enhance the performance on the stage or in the recording studio.”<sup>179</sup>

Violin technique is central to the writings of van der Merwe and Lee. While their projects emphasize the importance of foundational technique in the curriculum and involve the development of new pedagogical technical strategies for the twenty-first century violinist, they do not address the inclusion of commercial styles in refining technique or include specialized techniques used in the performance of commercial styles. However, Alexandra Matloff’s research shifts focus from technique to repertoire diversity.

Matloff has conducted an investigation considering the incorporation of contemporary American solo works in the undergraduate violin curriculum. Her goal addressed the deficit of modern solo violin repertoire in the applied lesson setting at the undergraduate level and the lack of interest or time spent in performing this music.<sup>180</sup> With an emphasis on solo violin repertoire written since 1975 by American composers, Matloff’s treatise took a pedagogical approach in examining modern compositions and their associated techniques that should be studied throughout the four years of collegiate education.<sup>181</sup> She proclaimed, “Although the works of Daugherty, O’Connor, Zimmerli, Sheng, and Corigliano exhibit contemporary music qualities in regards to harmony, rhythm, and extended techniques, the incorporation of popular and familiar

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<sup>178</sup> Brenda van der Merwe, “New Frontiers in the Art of Violin Performance: The Contemporary Study and Pedagogy of Extended Performance for the Violin” (DMA diss., Boston University, 2006), x.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>180</sup> Alexandra Matloff, “Focusing on the Present: Incorporating Contemporary American Solo Works in the Undergraduate Violin Curriculum” (doctoral diss., Florida State University, 2015), ix, Proquest Dissertations & Theses Global.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

musical styles help students find a way to connect with an era of music that might seem impossible to understand.”<sup>182</sup>

While Matloff’s research concluded that the ability to perform contemporary music presents a plethora of opportunities for musical growth, her study exclusively focused on contemporary classical music that integrates popular music.<sup>183</sup> This diminishes the need for authentic aural transmission and further stylistic diversity that may fully prepare students for commercial viability in twenty-first century violin performance. These experiences can be obtained in both the applied lesson and ensemble settings, as demonstrated by Elijah Holt.

Holt conducted a study seeking the development of an academic curriculum for a college-level commercial music ensemble. He described his project as “a simple yet creative way to aid a music department in expanding toward commercial music ensembles by applying pedagogy and best practices used by more traditional ensembles.”<sup>184</sup> Through an analysis of history, similarities and differences in structure, lesson and rehearsal planning, assessment, and repertoire exploration, this thesis demonstrates curriculum development for a university-level commercial music ensemble. As stated by Holt, “Through participation in a commercial music ensemble, students are afforded the opportunity to gain and expand critical thinking skills, the importance of teamwork, and a firm grasp of important music theory aspects that will be a constant in future professional settings.”<sup>185</sup>

While Holt’s research supported the inclusion of commercial music in the collegiate academic setting, the ensemble he studied exclusively consisted of a keyboard, an electric guitar,

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>184</sup> Elijah D. Holt, “Development of an Academic Curriculum of a University Level Commercial Music Ensemble” (master’s thesis, Tennessee State University, 2019), v.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 28.

a bass, drums, two male vocalists, and two female vocalists. He does not include violinists in the curriculum of a commercial music ensemble. Corinne Olsen addressed this, presenting the Japanese rock music of Sugizo to exemplify the use of violin in popular music.

The results of Olsen's study indicate that it is because of a willingness to learn different styles of music and explore all genres on the violin that Sugizo easily integrates with a variety of bands and projects. As explained by Olsen, "An awareness of modern compositions broadens the students' awareness of both music and their instrument. String students, in particular, have very versatile instruments and can learn a lot from pushing the boundaries of music they perform."<sup>186</sup> Olsen concluded that Sugizo's awareness and acceptance of all music provides him with an unlimited range of musical expression, declaring, "All musicians can learn from this mentality, to not consider any form of music superior or inferior to another."<sup>187</sup> While Olsen's thesis focused on the experiences of one professional violinist who spotlights rock, electronic, pop, and avant-garde compositions in violin performance, it does not, however, provide a sequence and structure for learning commercial styles within the curriculum.

Nancy S. Conley addressed commercial sequence and structure as they relate to learning improvisation within the context of undergraduate string methods and techniques courses. Using the explanatory sequential mixed methods design, Conley's study included a researcher-developed survey regarding the use of improvisation in collegiate string methods and techniques classes.<sup>188</sup> Subsequently, follow-up interviews were conducted to provide insight into the philosophical and practical applications of improvisation as both a teaching tool and skill for life-

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<sup>186</sup> Corinne M. Olsen, "A Violinist in a Non-Classical World: Sugizo's Use of Violin in Popular Music" (master's thesis, California State University, 2009), 1.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>188</sup> Conley, "The Use of Improvisation", 1.

long music-making and learning.<sup>189</sup> Conley's study concluded, "The results of the survey indicate that the majority of string teacher educators are interested in improvisation and feel that it is important to include in music teacher education. Many respondents described the benefits of improvisation for undergraduate music students' musical growth, both technically and expressively, and for the development of teaching skills for pre-service music teachers. Conversely, participants reported concerns such as time constraints, an overloaded music education curriculum, and student and faculty discomfort with improvisation as impediments to including improvisation in their classes."<sup>190</sup> Furthermore, Conley urged music educators to create environments that encourage exploration and learning from "mistakes," in order for students to feel more comfortable with improvising.<sup>191</sup>

While Conley's study addresses the inclusion of improvisation in methods and techniques courses, Colin Wood further explores improvisation in the context of a non-idiomatic course within the undergraduate music curriculum. The primary focus of Wood's research is a sequential collegiate course in improvisation, designed for students of any instrument or voice, stylistic background, and instrumental ability.<sup>192</sup> Wood organized non-idiomatic improvisation into four primary categories: studies related to the benefits of improvisational training, methods for teaching improvisation, research on assessment in improvisation, and calls for the inclusion of improvisation in music education.<sup>193</sup> He gathered information that illuminates the benefits of

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>192</sup> Colin A. Wood, "Improvisation Methods: A Non-Idiomatic Improvisation Course for the Undergraduate Music Curriculum" (DMA diss., Ohio State University, 2019), 5.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 6.



delivering thoughtful experiences in improvisation to students at the college and university level of education. While Wood's study detailed the support for and the creation of a general improvisation course, it does not include ways in which improvisation affects violin performance or other dimensions of musicianship including aural skills, sight-reading ability, and compositional skills.<sup>194</sup> Additionally, neither Wood nor Conley addressed improvisation in the applied area of collegiate violin study.

### **Chapter Summary**

Through a review of resources that currently exist in both classical and commercial violin collegiate pedagogy and an analysis of related studies in the field, it is evident that the literature is lacking a specific study that determines ways in which the commercial violinist might be underprepared for commercial viability when training exclusively with traditional classical curriculum. In addition, it is necessary to define ways in which the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles, moving toward the development of a twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music, allowing for multifaceted opportunities in music through structured and sequential pedagogy.

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 98.

### CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

As argued by Gall, “Educational research is not a simple matter of discovering facts about education, but rather that it has diverse goals, including the development of theories to explain educational phenomena.”<sup>195</sup> Research, an organized and professional approach to inquiry, plays an important role in improving educational practice.<sup>196</sup> This educational research study is presented to identify factors for improving collegiate violin students’ achievements and professional success in the music field of the twenty-first century. These factors can then be transformed into interventions.

#### Design

This qualitative research study identifies, examines, and compares current classical and commercial collegiate violin methodologies simultaneously as a basis for the development of an innovative hybrid twenty-first century violin curriculum. Qualitative research, as defined by Creswell, contains emerging questions and procedures, findings typically collected in the participant’s setting, an examination of findings while inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the findings.<sup>197</sup> Referencing the researcher as the key instrument, Creswell further explained, “Qualitative researchers collect through examining documents.”<sup>198</sup> They may use protocol— an instrument for collecting findings— but the researchers are the ones who actually gather the information. They do not tend to use or rely on instruments developed by other researchers.<sup>199</sup> The qualitative

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<sup>195</sup> Gall, Gall, and Borg, *Educational Research: An Introduction*, 1.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods*, 4.

<sup>198</sup> Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 175.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

research presented here involves the application of inductive reasoning, a method through which a list of observations is integrated to bring forward a general principle.

The procedure of this study reflects an emerging design, identifying the appearance of theoretical categories from the findings.<sup>200</sup> Theoretical categories and hypotheses have not been developed apart from the research field, but have instead emerged from empirical discoveries.<sup>201</sup> These findings are utilized to inspire new ideas and insights in the area of collegiate violin curriculum, instead of exclusively applying previously formulated theories and models from the field.<sup>202</sup>

### **Procedure**

When identifying a process to examine a qualitative study, Creswell and Guetterman directed that it “should naturally follow from the research problem and questions that the researcher seeks to answer.”<sup>203</sup> Each collegiate violin method selected in this study was assessed through the specific criteria of scope, sequence, technique training, written theory, music reading skill development, ear training, composition, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Additionally, published commentary and interviews from the existing literature were reviewed for practical learning outcomes.

The procedural technique of theoretical sampling was conducted during the progression of this study. Corbin and Strauss have asserted, “Theoretical sampling is concept-driven. It enables researchers to discover the concepts that are relevant to this problem and population, and

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<sup>200</sup> Udo Kelle, “The Status of Theories and Models in Grounded Theory,” in *The SAGE Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory* (London: SAGE Publications, 2019), 77.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 74

<sup>203</sup> John W. Creswell and T.C. Guetterman, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (Boston: Pearson, 2019), 452.

allows researchers to explore the concepts in depth. Theoretical sampling is especially important when studying new or uncharted areas because it allows for discovery.”<sup>204</sup>

Throughout the process of the theoretical sampling of classical violin methodologies, it became evident that the writings of Auer, Flesch, and Galamian have had the greatest degree of impact on modern violin pedagogy at the collegiate level.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, methods written by and advocated for by these pedagogues were chosen for examination because of their influence on collegiate violin study throughout history. These methodologies presented a saturation of the categories being studied, with no new information emerging to further illuminate the properties of the chosen categories.

With regard to commercial violin methodologies, theoretical sampling was conducted in consultation with the latest commercial violin texts by preeminent violinists and authors. In addition, methodology highlighted and featured in the American String Teachers Association’s newest *String Syllabus*, published in 2009, was selected until saturation occurred through the comparison of available data and categories. As stated by David Littrell, “A committee of seventeen ASTA members, all teachers selected from public schools, universities, and private studios, compiled these instrumental lists.”<sup>206</sup> This publication includes an extensive section on alternative style methodology and repertoire, with experts in the field including Renata Bratt, Andrew H. Dabczynski, Christine Harrington, and Paula Zeitlin responsible for compilation. Ultimately, commercial methodologies by Liebermann, O’Connor, and Silverman were selected for examination in this qualitative research study.

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>205</sup> Arney, “A Comparison of the Violin Pedagogy,” 1.

<sup>206</sup> David Littrell, ed., *String Syllabus Volume One: 2009 Edition* (Fairfax: American String Teachers Association, 2009), v.

This study divides collected findings and evaluates them based on a specific set of criteria. In this work, the core area of focus is collegiate violin methodology. The areas that related to it in ways that are meaningful for the qualitative examination are scope, sequence, technique training, written theory, music reading skill development, ear training, composition, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Throughout the evaluation, this researcher constantly wrote memos to help stay within the substantive field of study. As Glaser proclaimed, “It is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions, and writing memos throughout the study. I say that qualitative data analysis is conducted concurrently with gathering data, making interpretations, and writing reports.”<sup>207</sup> Glaser also presented researchers with three fundamental questions of a qualitative study: “What is this data a study of? What category does this incident indicate? What is actually happening in the data?”<sup>208</sup> These questions were referenced during evaluation in this research.

Finally, the researcher conceptualized relationships among the areas in this study. Based on the research questions presented, the researcher hypothesized that when training with a traditional curriculum, the commercial violinist can be underprepared for commercial viability in the areas of ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. An additional hypothesis indicated that the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles through scope and sequence, technique training, and written theory skill development. After the evaluation process, the existing literature referenced in this study was further reviewed for practical learning outcomes.

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<sup>207</sup> Linda Liska Belgrave and Kapriskie Seide, “Coding for Grounded Theory,” in *The SAGE Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory* (London: SAGE Publications, 2019), 170.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

### Evaluation of Findings

A deductive qualitative approach to evaluation has been completed in this report. Creswell has addressed interpretation in qualitative research, emphasizing that qualitative researchers try to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under study.<sup>209</sup> Additionally, he has argued, “Qualitative research is a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear, and understand. Their interpretations cannot be separated from their own backgrounds, history, contexts, and prior understandings.”<sup>210</sup> The research process for this qualitative study was emergent, addressing the findings to obtain answers to the presented research questions. In addition, abundant descriptions were used to convey the results. Based on Creswell, “When qualitative researchers provide detailed descriptions of the setting or provide many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer.”<sup>211</sup> Ultimately, through an evaluation of the core area and areas that related to it in ways that are meaningful for the emerging theory, a twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum theory has been developed that references prior concepts and the deductive methods of this study.<sup>212</sup>

### Chapter Summary

This qualitative research study identified, examined, and compared current classical and commercial collegiate violin methodologies simultaneously as a framework for the development of a new hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum. The procedural technique of theoretical sampling was conducted during the progression of this study, before dividing collected findings and examining them through a set of precise areas. Through such examination,

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<sup>209</sup> Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 176.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 107.

collegiate violin methodologies studied were assessed through the specific criteria of scope, sequence, technique training, written theory, music reading skill development, ear training, composition, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Research for this study was completed through the collection of findings while searching for theoretical constructs, themes, and patterns that are grounded in the pedagogical theories and historical methodologies. From this, a hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum theory has been developed that incorporates elements of both classical and commercial music.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS**

With the understanding that there are diverse traditions for learning music on the violin, the purpose of this study is to answer research questions regarding current classical and commercial collegiate violin pedagogies. The theoretical sampling of classical violin methods has shown that the writings of Auer, Flesch, and Galamian have historically had the greatest degree of impact on modern violin pedagogy at the collegiate level.<sup>213</sup> Therefore, their methods are examined in this qualitative research study, along with commercial methodologies by preeminent violinists and authors including Liebermann, O'Connor, and Silverman. These theoretical samplings and deductive qualitative evaluations for the foundation for responses to the main research questions.

### **Association of Research Question One and Hypothesis One to Results**

RQ1: In which ways can the commercial violinist be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum?

H1: The commercial violinist can be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum in the areas of ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity.

The outcomes from the theoretical sampling that occurred in this project produced results that aligned with this initial hypothesis. The pedagogical resources and teachings of Auer, Flesch, and Galamian, all regularly used by collegiate violin students, include minimal direction in ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. While the writings of each traditional pedagogue acknowledged the requirement of ear training for violin, none provided detailed strategies for developing aural skills. Focusing instead on aural development through technique,

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<sup>213</sup> Arney, "A Comparison of the Violin Pedagogy," 1.



Auer encouraged attention to half-steps and double stops,<sup>214</sup> while Galamian concentrated on shifting.<sup>215</sup> Flesch considered aural skills critical, but he did not indicate specific modes of developing sensitive hearing when playing the violin.

Furthermore, the traditional pedagogues in this study demonstrated a rejection to the inclusion of improvisation within the violin curriculum. Instead, each methodology gave specific instruction in individuality within the areas of phrasing and nuance in Western classical music. Galamian specifically referenced “improvisation,” but exclusively in the context of interpretation.<sup>216</sup> Flesch moved the furthest in this area, publishing a work specifically on artistic realization and instruction. Similarly, this instruction fixated on the Western classical music tradition.

The skill of playing authentically within numerous genres of music was not included in the traditional pedagogy integrated in this study. For the traditional pedagogues, all theories and methodologies were grounded exclusively in the tradition of Western classical music, separate from Western folk music, commercial, or popular music traditions. Flesch’s teachings most distinctly discouraged the performance of groove-based playing and the embodiment of rhythmic pulse in performance.<sup>217</sup>

### **Ear Training**

While Auer does not broadly address ear training in his traditional methodology, he does advocate for practicing scales in double-stops, allowing students to pay close attention to

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<sup>214</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 38.

<sup>215</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 68.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>217</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 8.

functional intonation.<sup>218</sup> He also discussed ear training in the context of left-hand technique. Pursuant to Auer, “The best ‘natural good ear’ may become corrupted by negligence, and faulty intonation in the case of the half-steps – a very prevalent vice – is a menace against which you must especially be on your guard.”<sup>219</sup> It is evident that Auer ultimately desired aural training for students within the context of their lessons, emphatically exclaiming, “Purely verbal teaching, teaching which only explains by means of the spoken word, is dumb teaching!”<sup>220</sup> Moreover, he added, “The more conspicuously nature has gifted the young musical aspirant with a discriminating sense of hearing and a strong feeling for rhythm, the greater are his chances of reaching his goal.”<sup>221</sup>

Flesch’s traditional methodology does not acutely address ear training but initially discusses intonation in a theoretic and mathematic context. He stated, “According to the laws of acoustics, each tone or pitch has a precise number of vibrations. To play in tune would therefore mean that we touch the string at a place where, through the resulting shortening of the string, the mathematically correct number of vibrations is achieved.”<sup>222</sup> Nonetheless, he eventually contended, “We can therefore see that while theoretically it is possible to determine the exact number of vibrations for each pitch, we must, in practical music-making, rely solely on our ear, and make decisions case by case. This is of course one good additional reason to safeguard and take care of this valuable tool (our ear) for the sake of our art.”<sup>223</sup> In Flesch’s opinion, “A ‘good

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<sup>218</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 45.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>222</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 7.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

ear' for a violinist means first of all that he is able not only to hear any deviation from accurate pitch, but that such deviations create such a feeling of displeasure, that half-subconsciously and automatically, he attempts to correct it."<sup>224</sup> While Flesch considered this critical, he did not include specific modes of developing sensitive hearing when playing the violin.

Although the process of ear training is not specifically addressed within Ivan Galamian's traditional pedagogy, he recognized the role of the ear in performance. For example, in a discourse on shifting, Galamian declared, "The role of the ear is of the greatest importance for the successful performance of any shift. Be listening intently before the shift and by hearing, during the shift, the gradual approach to the new pitch, the ear most effectively supplements and supports the feeling of distance provided by the sense of touch."<sup>225</sup> In addition, he explained, "The building of good intonation rests mainly on the sense of touch in combination with the guidance of the ear."<sup>226</sup> For Galamian, aural skills support the focus of physicality in playing the violin. He acknowledged, "No violinist can play according to a mathematical formula; he can only follow the judgment of his own ear."<sup>227</sup>

Ear training is a primary concentration of Julie Lyonn Lieberman's commercial pedagogy. As defined by Lieberman, "Ear training is a process that focuses on pitch and interval recognition. It's also defined as a skill by which you learn to identify chords, rhythms, and other basic elements of music."<sup>228</sup> While Lieberman provided detailed and sequential instruction in standard ear training, she also communicated four components of aural recognition that are

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<sup>224</sup> Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing, Book 2: Artistic Realization and Instruction*, 8.

<sup>225</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 68.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>228</sup> Lieberman, *How to Play Contemporary Strings*, 10.

necessary to toggle between musical styles, improvise, and develop a unique signature voice on the violin.<sup>229</sup> These factors include the style of entry into, fulfillment of, and exit out of each note, ornamentation, inflection, and the mood or emotion that the music evokes.<sup>230</sup> As stated by Lieberman, “Each style of music has developed an intricate, sometimes extremely subtle, signature note-to-note approach to the contour of the whole phrase and its elements within. Learning to listen to details like the type of ornaments employed by a given style, where they’re placed within the rhythmic phrase, and how diverse or frequently they’re engaged, are important elements to take note of.”<sup>231</sup>

Lieberman’s methodology also introduces and develops four styles of listening. The first, defined as passive listening, is the ability to listen to music subconsciously. Lieberman alleged, “While this is not an attractive listening state for the musician, we do have to juggle a number of mental and physical tasks. If you allow passive listening to take over your practice sessions, don’t expect your mind to suddenly know how to focus on active listening during rehearsal or performance.”<sup>232</sup> In contrast, when listening actively, violinists audiate each note or phrase before playing it. Lieberman affirmed, “Even without perfect pitch we can duplicate what we hear by following pitch-to-pitch relationships, rhythmic phrasing, and the physical act of playing.”<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

Analytical listening, as described by Lieberman, is the “recognition of intervals, harmonies, and compositional or improvisational choices while listening to pieces of music.”<sup>234</sup> While this involves an ear-to-mind relationship that does not come naturally, Lieberman directed, “The ability to recognize the internal working parts within each melody or arrangement can support faster and more comprehensive memorization as well as compositional, improvisational, and ensemble skills.”<sup>235</sup> The final level of listening taught by Lieberman, and essential for ensemble playing, is layered listening. Lieberman stated, “If you only listen primarily to yourself while jamming, rehearsing, or performing with other musicians while you press their input into the background, you’ll miss out on a lot of opportunities to interact, co-create, and learn from everyone around you. Learning to listen to a number of layers of music simultaneously is particularly challenging for us string players, because we have to tune every pitch, but even intonation can improve when balancing our ears between solo and ensemble.”<sup>236</sup> For Lieberman, aural skills are at the center of violin performance. Additionally, listening to numerous styles of music for the learning of stylistic fundamentals is essential. She concluded, “If you find one style that particularly appeals to you, you can immerse yourself in that tradition by listening to as many traditional artists in that genre as possible, and taking lessons with a teacher who specializes in the style.”<sup>237</sup>

Although O’Connor’s method is primarily available as a print resource, ear training is a principal component of his pedagogy. O’Connor declared, “Listen to my lesson reference recording every day. Development of good violin playing depends on ear training. Sing or hum

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Lieberman, *The Contemporary Violinist*, 46.

the pieces, with or without the words. Listen to your favorite musicians play their music.”<sup>238</sup>

Additionally, O’Connor encouraged the performance of presented tunes after listening to the provided reference recordings, stating, “Music is a language and is best learned by imitating someone who speaks the language often like I do. Copying my intonation, tone and phrasing will develop a good foundation for future interpretations or creativity of your own.”<sup>239</sup> Noting that he is a product of America’s rich aural folk tradition, O’Connor encourages aural learning through his pedagogical voice.<sup>240</sup>

Ear training is also a primary consideration of Silverman’s methodology. He penned, “The first step in the process is to hear the groove, to be fully aware of it. Before you can play it, you have to know what it is you’re trying to play.”<sup>241</sup> It is then imperative to vocalize the groove before applying it to the violin. Silverman instructed, “When I say ‘Hum it,’ what I really mean is to sing the rhythm. Articulate all the downbeats, all the accents, and if you can, all the little ghosted Groovons in between. You should end up sounding like you’re beatboxing”<sup>242</sup> He then added, “It’s much more challenging to do this with a written rhythm than with a recording to imitate.”<sup>243</sup> Silverman emphasized learning stylistic elements of diverse genres through listening, as this was the method he personally used to discover commercial styles. He described, “All the music I heard around me outside of school—rock, jazz, film and TV scores—started opening my

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<sup>238</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Violin Method: Violin Book 1*, Eight Principles of the O’Connor Violin Method.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5*, Biography.

<sup>241</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, 63.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

ears and eyes to a wider world outside of my classical studies. I wanted to play music that people outside the classical world would like, music in my own contemporary musical language.”<sup>244</sup>

Concerning the development of aural skills, Silverman asserted, “The listening process of a musician is different from the listening experience of the audience. A musician has to listen forward as well as backward.”<sup>245</sup> His methodology guides students in developing skills necessary to think ahead, imagining sounds and hearing them specifically as if they are being played. According to Silverman, “This is called audiation. It’s the sound you shoot for: the ideal version of the pitch, tone, or phrasing in your imagination that you try to match with your instrument. The more vivid your imagination, the better your odds of recreating it.”<sup>246</sup>

The other form of listening taught by Silverman is the examination of the actual tangible sound being made by the instrument. He inquired, “Which notes are out of tune? Which notes stick out unintentionally? Which accents aren’t really as pronounced as you’d like them to be? Is the groove really as perfectly in time as you imagine it to be?”<sup>247</sup> Silverman also supports the recording of practice sessions as advantageous for personal assessment and to further develop ear training. He argued, “As musicians we are constantly situated within the dichotomy between the ideal sound in our head and the real sound on our instruments. We make instantaneous adjustments to pitch and tone all the time, trying to reshape our reality to match our ideal. When we split our attention equally between ideal and real, we can clearly hear what we’re not achieving.”<sup>248</sup> As he claimed, “Honest confrontations with shortcomings may not be as blissful

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., xvii.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

as ignoring them, but paying attention to reality allows us to adjust as quickly as possible.”<sup>249</sup>

The conscious and intentional emphasis on ear training, guided by Silverman and all the other commercial pedagogues contained in this study, impacts the comprehensive musicianship of the violinist.

### **Improvisation**

Auer’s traditional pedagogical resources do not address composition or improvisation. His closest allusion to composition is the presentation of his personal violin training experience. Auer contended, “Since there existed no special technical material for the left hand nor for the bow-arm, with the exception of the studies already mentioned, I invented some for myself; and, above all, I used passages from the different concertos and other pieces, passages of which I was not quite sure, as material for the extension and perfection of mechanism.”<sup>250</sup> Without labeling it as such, Auer personally made composition a part of his studies on the violin.

Although Auer’s methodology similarly does not include improvisation, it considers the individuality of each performer in the areas of phrasing and nuance. He explained, “His musical taste, his musical intelligence, his musical sense of proportion must guide him in his phrasing. No two artists phrase the same passage in exactly the same manner; their phrasing may be similar, yet there will always be delicate distinctions, minute variations, qualifications, differences due to their individual temperament, the individual quality of their inspiration, and – not to be forgotten – their knowledge and skill as well as their instinct.”<sup>251</sup> Auer continued, “The principle point for every student to bear in mind is that good phrasing presupposes an artistic building-up of musical interest looking forward to a climax. If he will remember this, and rely on

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>250</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 9.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 72.



his natural musical instinct, his good taste and feeling for proportionate values, he cannot go wrong.”<sup>252</sup>

Although Flesch additionally did not directly address training the violin student in composition or improvisation in his writings, he did publish a complete work on artistic realization and instruction. He remarked, “There are three main categories of human beings connected with the world of music: the composer or ‘creating’ musician, the ‘receiver’ who absorbs the music, and the ‘recreating’ musician who transmits the creation of the composer to the listener.”<sup>253</sup> Flesch’s pedagogical instruction is aimed at the recreating violinist. In his opinion, “He is in a way the synthesis or essence of both composer and listener, as he creates something alive by turning the notation of music into sound; written symbols become expression by adding his own awareness and sensitivity.”<sup>254</sup> It is clear that symbol comes before sound and expression in Flesch’s methodology, and his work considers rules that underlie the art of “recreating” and interpreting.<sup>255</sup>

Galamian’s pedagogical resources also do not address composition or improvisation. The closest allusion to improvisation is made when presenting the concept of relative values within interpretation. According to Galamian, relative values “deal with the interpretive side of the performance. Interpretation, as the word itself implies, contains a strong subjective element, namely, the performer’s personal conception of what the music should sound like. Since this subjective element is vitally influenced by taste, style, and fashion, interpretation has to be

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>253</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing Book 2: Artistic Realization and Instruction*, 1.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

classified as a changeable value.”<sup>256</sup> Continuing to address interpretation, Galamian advised, “The best performance always partakes of the nature of an improvisation in which the artist is moved by the music he plays, forgets about technique, and abandons himself with improvisatory freedom to the inspiration of the moment.”<sup>257</sup> He further informed, “The improvisational element music must not be overdone, and a player who is not yet musically and technically matured must beware of letting his emotions run wild during a performance.”<sup>258</sup>

While Lieberman’s resources briefly addressed compositional skills, improvisation is a central component of her pedagogy. On the subject of creating variations on a riff, Lieberman advised, “Once you feel comfortable with a riff you like, and can move it through the twelve keys as you hear, visualize, and track the interval relationships, you can use the riff as a tool to develop your compositional – and improvisational – skills.”<sup>259</sup> In a complete detailed text exclusively on improvisation, Lieberman proposed sequential exercises to use in developing mastery over the technical and theoretical aspects of improvisation. In addition, she emphasized the musical and imaginative side of improvisational development, remarking, “Nothing can replace the aural process; this is how you learned to speak as a child. Listen to improvising musicians as often as you can, whether recorded or live. Even study their solos by learning them note for note – first vocally, and then on the violin. This is not for the sake of imitation; it is for the purpose of learning how advanced improvisers hear, phrase, interpret, thread from chord change to chord change, and so on.”<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 23.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>259</sup> Julie Lyonn Lieberman, *Twelve-Key Practice* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2018), 94.

<sup>260</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, 47.

Lieberman also integrated several specific strategies in building bridges into improvisation. For example, she noted, “Explore as many textural sounds as you can possibly find. Start with your bowing arm by experimenting with the juxtaposition of pressure from the index finger with bow speed, and amount of hair used. Then switch to your left hand: try different combinations of speed and pressure for finger to finger motion.”<sup>261</sup> Moreover, she explained, “Choose a key and a scale type or mode, and create a lengthy improvisation using that scale. Each time you hit a plateau and start to feel bored, if you stay with it, you will discover new ideas.”<sup>262</sup> Lieberman’s pedagogical works, especially *Improvising Violin*, provide violinists with comprehensive resources with which they can develop their improvisational abilities.<sup>263</sup> She contended, “The violin is a versatile and expressive instrument and can do everything a voice or horn can do in improvisation. Since most violinists have been limited to learning how to play from sheet music, their mental and physical training has fostered a ‘follow the dots’ approach rather than one of origination.”<sup>264</sup>

Although Mark O’Connor’s pedagogy does not address compositional skills, like Lieberman, improvisation is a significant element. The learning pages of his resources encourage individual creativity through the inclusion of improvisation suggestions and exercises.<sup>265</sup> In addition, his teaching states that the understanding of musical form and how a piece is structured is essential to the development of improvisation.<sup>266</sup> A specific example of this can be found in

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<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, 47.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., vii.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>265</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Violin Method: Violin Book I*, Eight Principles of the O’Connor Violin Method.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

O'Connor's presentation of Eck Robertson's *Sallie Gooden*, of which he wrote, "Measure 61 begins a series of variations on the one-measure *Sallie Gooden* phrase. An almost endless selection of variations can be chosen for this phrase during improvisation, indicating how many fiddlers end up with their own version of this venerable American fiddle tune."<sup>267</sup> This is followed by a series of ideas to attempt that exist beyond Robertson's original performance, leading to the development of further ideas from students through improvisation.

Similarly, Silverman specified that violins are "capable of every shade of articulation, from the pure percussion of the vertical strokes to sustained singing tones. With great power comes great responsibility, and it's our obligation as string players to figure out how to use that huge range of sound for the greater groove."<sup>268</sup> While all of the techniques presented by Silverman can be used in compositional settings, his methodology emphasizes the art of improvisation.

Sequentially starting from the initial stages of improvisation, Silverman's work offers realistic goals for students. According to Silverman, "Rhythmic improvisation is an easy entry point for more traditional melodic improvisation. Solos don't need to be filled with tons of different notes to be wonderful. You can say a lot with just a few notes. Most drum solos use only a few different pitches but lots of interesting rhythms. This can have enormous emotional and musical impact."<sup>269</sup> Silverman's resources also guide students who are more experienced in groove-based performance to explore. He included, "Be flexible. Follow your hunches. But be discreet – learn how to try things quietly with dampening and ghosting until you are sure of them. Venture back and forth between vertical chops and horizontal shuffles. See what works

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<sup>267</sup> O'Connor, *O'Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5*, 55.

<sup>268</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, 138.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

best. Or just change it up to keep it fresh.”<sup>270</sup> Improvisation is clearly central to Silverman’s pedagogy. He affirmed, “The only actual rule in all of this is don’t disturb the groove.”<sup>271</sup>

### **Authenticity of Diverse Styles**

Auer performed and taught solely in the tradition of formal Western classical music, distinct from Western folk music or popular music traditions. Although Auer praised stylistic authenticity, it was exclusive to the classical idiom. According to Auer, “Art begins where technique ends. But in interpretation, art and nature are twins. The violinist who listens to nature and develops his nuance of interpretation out of her teaching will never become a violinistic automat. For nature, ever changing, ever showing us some new mood, some new phase of her inexhaustible self, is the fountain-head of variety in expression.”<sup>272</sup> In such ways, Auer advocated for and taught students musicality and diversity in expression. Nonetheless, this diversity of sound and expression was explored exclusively within the Western classical music tradition.

Flesch’s traditional pedagogy does not consider diverse style authenticity on the violin. Like Auer, Flesch performed and taught exclusively in the tradition of formal Western classical music, distinct from Western folk music or popular music traditions. He remarked, “The main challenge, as far as the art of musical performance is concerned, consists of bringing into harmony the composer’s intentions with the free expression of one’s own individuality.”<sup>273</sup> Flesch believed that a violinist needed to be a complete technical master of the instrument and have a personality able to capture an audience in order to present a musical work in a convincing

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>272</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 67.

<sup>273</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing, Book 2: Artistic Realization and Instruction*, 8.

manner.<sup>274</sup> He described a “cultivated musician” as one who is “knowledgeable in the laws of musical form, harmony, meter, rhythm, ornamentation, articulation, dynamics, tempo, phrasing, and different musical styles.”<sup>275</sup>

Nonetheless, Flesch was steadfast in his focused study of classical music, outside the realm of groove-based and diverse style performance. To exemplify this, he discouraged the embodiment of rhythmic pulse in performance, stating, “The habit which beginners often have of beating time with the foot becomes a detrimental factor for the advanced player. This bad habit is not only acoustically disturbing, by forcing the player into a ‘must-stay-in-time’ approach, but also it inhibits all imagination, and nips any yearning for free interpretation and rubato in the bud.”<sup>276</sup> Flesch’s teaching was clear that the “essence of real artistry is combining faithfulness to the directions of the composer with insightful musical knowledge on the basis of which one’s own decisions have to be made as to how to give the most valid musical interpretation.”<sup>277</sup> With detailed direction given to compositions by composers such as Bach, Mozart, Viotti, Beethoven, Spohr, Mendelssohn, Vieuxtemps, Schumann, Brahms, and Nardini, it is evident that his methodology is grounded exclusively in Western classical music.

Galamian’s traditional pedagogy is also solely grounded in the tradition of formal Western classical music, distinct from Western folk music, commercial, or popular music traditions. Although Galamian praised individuality, it was limited to the classical idiom. Musical examples from his methodology range from Bach, Brahms, and Beethoven to Lalo, Wieniawski, and Bruch. Galamian professed, “The teacher must realize that every student is an

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 124.

individual with his own personality, his own characteristic physical and mental make-up, his own approach to the instrument and to music.”<sup>278</sup> Nonetheless, he explored these individualistic approaches exclusively within the Western classical music.

Stylistic diversity and authenticity are paramount to Lieberman’s commercial pedagogy. She introduced five basic parameters that define the authentic performance of a musical style on the violin: pressure, speed, duration, method of entry, and method of departure. Within this context, Lieberman conveyed, “Students should experiment with drawing fast long bows or slow short bows on notes with the same time values to create completely different expressive effects.”<sup>279</sup> Moreover, she advised, “Students can practice paying attention to how they start and end notes and phrases, and experiment with the difference between staccato, legato, loud, soft, tapered (fade up, fade down), sudden changes, and gradual ones. To help your students understand how the same melody can be totally altered depending upon the context in which it is played, it can be interesting to teach, for example, an Irish tune, and then how students play that tune against different accompaniments, such as rock, calypso, and jazz.”<sup>280</sup> Using these strategies, students begin to interpret tunes differently in response to the rhythmic environments created by each accompaniment.<sup>281</sup>

Lieberman also taught four critical components for authenticity of style in violin playing. After listening to a specific performance style, students are directed to convey the groove through the bow hand, include style-specific ornamentation, duplicate articulation and phrasing,

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<sup>278</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 1.

<sup>279</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 20.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

and learn the parameters of what is acceptable pertaining to improvisation in that style.<sup>282</sup>

Without these focus areas, Lieberman alleged, “You will sound classical on everything you attempt – or, if you come from a particular roots tradition, you will tend to sound like that genre.”<sup>283</sup> On her authority, “The inclusion of bowed string instruments in styles worldwide can be traced back for centuries in one form or other. We can thank the recording industry, the Internet, radio, television, publishers, and a handful of educational pioneers and eclectic performing artists for a growing interest in including the art of improvisation and multi-styles into the mainstream of string pedagogy.”<sup>284</sup> With studies published on old-time fiddling, bluegrass, Cajun, Franco-American, western swing, blues, jazz, rock, and various world styles, Lieberman provides extensive training in diverse style authenticity.

O’Connor’s pedagogy also relies on stylistic diversity and authenticity. He stated, “Acquiring an understanding of the many styles of music that comprise our rich and diverse musical heritage provides relevance to our own musical development.”<sup>285</sup> Styles including hoedown, nineteenth-century African-American spiritual, ragtime, Strathspey, swing, jazz, folk, old-time, Texas fiddling, and bluegrass are incorporated throughout O’Connor’s method. He declared, “My approach to everything – whether it is composing a concerto, arranging a fiddle tune, recording with a jazz vocalist, or performing as the leader of a string trio – implicates an appreciation for the diversity and creativity inherent in American music and, in particular, American string music. Blues, hoedowns, ragtime, spirituals, folk songs, and jazz tunes not only

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<sup>282</sup> Lieberman, *How to Play Contemporary Strings*, 40.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 6.

<sup>285</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Violin Method: Violin Book I*, Eight Principles of the O’Connor Violin Method.



shine on their own but also lend themselves to reinterpretation, rearrangement, improvisation, and adaptation to a variety of settings and other styles.”<sup>286</sup>

O’Connor further noted the incorporation of classical music in his method, adding to the stylistic diversity that his pedagogy displays. For example, his caprices directly reference and quote those of Paganini. Referencing his sixth caprice, O’Connor wrote, “The slurs at bar 170 refer to Paganini’s twelfth caprice, and the double-stops that end the piece are reminiscent of the master’s thirteenth.”<sup>287</sup> Bach’s Violin Sonatas and Partitas are also incorporated in O’Connor’s instruction, through the inclusion of *Violin Sonata No. 1 in G minor*. O’Connor stated, “I have included the piece in its original form as well as my reinterpretation of it, which incorporates bowings, fingerings, articulations, tempo, rhythms, and syncopation informed by bluegrass, Texas fiddling, and old-time styles.”<sup>288</sup> In such ways, his methodology encourages students to re-envision classical masterpieces and commercial tunes without sacrificing musical integrity. O’Connor proclaimed, “My version serves as an invitation to students to develop their own interpretations.”<sup>289</sup>

Stylistic diversity is likewise fundamental to Silverman’s commercial pedagogy. Referencing strum bowing, he wrote, “Subdivision is foundational to folk fiddling, a style in which the violin is sometimes the only accompaniment for dances.”<sup>290</sup> He also noted bebop jazz drumming and “comp” piano playing, in teaching his method. Moreover, Silverman declared, “Whether it’s swing, rock, or hip hop, the idea that string players sound square is not going to go

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<sup>286</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5*, Foreword.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, 8.

away unless they actually learn how to groove.”<sup>291</sup> While popular styles are included in Silverman’s teachings, like O’Connor, he also incorporates the classical music of Bach. Silverman inquired, “What if Bach was physicalizing the groove and creating a steady strum, complete with ghosted notes and accents?”<sup>292</sup> In seeking an answer, he hypothesized, “I like to think Bach’s underlying goal with the solo sonatas was simply to create something fun – enjoyable pieces that a violinist could play at home. These well-crafted pieces are malleable enough to be played over and over again with countless interpretations, providing a lifetime of fascination.”<sup>293</sup>

### **Association of Research Question Two and Hypothesis Two to Results**

RQ2: In which ways can the structure of classical violin pedagogy impact the learning of commercial violin styles?

H2: The structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles through scope and sequence, technique training, and written theory skill development.

As exhibited through the analysis of RQ1, the theoretical sampling in this project also produced results aligned with the initial RQ2 hypothesis. Each traditional methodology explored in this study demonstrated a detailed scope and sequence, primarily through the lens of students’ technical development on the violin. Each pedagogue also insisted on and developed a pristine technique to allow students to perform with musical expression. With repertoire and developmental resources available for centuries within the classical music idiom, Auer and Flesch included specific suggested sequences of their study for collegiate students, and Galamian

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<sup>291</sup> Ibid., xv.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

emphasized the importance of the live student-teacher relationship when sequencing studies for individual students.

While the traditional methodologies examined grounded their individual scopes in the technical development of violin playing, the commercial pedagogues focused on diverse style authenticity and performance. The commercial methodologies sampled in this study were impacted by traditional pedagogy in the category of sequencing. Lieberman, O'Connor, and Silverman all exhibited sequencing in their presentations, but most notably in the categories of tune arrangement, improvisation, and groove development. Nonetheless, they did not offer specific sequences of comprehensive repertoire to study, instead noting the need for a simple, unified approach to commercial pedagogy.<sup>294</sup>

For Auer, Flesch, and Galamian, the area of primary pedagogical concern is technique training. Each traditional methodology exhibited a detailed focus on setup, right-hand technique, and left-hand technique. All pedagogues detailed holding the bow, using the bow, bow changes, string crossings, bow division and distribution, and bow strokes obligatory to the classical music idiom. Moreover, they all addressed the vertical and horizontal movement of the fingers of the left hand, shifting, double stops, and trills. While setup, left-hand position, and right-hand position are briefly included in the methodologies of Lieberman and O'Connor, none of the commercial pedagogues included the foundational detail in technique delivered by the traditional methodologies. Any sparse technical training included by Lieberman, Silverman, and O'Connor is specific to commercial music styles.

Finally, the traditional methodologies examined in this study all teach and analyze exercises and compositions through written notation. The teachings of Auer, Flesch, and

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid., iii.

Galamian all ardently support the detailed practice of written exercises and music from the classical repertory, which is transmitted through a written tradition. In contrast, while the commercial methodologies all use supplementary traditional notation, they consistently place an emphasis on aural learning.

### Scope and Sequence

The scope Auer's pedagogical violin method is to inspire in each pupil the will to achieve maximum potential and self-expression on the instrument.<sup>295</sup> From Auer's perspective, the unique attribute of his pedagogy is the inclusion of the mental factor. He argued, "By no means enough stress has ever been laid on the importance of mental work, on the activity of the brain which must control that of the fingers. And yet, unless one is capable of hard mental labor and prolonged concentration, it is a waste of time to undertake the complicated task of mastering an instrument as difficult as the violin."<sup>296</sup>

Auer's sequence to achieve mastery on the violin begins with clear attention to detail in setup and continues with a repertory series that concludes with Paganini's twenty-fourth *Caprice* and *Perpetuum Mobile*.<sup>297</sup> Regarding setup, he noted, "It is impossible to overestimate the importance of the first elementary steps in the long process of mastering the violin. There is no instrument whose absolute mastery at a later period presupposes such meticulous care and exactitude in the initial stages of study as does the violin."<sup>298</sup> At all levels of study, including the college level, holding the instrument as it should be held is a prerequisite to all further

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<sup>295</sup> Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin*, 228.

<sup>296</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, ix.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

development.<sup>299</sup> Moreover, right- and left-hand fluidity are taught in sequence and are essential for professional success. Auer reported, “The shape and conformation of the left hand are also responsible for the lack of success of a great number of students who seem otherwise well endowed.”<sup>300</sup>

Auer included two detailed sequences for the formation of violin students, one that he experienced and one that he recommended. He provided a practical repertory sequence beginning with Kreutzer’s 40 *Etudes* and the 24 *Caprices* by Rode and continuing through works by composers such as Spohr, Dont, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Bach, Tartini, and Wieniawski.<sup>301</sup> The sequence he imparted for practice relies on assessment. He conveyed, “When they practice without observing and criticizing themselves they merely develop and perfect their faults.”<sup>302</sup>

The scope presented by Flesch is particularly notable for this study. He explained, “Not infrequently, teachers are satisfied with proclaiming traditional tenets as unchangeable truths. But there is a good deal of wisdom in the saying by Gustav Mahler ‘Tradition means slovenliness.’”<sup>303</sup> Defining his scope, Flesch continued, “My aim has been to create clarity about those subjects which most violinists hitherto have dealt with only instinctively or in a traditional manner. In this way I am hoping to narrow the gap between the insufficient violinistic accomplishments of the many and the outstanding ones of the very few surpassing talents. For

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>303</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, vi.

this we need a body of thoughtful teachers capable of improving the average standards in our profession.”<sup>304</sup>

Sequentially, Flesch offered his methodology in three distinct categories: general technique, applied technique, and artistic realization. General technique refers to the development of the mechanics of both arms for “producing all that is possible on the violin in a faultlessly reliable manner.”<sup>305</sup> When students use general technique to execute technical difficulties within a musical work, Flesch would consider this applied technique.<sup>306</sup> Referring to artistic realization, Flesch commented, “Only if one has command of a perfect technique, and is able to use it successfully and appropriately, can one achieve the freedom of spirit and soul to abandon oneself to the music and to let musical expression predominate over the technical aspect which then serves the musical and artistic ends.”<sup>307</sup>

Flesch also demonstrated clear sequencing through his *Scale System* supplement to *The Art of Violin Playing* and his suggested sequence of étude books. With regard to scale study, he suggested sequential practice of scales on one string, within the compass of one octave, three octaves, double-stop thirds, sixths, octaves, fingered octaves, and tenths.<sup>308</sup> In Flesch’s *Scale System*, he “endeavored to conduct the daily study of rigid, general technical formulas along regulated systematic paths, in order to prevent the pupil from favoring one variety in preference to another; in other words, to compel him to divide his study equally between the usual and most

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid., 84.

necessary technical combinations.”<sup>309</sup> Flesch successively recommended practicing scales with a détaché stroke in the lower half of the bow, détaché stroke in the upper half of the bow, string changes in both the lower and upper halves, and fast small strokes near the frog, middle, and point of the bow.<sup>310</sup> He sequenced the study of étude books from Kreutzer, Fiorillo, Rode, and Sauzey to Schradieck, Wieniawski, Sauret, Paganini, and Ernst.<sup>311</sup>

In defining the scope of his method, Galamian contended, “Putting a system into a book, even writing a book like this, is a problematical undertaking because no printed work can ever replace the live student-teacher relationship.”<sup>312</sup> Nonetheless, he penned, “What a book can do is help. It can do so by mapping out the general principles as such, and by trying to clarify many of the problems involved.”<sup>313</sup> Based on Galamian’s methodology, “The key to facility and accuracy and, ultimately, to complete mastery of violin technique is to be found in the relationship of mind to muscles, that is, in the ability to make the sequence of mental command and physical response as quick and as precise as possible.”<sup>314</sup> For Galamian, this is the fundamental principle of violin technique that provides the foundation for his sequential methodology.

Galamian advocated for clear sequencing, which is visible in his preceding statement. In addition, he wrote, “The foundation upon which the building of technique rests, as mentioned shortly heretofore, lies in the correct relationship of the mind to the muscles, the smooth, quick and accurate functioning of the sequence in which the mental command elicits the desired

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<sup>309</sup> Carl Flesch, *Scale System: Scale Exercises in All Major and Minor Keys for Daily Study* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1987), Preface.

<sup>310</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 84.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>312</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 18.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

muscular response.”<sup>315</sup> With tone, pitch, and rhythm defined as the basic elements of all music, Galamian instructed that violin technique must be founded on these three elements in terms of beauty of tone, accuracy of intonation, and precision of rhythmic control.<sup>316</sup> He sequenced the study of the violin, leading to successful performance, through the physical, mental, and aesthetic-emotional factors. Galamian did not personally provide a detailed sequence of standard repertoire to study in his writings. Instead, he promoted individuality. According to Galamian, “The decision of how and when to do all of these things, however, will have to be based on considered judgment of the student’s personality. This is why it is so important that the attitude of the teacher be a very personal one and, of concomitant importance, that he analyze the character of every student correctly.”<sup>317</sup>

Sequencing can be observed in Galamian’s *Contemporary Violin Technique*, as he integrated scales and arpeggios with a unique system of bowing and rhythm patterns. He noted, “Since technical mastery depends more upon control of mind over muscle than upon mere agility of fingers, the direct way to such mastery lies through working procedures which present a constant challenge to the student’s thinking process. For this reason, new problems must always be faced and solved. To provide such new problems in almost inexhaustible supply is the chief purpose of these patterns.”<sup>318</sup>

Lieberman was one of the first pedagogues to make developments in teaching improvisation and world music at the Julliard School. While the methodology she created was

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<sup>315</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 27.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>318</sup> Ivan Galamian and Frederick Neumann, *Contemporary Violin Technique* (St. Louis: Galaxy Music Corporation, 1977), Preface.



abundant and diverse, she established a principle scope of an inclusive approach to violin education, lobbying for a pedagogical model that “embraces the musical imagination of the world honoring creativity and tradition alike, while incorporating today’s technological advances and respecting tradition.”<sup>319</sup> She noted, “I think the string player of the twenty-first century is one who is in touch with his or her creativity and is not only adept at a number of styles, but has also brewed and finely stirred their own amalgam to play from an individualized voice – whether traditional, classical, innovative, or all three.”<sup>320</sup> Lieberman’s diverse pedagogy offers varied approaches to serve the personal visions of students and what wish to create and experience on their instruments.

Because there are numerous resources available from Lieberman, her pedagogical sequencing can be assessed through a variety of lenses. Her first text, *Blues Fiddle*, introduced blues technique and theory before presenting the styles of early blues, second-, and third-generation blues fiddlers. In her opinion, “Since the blues is the parent of R&B, swing, jazz, bluegrass, rock, and many other areas of contemporary music, learning the blues is an essential stepping stone to these more sophisticated improvisationally-based musical forms.”<sup>321</sup>

In sequencing the learning of improvisation, Lieberman’s method began with melodic improvisation before moving to improvisation based on tonal center, tonal center with leading tones, chord changes, and a consortium of all four. In the early stages, Lieberman encouraged, “If you can’t hear the melody in your inner ear, stop playing and wait until you can. Go a little at a time until you can play more and more complex versions of the melody without losing track of

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<sup>319</sup> Lieberman, *How to Play Contemporary Strings*, 5.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Julie Lyonn Lieberman, *Blues Fiddle* (New York: Oak Publications, 2014), 6.

it in your inner ear.”<sup>322</sup> She further instructed, “As you become stronger at effectively using each of the four approaches to improvisation outlined above, you will experience a natural integration of the activity of your listening with your technique and knowledge of theory.”<sup>323</sup>

Lieberman introduced her trilateral learning system to aid in the sequencing of practice and learning music on the violin. Based on her teaching, “Analytical memory is the ability to look at or hear a musical passage and understand the scaffolding upon which it has been built, such as how the notes relate to the key, to the chords, and to the overall length and organization.”<sup>324</sup> Next, Lieberman defined imagistic memory as “the ability to picture yourself practicing your instrument without moving your body.”<sup>325</sup> Finally, she described auditory memory as “the ability to hear the melody in the inner ear separate from bowing the instrument.”<sup>326</sup> When approaching material drawing on this sequential and balanced approach, students can master material more quickly and reduce potential tension about possible mistakes.<sup>327</sup>

As a young man, O’Connor studied with commercial violin legends such as Benny Thomasson and Stéphané Grapelli. Although he wrote a violin method that focuses on commercial music, he views the scope of his methodology as an evolution of American classical music.<sup>328</sup> As explained by O’Connor, “I have encountered thousands of students of all ages and abilities at concerts, workshops, college/conservatory/university seminars and fiddle camps and

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<sup>322</sup> Lieberman, *The Contemporary Violinist*, 22.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>324</sup> Lieberman, *How to Play Contemporary Strings*, 12.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Violin Method: Violin Book I*, Foreword.

have found repeatedly that students do not want to be ‘left out’ of the great sounds and energy of fiddling and jazz because they wish to become fine classical players. It is my firm belief that the new American classical music will embrace the totality of our rich history of violin playing, and it is my sincere hope that my Method will further this process and perpetuate love for the violin.”<sup>329</sup> Moreover, concerning the scope of his pedagogy, O’Connor noted, “American pieces of music are meant to be recreated, not just replicated. American music comprises of what I believe to be the richest, most diverse, and most exciting body of material in the world, and the O’Connor Method harnesses it to promote mastery of technique as well as individual creativity and expression like never before.”<sup>330</sup>

While O’Connor’s methodology is available for early students of the violin, he has also made pedagogy available for collegiate-level students. Sequencing is clear in the presentation of O’Connor’s complete methodology. He emphasized, “In the early books, students will learn simplified arrangements of more advanced music which will appear later in the method. Many of my own compositions such as *Appalachia Waltz* and *The Fiddle Concerto*, appear in the early books in a form accessible to beginners. Students revisiting these and other pieces at a higher technical and musical level some years down the road will find themselves coming full circle with their own earliest years of wonderment and fascination with the violin.”<sup>331</sup> O’Connor firmly encouraged the study of the included pieces in the order in which they are presented, stating, “The tunes are organized in a carefully planned sequence designed to layer new skills on top of established ones. Keep playing all the material learned. This method is cumulative not just linear.

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5*, Foreword.

<sup>331</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Violin Method: Violin Book 1*, Foreword.

Practice a piece until it is ‘easy,’ not just until you believe it is ‘correct.’”<sup>332</sup> O’Connor’s methodology concludes with a presentation of caprices, akin to those of Paganini and Locatelli.<sup>333</sup> He asserted, “The violinist will find passages containing complex rhythms, broken chord arpeggios, two-handed pizzicato, various spiccato and double-stopped runs.”<sup>334</sup>

In reference to commercial music, Silverman has reported, “I started out at The Julliard School hoping to be the next Jascha Heifetz and left wanting to be the next Jimi Hendrix.”<sup>335</sup> Through his *Strum Bowing* methodology, he sets the scope of guiding students “towards the overarching natural law of every groove-based style of music: the primacy of the subdivision of the beat. And on strings, subdivision is all about the bow.”<sup>336</sup> According to Silverman, “This area of post-classical string playing is so new that a comprehensive pedagogy hasn’t yet been developed, and there is a palpable need for a simple, unified approach.”<sup>337</sup>

Silverman’s sequential pedagogy is exclusive to groove-based string playing. For learning new grooves, he asserted, “If you can say it, you can play it.”<sup>338</sup> Objectively, violinists are directed to get new grooves in the voice, body, and brain and then on the instrument.<sup>339</sup> As Silverman stated, “The groove proficiency system for strings is effective because you first learn

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<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Mark O’Connor, *O’Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 6* (New York: Mark O’Connor Musik International, 2021), Foreward.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, xvii.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., iii.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

the groove viscerally through physical and verbal repetition, and then you activate your intellect with specific bow directions.”<sup>340</sup>

### Technique Training

Auer’s area of primary pedagogical focus is technique training. He has provided detailed and sequential writings on setup, tone production, bowing, left-hand technique, double stops, ornaments, and harmonics. Instead of focusing on the physicality of tone production, Auer chose to concentrate on quality instruction. Before detailed technical considerations, he noted, “I stress the importance of competent teaching in connection with the subject of tone production because the acquisition of a pure, lovely tone is emphatically a matter of instructive development, and it is so largely within the power of the teacher to foster or destroy its latent possibilities in his pupils, that he is anything but a negligible factor in its attainment.”<sup>341</sup>

In the category of bowing, Auer provided detailed instruction in the *détaché*, *martelé*, *staccato*, *flying staccato*, *spiccato sautillé*, *ricochet-saltato*, *tremolo*, *arpeggio*, and *legato* bow strokes. He approached left-hand fingering technique and shifting through diatonic and chromatic scales and exercises. Advocating for Schradiek’s *Scales* and *School of Violin Technique* in addition to Happich’s *Scales and Chord Studies for Violin*, Auer noted, “First play the scale in compass of one octave only, paying the greatest attention to your intonation. If your teacher is really conscientious, he will not pass over a single false note, and you will thus become accustomed from the very start to watch yourself while you are working with him.”<sup>342</sup> Auer also proposed the study of scales in thirds, fourths, sixths, simple octaves, fingered octaves, and tenths. He explained, “The young violinist will find in *Scale Studies in Double Stops*, by

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<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>342</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 38.

Alexander Bloch, and in H. Schradiek's *School of Technique, Book II*, valuable collections of material."<sup>343</sup>

Like Auer, Flesch's area of primary pedagogical focus is technique training. According to Flesch, "Only complete, intellectual, and physical mastery of all those individual disciplines, which are included in the overall concept of technique, can give us assurance of being able to realize our artistic intentions. Without a healthy body, the soul cannot develop fully; so also do our expressive powers depend, first of all, on the type and scope of our technical abilities."<sup>344</sup> Thus, he detailed body posture, the left arm, and the right arm before teaching applied technique. The level of detail Flesch considered in body posture is evident as he explained, "Placed on the collarbone, and to some extent on the left shoulder, it is kept in place by the left lower jaw, and just lightly supported by the left hand, for which we need to preserve, after all the greatest freedom for shifting."<sup>345</sup> In advocating for the use of a shoulder pad, Flesch instructed, "We have to consider that the ribs of the violin only measure from two to three centimeters in thickness, while the space between the lower jaw and collarbone, commonly considered the length of the neck, measures four to eight centimeters."<sup>346</sup>

Specific to the left hand, Flesch advised, "Each finger should fall on the string with its own natural impetus. I consider that the lifting of the fingers in an exaggerated fashion or 'flinging' them onto the string is a detrimental squandering of strength. This makes fluency and the elastic, unforced lifting and falling motions necessary for the paying of rapid passages

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<sup>343</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>344</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 164.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

practically impossible.”<sup>347</sup> Flesch promoted securing a firm feeling within each position before shifting is studied through resources such as Sevcik’s *School of Violin Technique*.<sup>348</sup> As specified by Flesch, “Shifting constitutes the most challenging part of all left-hand technique. Up to the fourth position, only the forearm is involved; from that point on, the upper arm, hand and thumb are also involved, with the other fingers participating in a more passive way.”<sup>349</sup>

Flesch further addressed the cohesion of right- and left-hand technique through concepts such as string changes. He explained, “There are two reasons why one so rarely hears smooth string changes: one, is the tendency of the right arm to execute angular and excessively expansive motions, the other, is that extremely accurate coordination between left hand and right arm is required. Flesch reported on right-hand development through segments on holding the bow, use of the bow, bow changes, string changes, bow division and distribution, long and short strokes, bouncing bow strokes, and mixed bowings. He added, “While the main task of the left arm, hand and fingers is to determine pitch and to infuse notes with inner life, the task of the right arm consists primarily in setting the string into uninterrupted oscillation or vibration, and to determine the dynamic and agogic properties, in other words, the loudness and duration of the notes.”<sup>350</sup>

Galamian’s area of primary pedagogical focus was also technique training. He conveyed, “Technique is the ability to direct mentally and to execute physically all of the necessary playing movements of left and right hands, arms, and fingers. A complete technique means the development of all of the elements of the violinistic skill to the highest level. In short, it is the

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid., 34.

complete mastery over all of the potentialities of the instrument.”<sup>351</sup> In building technique on the violin, Galamian insisted on the focus of the correct relationship of the mind to the muscles, “the smooth, quick, and accurate functioning of the sequence in which the mental command elicits the desired muscular response.”<sup>352</sup>

Addressing posture and the manner in which to hold the violin, Galamian again promoted individuality, stating, “How to stand or to sit should not be the object of exact prescriptions other than that the player should feel at ease. Likewise, there should not be any exact rule given as to how to hold the instrument.”<sup>353</sup> Nonetheless, Galamian detailed ways in which to hold the instrument, noting specifics of the left arm, wrist, hand, fingers, and thumb. In describing movements of the left hand, he included vertical and horizontal movement of the fingers, string crossings, sliding motion of the fingers and hand, vibrato movements, intonation, and timing. Special left-hand technical problems involve shifting, double stops, trills, left-hand pizzicato, harmonics, and chromatic glissandi. Galamian posited, “The principle that correctly applies this whole matter designates the fingers as the determining factor. They have to be placed in such a way as to allow them the most favorable conditions for their various actions. Once this is done, everything else – thumb, hand, arm – will subsequently find its corresponding natural position.”<sup>354</sup>

Galamian referenced right-hand technique as a system of springs, reacting similarly to mechanical springs. He conveyed, “Violinistically they are partly artificial (such as the resilience of the bow hair and the flexibility of the bow stick) and partly natural (such as the joints of the

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<sup>351</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 25.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.



shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers, and thumb).”<sup>355</sup> For Galamian and his students, the bow hand is dynamic. He emphasized, “It is subject to constant modification as the bow moves from one end to the other and as the player changes his dynamics, bowing styles, and tonal qualities.”<sup>356</sup> He also taught that the straight bow stroke from frog to tip is the foundation of all bowing technique. As Galamian reported, “The bow has to be drawn in a straight line, parallel to the bridge, for two good reasons. One is that a crooked bow stroke causes the bow to change promiscuously its place of contact on the string and to vary at random its distance from the bridge. The second reason is that a crooked bow stroke impairs the quality of the sound.”<sup>357</sup> Finally, defining the three main components of bowing technique as speed, pressure, and sounding point, Galamian provided detailed instruction on bow strokes including *détaché*, *fouetté*, *martelé*, *collé*, *spiccato*, and *ricochet*.

In contrast, technique training on the violin is not a central focus of Lieberman’s commercial pedagogy. While she did not address topics such as set up, left-hand position, or right-hand position with the same depth or complexity as the traditional pedagogues, she taught techniques for authentic performance of non-classical genres. As she generally stated, “Each style requires specific left-hand and right-hand techniques. Devote a little time to isolate new bow-strokes and new left-hand material within each practice session.”<sup>358</sup>

In a discussion about technique development, Lieberman emphasized, “We have the ability to send technically precise directions from our motor cortex via our nerves through the central nervous system out to our muscles thereby achieving mechanically perfect motion, yet

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<sup>355</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>358</sup> Lieberman, *How to Play Contemporary Strings*, 7.

treating the hands and arms as little more than servants; we also have the ability to receive incoming information by being kinesthetically aware which will enable us to monitor how we are using our bodies, thereby giving us the ability to make subtle but important changes in the quality of experience we create in our muscles.”<sup>359</sup> Here, Lieberman discourages the rigidity of technical development used in traditional methodology. As she stated, “I would like to propose a different path for building technique. It’s one in which you breathe, feel, listen deeply, and take your time. Experience each sound you make as music rather than a means toward an end. It’s a process where, when you get frustrated and impatient and wish you could play faster and better, you can pause and give thanks for what you can do, for the opportunity to make music, take a deep breath, and get back into the enjoyment of making music.”<sup>360</sup>

Technique training on the violin is also not a central focus of Mark O’Connor’s commercial pedagogy. While his instruction does not address topics such as set up, left-hand position, or right-hand position with the same depth or level of complexity as the traditional pedagogues, it does include pedagogical exercises as supplements to many of his included pieces. For example, in his inclusion of *La Golondrina*, a historic Mexican song adapted into triple time, he incorporates a double-stop exercise to assist in tuning chords.<sup>361</sup> In addition, he includes string-crossing exercises on successive intervals in sixths during the study of *College Hornpipe*, a Texas-style old-time fiddle tune.<sup>362</sup>

Similarly, Silverman’s commercial violin pedagogy did not focus on technique training or address topics such as set up, left-hand position, or right-hand position. Instead, it does detail

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<sup>359</sup> Lieberman, *The Contemporary Violinist*, 15.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>361</sup> O’Connor, *O’Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5*, 14.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 20.

specific rhythmic techniques that are imperative to his method. For example, he stated, “The key to ghosting is to use very little bow. With tiny bow strokes, you can still use pressure to bring out accents cleanly, whereas with fuller bows, you would never be able to hide those ghosts.”<sup>363</sup>

Furthermore, he proposed five basic technical rules of the chop bow stroke, describing placement at the frog, bow hair out, loose right hand, dampening the strings, and leaving the bow on the strings.<sup>364</sup>

### Written Skill Development

Throughout Auer’s pedagogical contributions, an assumption of the knowledge of written theory and music reading skill development is present. For instance, he supplemented growth in theory through intervallic and chordal drills. Moreover, all exercises, studies, and compositions suggested by Auer are learned through written notation. He fervently supported detailed practice of written exercises but does not include the skill of sight-reading in his writings. Instead, Auer encouraged mastery of musical works, “not as a result of running through from beginning to end in a superficial manner, but of studying them with the most serious devotion.”<sup>365</sup>

Flesch’s pedagogical works also demonstrate an assumption of the knowledge of written theory and music reading skill development. As he described, “Our relationship to a piece of music is at first that of only being acquainted with it; at this stage we still need the ‘note-picture’, in other words, the printed or written symbols of music. Only gradually can we free ourselves from those symbols, and then, we may consider that we really know the work.”<sup>366</sup> All exercises, studies, and compositions suggested by Flesch are learned through written notation. He

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<sup>363</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, 32.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>365</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 97.

<sup>366</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 147.

explained, “Printed symbols can be compared to the scaffolding necessary for the construction of a building; however, the scaffolding disappears from view when the building is completed.”<sup>367</sup>

While Flesch passionately supported detailed practice of written exercises, he, like Auer, did not include the skill of sight-reading in his writings. Flesch taught that when practicing, “more can be accomplished in half-an-hour of purposeful study than in a week of mechanical practice.”<sup>368</sup>

Like Auer and Flesch, a conjecture of the knowledge of written theory and music reading skill development is apparent with Galamian. All études and repertoire were assumed by Galamian to be learned through notation. He ardently supported detailed practice of written exercises but did not include the skill of sight-reading in his writings. Addressing practice objectives, Flesch declared that it is essential to have an intelligently balanced division of practice hours distributed between overcoming technical problems and advancing technique. This makes the playing of a musical work correspond to interpretive ideas and performance time.<sup>369</sup>

Music reading skill development is not a category of focus for Lieberman. While she used traditional notation to write studies for her methodology, her emphasis was on aural learning. According to Lieberman, “When tunes are taught by ear, it is up to the memory and taste of individual musicians to carry those tunes forward, each in a somewhat different way. If they forget sections, they can replace them with variations. On the other hand, if the same tune is written down and a student learns it by reading it, the melody is more likely to be forever cast in stone.”<sup>370</sup>

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<sup>367</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing Book 2: Artistic Realization and Instruction*, 8.

<sup>368</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 147.

<sup>369</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin Playing and Teaching*, 200.

<sup>370</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 8.

Lieberman's methodology addresses written theory through the instruction of playing on chord changes. She posited, "The greatest challenge in learning how to improvise is to be able to look at a chord chart for a song, know which notes constitute the primary tones of the chord (1 3 5 7), know where they are on the violin, and be able to play the appropriate notes for each chord's complementary scale (diatonically, meaning scalewise, as well as intervallically, moving in various arpeggiated steps like thirds and fourths)."<sup>371</sup> Lieberman introduced other concepts, such as the major jazz modes, pentatonic scales, and diminished scales and arpeggios, through a written theoretical lens. These concepts are used as a bridge to improvisation. Lieberman suggested, "Choose a key and a scale type or mode, and create a lengthy improvisation using that scale. Each time you hit a plateau and start to feel bored, if you stay with it, you will discover new ideas."<sup>372</sup>

Similarly, music reading skill development is also not a category of focus in O'Connor's commercial methodology. While he used traditional notation to write studies for his methodology, the emphasis is on aural learning. O'Connor noted, "Consummate musicianship in the twenty-first century is impossible to achieve with training based solely on rote memorization and 'perfection.' Methods that approach music in this way are outdated and ineffective. In particular for young students, beauty and inspiration are derived not only from learning melody but also from learning harmony, counterpoint, and rhythm and from listening, sharing, feeling, leading, accompanying, and enjoying."<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, 25.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>373</sup> O'Connor, *O'Connor Method: A New American School of String Playing Violin Book 5*, Foreword.

O'Connor used notation to supplement the aural tradition of his pedagogy. He wrote, "For a piece of classical music to work, it has to be interpreted from the page and not just live as a figment of oral tradition: this idea I learned early on in my musical life. For me to have a career in American classical music, I needed to be able to write our traditional materials down. These things couldn't just live and remain in their own esoteric bubble as concocted imagination. Some of it at least, had to translate to actual literature as well."<sup>374</sup> Like Lieberman, O'Connor's methodology addresses written theory through the instruction of playing on chord changes. For example, Billy Strayhorn's *Take the "A" Train* features a prominent "flat five" chord in its tonality. O'Connor explained, "Measures seven and fifteen include the same Db (b5) chord found in the intro and creating a harmonic theme for the piece. The melody always features a G# note in the measures requiring a Db (b5) chord and making it clear that the flatted fifth of the chord is the G# note."<sup>375</sup> He also included chord symbols for every tune in his method notated above the melody line, emphasizing the need for the development of a sense of harmony in the twenty-first century violinist.

Finally, Silverman's commercial pedagogy does not concentrate on written theory. While using traditional notation to write études and studies for his methodology, the emphasis is on the aural and physical learning of groove. As asserted by Silverman, "The idea that string players sound square is not going to go away unless they actually learn to groove."<sup>376</sup> Thus, instead of focusing on the interpretation of written rhythms, Silverman's focus is on how rhythm and groove feel. As he specified, "Theoretically, you can divide a beat infinitely, but what we are

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<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>376</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, xxvi.

concerned with here is finding the smallest practical part of the beat: the fast subdivision you hear in the song.”<sup>377</sup>

### **Chapter Summary**

The theoretical sampling and deductive qualitative evaluation in this study led to clear responses to the following presented research questions.

RQ1: In which ways can the commercial violinist be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum?

RQ2: In which ways can the structure of classical violin pedagogy impact the learning of commercial violin styles?

Through the theoretical sampling process of classical and commercial violin methodologies, the areas of scope, sequence, technique training, written theory, music reading skill development, ear training, composition, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity, when related to the focus area of an individual violin methodology of study, proved the hypotheses associated with the research questions in this study to be correct. The commercial violinist can be underprepared for commercial viability when training with traditional curriculum in the areas of ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Notably, commercial violin pedagogues consistently presented listening to numerous styles of music, for the learning of stylistic fundamentals, as a primary area of focus. In addition, the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles through scope and sequence, technique training, and written theory skill development. Ultimately, the scope and sequence of traditional classical violin pedagogy, when simultaneously paired with structured commercial

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<sup>377</sup> Ibid., 10.

violin studies, provides viability to the twenty-first century violinist throughout the modern and diverse professional music landscape.



## **Chapter Five: Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

Throughout history, violin pedagogies from the classical and commercial idioms have highlighted divergent areas of focus. The results of this research study serve as a framework for the development of a new hybrid twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum, which integrates classical and commercial pedagogy concurrently. This final chapter presents a summary of findings, which are discussed and related to prior research. Moreover, limitations of the study are presented to help guide future research. Implications that this study can have for building new hybrid educational experiences for the twenty-first century collegiate violinist are also included.

### **Summary of Findings**

This qualitative research study of resources that currently exist in both classical and commercial violin pedagogy at the collegiate level was used to test the hypotheses related to the two presented research questions. Through the procedural technique of theoretical sampling, the methodologies and pedagogies of Auer, Flesch, Galamian, Lieberman, O'Connor, and Silverman produced results that supported the hypotheses. The resources of Auer, Flesch, and Galamian focused on violin technique, included a detailed scope and sequence, and employed the written tradition of music. Conversely, Lieberman, O'Connor, and Silverman emphasized aural skills, improvisational skill development, and stylistic diversity. Therefore, the commercial violinist can be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum in the areas of ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. In addition, the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles through scope and sequence, technique training, and written theory skill development.

Currently, students are most often given an option of either commercial or classical training at the collegiate level. The results of this study prove that the complete training of a twenty-first century violinist, qualified for varied performance opportunities in the contemporary professional landscape, necessitates elements of both traditional classical and commercial pedagogy. Traditional methodology is indispensable, most clearly required in the areas of technical development, scope and sequence, and written theory. In conjunction with this approach, commercial pedagogy is crucial for violinists to develop stylistic diversity, discriminating aural skills, and improvisational abilities.

As Lieberman emphasized, “We have to change the rules and open the doors. Promoting student involvement within the alternative string community can provide the opportunity to foster new attitudes within our educational institutions. As I see it, our choices are either to change the system or lose future generations of musicians.”<sup>378</sup> These choices cannot mean abandoning traditional pedagogy in favor of commercial-style training. Instead, they should be an impetus to expand the traditional violin curriculum to include commercial components.

The results of this qualitative research study correspond with the literature reviewed in chapter two of this document. Traditional pedagogical works by Geminiani and Mozart, predecessors to the traditional pedagogues chosen for this study, support the answers to the presented research questions. In addition, cited works by Baillot, Rode, Kreutzer, Fauré, Mazas, Paganini, Sphor, Dont, Kayser, Couvoisier, Shradiek, and Ševčík were all included in the pedagogical offerings of at least one of the theoretically sampled traditional pedagogues. In the dominion of commercial pedagogy, integrated works by Grizzard, Carlson, Glaser, Howes, Norgaard, Driessen, and Duncan also support the specific answers to both research questions.

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<sup>378</sup> Lieberman, *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*, 17.

While concentrating exclusively on the technical focus of traditional classical methodology in his writings, Lee emphasized that violin students each embody different modes of learning and ways of expressing themselves<sup>379</sup>. His contributions substantiate the findings that the structure of classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles through comprehensive technique training. Furthermore, Van der Merwe addressed new extended techniques required of the twenty-first century violinist. Although her writings are exclusive to classical pedagogy, her inclusion of technology, polyrhythm, and unusual rhythmic subdivisions also support the results that classical violin pedagogy can impact the learning of commercial violin styles.

Matloff specifically addressed O'Connor in her text, advocating for the incorporation of contemporary American solo works in the undergraduate violin curriculum. While she exclusively concentrated on contemporary classical music that integrates popular music,<sup>380</sup> her findings indicate the static nature of traditional collegiate violin pedagogy and confirm the established ways in which the commercial violinist can be underprepared for commercial viability when training with a traditional curriculum. Olsen's attention to Sugizo, a Japanese rock violinist, endorse the point that it is because of a willingness to learn different styles of music that a violinist can easily fit with a variety of bands and professional projects.<sup>381</sup> Therefore, a curriculum exclusively based on traditional classical music and exercises can underprepare the collegiate violinist for commercial career possibilities.

Finally, the works of Conley and Wood support the results of this project in the area of improvisation training, in relation to commercial viability when training with a traditional

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<sup>379</sup> Lee, "Towards a Dynamic Pedagogy", 109.

<sup>380</sup> Matloff, "Focusing on the Present", 82.

<sup>381</sup> Olsen, "A Violinist in a Non-Classical World", 29.

curriculum. Conley concluded that most string teacher educators are interested in improvisation, also noting that improvisation helps build students' musical growth, both technically and expressively.<sup>382</sup> Wood further explained the benefits of delivering thoughtful experiences in improvisation to students at the college and university-level of education.<sup>383</sup>

### **Implications**

The qualitative examination and responses to the research questions make the strengths and weaknesses of traditional classical and modern commercial violin pedagogy discernable. Prerequisites for the multifaceted twenty-first century professional violinist include a developed tone, technical facility, exquisite and functional intonation appropriate to performance style, and the ability to comprehend and perform diverse genres from both written and aurally transmitted musical traditions. This clarifies the necessity for a modern hybrid collegiate method, which simultaneously incorporates both classical and commercial violin pedagogy into a single curriculum.

Curriculum refers to a regular course of study or training, as at a school or university.<sup>384</sup> While all authors examined in this study agreed that the decision of sequencing the overall collegiate violin curriculum should be based on assessment and consideration of the student's learning pace and personality, Galamian importantly pointed to the student-teacher relationship. He declared, "This is why it is so important that the attitude of the teacher be a very personal one and, of concomitant importance, that he analyze the character of every student correctly."<sup>385</sup> Therefore, while the presented sequences from the results of this study should be incorporated

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<sup>382</sup> Conley, "The Use of Improvisation", 150.

<sup>383</sup> Wood, "Improvisation Methods", 6.

<sup>384</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Curriculum," accessed October 28, 2021, <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/46107?redirectedFrom=curriculum#eid>.

<sup>385</sup> Galamian, *Principles of Violin: Playing and Teaching*, 214.

into the twenty-first century collegiate violin curriculum, the teacher must determine the best overall course of action for each student.

Auer's repertory sequence began with Kreutzer before progressing to works by Spohr, Dont, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Bach, Tartini, and Wieniawski.<sup>386</sup> Flesch sequenced the study of étude books from Kreutzer, Fiorillo, Rode, and Sauzay, to Schradiek, Wieniawski, Sauret, Paganini, and Ernst.<sup>387</sup> With consistent support from the scalar and technical resources by Flesch and Galamian, this study uniquely determined that these traditional classical sequences of study and repertory should be concurrently paired with studies of commercial music.

Sequential commercial music studies must be grounded in listening to diverse genres of music from the beginning of study. In Silverman's text, Mark Wood argued, "Just teaching the notes and notation on the page is like teaching only the alphabet and never allowing students to connect those building blocks into beautiful forms of personal communication."<sup>388</sup> Lieberman further emphasized, "Nothing can replace the aural process; this is how you learned to speak as a child. Listen to improvising musicians as often as you can, whether recorded or live. When you select a tune to learn, listen to as many recorded examples of the tune as you can to reinforce your auditory memory of the melody and harmony."<sup>389</sup> Stylistic authenticity and improvisation in diverse musical styles will be led by hearing what other artists have created throughout history. While Lieberman presented the sequence of improvisational study with the most detail in

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<sup>386</sup> Auer, *Violin Playing As I Teach It*, 96.

<sup>387</sup> Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing*, 84.

<sup>388</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, 27.

<sup>389</sup> Lieberman, *Improvising Violin*, 47.

this research, Silverman's method for rhythmic improvisation should also be included in the curriculum. As he simply and shrewdly directed, "If you can say it, you can play it."<sup>390</sup>

Violin students should be directed to create new grooves in the voice, in the body, in the brain, and then on the instrument, while simultaneously refining their technique through traditional pedagogy. Toward this end, O'Connor distinctly directed the inclusion of the genres of hoedown, blues, spirituals, ragtime, Strathspey, swing, jazz, folk, old-time, Texas fiddling, and bluegrass into the curriculum. Lieberman further offered the inclusion of rock and world styles such as Afro-Cuban, Arabic, Asian, Brazilian, Canadian, Celtic, Eastern European, Greek, Gypsy, Indian, Klezmer, Mexican, Native American, Scandinavian, and Tango.

From these findings, this study clearly expresses a new violin curriculum that is comprehensive instead of categorical. Incorporating all of the aforementioned studies, the twenty-first century collegiate student will be suitably prepared in the areas of technical training, written theory, aural skills, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity, leading to widespread career opportunities in the area of violin performance. Particularly, since music is clearly an aural activity, students will study and experience the differences in performance styles through listening. This is also addressed in John Dewey's 1916 explanation that formal education can often become separated from life experiences. Finally, as Mercado emphasized, "One of the weightiest problems with which the philosophy of education has to cope is the method of keeping a proper balance between the informal and the formal."<sup>391</sup> The results from this research advocate the balance of both classical and commercial training, bringing the informal into the educational experience without excluding imperative formal integrated studies.

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<sup>390</sup> Silverman, *The Strum Bowing Method: How to Groove on Strings*, 62.

<sup>391</sup> Mercado, "Popular, Informal, and Vernacular Music Classrooms", 30.

### Limitations

As is the case with nearly all research, this study included limitations that were unavoidable and could affect the results. First, any unintentional bias of the researcher must be considered. On the authority of Creswell, “Reflexivity has been mentioned as a core characteristic of qualitative research. Good qualitative research contains comments by the researchers about how their interpretation of the findings is shaped by their background, such as their gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic origin.”<sup>392</sup> This research was conducted by a violinist and educator who received formal classical training at the collegiate level but who primarily performs and teaches in the commercial music field. He has experienced first-hand the benefits of a comprehensive applied music experience from the earliest stages of training.

Next, because qualitative research is a time-consuming and complex process, the researcher could have inadvertently left out information located in inaccessible places. This study included emerging questions and procedures; therefore, the researcher experienced ambiguity while conducting the data collection and analysis. Moreover, additional documents that could have been included may be protected information unavailable to public or private access.<sup>393</sup> It is imperative to consider that all individuals are not equally articulate and perceptive, and all documents included in this research have been filtered through the views of the author.

Finally, there is no mathematical objective result verification in qualitative research. Because qualitative research is open-ended, researchers must be mindful of the accuracy of transcription, the relationship between the research questions and data, and the level of data

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<sup>392</sup> Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 192.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

analysis from the raw data through interpretation.<sup>394</sup> As all qualitative studies are unique in nature, they are difficult to replicate precisely.

### **Recommendations**

While this research project focused on the incorporation of classical and commercial studies within the applied violin lesson setting at the collegiate level, future research could involve additional course offerings in improvisation and stylistic diversity. Whereas music majors at schools of music around the world currently take courses in aural skills, post-secondary education primarily emphasizes the practice and performance of Western art music. Future studies can direct attention to the results displayed in the applied setting when improvisation and stylistic diversity are offered as supplementary courses in the collegiate music program.

Additional research could also be completed to examine the professional placements of traditional conservatory violin students when compared to the professional placements of violin majors who have graduated from commercial music programs at accredited higher-education institutions. Detailed analysis could critically examine the results to determine the range of job opportunities available for graduates of each course of study. This study could address the balance among classical, jazz, and popular music traditions and the job opportunities that each tradition offers, representing a noteworthy change in mission and identity for educational institutions at the collegiate level.

Moreover, studies could be conducted to observe and report the roles technology can play in a comprehensive collegiate violin curriculum that incorporates both traditional and commercial pedagogy. The field of music education is currently experiencing a time of change and innovation. A technological revolution is occurring with the demands for creativity, innovation, and fresh models of learning. Technology is now an essential support to music from

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<sup>394</sup> Ibid., 192.



both an education perspective and a general musicianship perspective. Whether performing, composing, or researching music, technology is a valuable tool in the development of musical skills. In correlation to the focus of the current study, a supplementary analysis could specifically examine the role that technology can play in a hybrid twenty-first century violin curriculum in the areas of scope and sequence, technique training, written theory skill development, ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Using technology to promote comprehensive musical learning objectives, students will continue to experience all-encompassing music education in the twenty-first century and beyond.

Finally, this study encourages further research into the relationship between classical and commercial training throughout collegiate instrumental music education. Supplementary research could be conducted focusing on hybrid stylistic music education models in instrumental music education at all levels. Whether a student is learning an instrument in the string, wind, or percussion family at the elementary, middle, high school, or collegiate level, it is noteworthy to determine the outcomes of a comprehensive music education that incorporates both traditional and commercial pedagogy.

### **Chapter Summary and Study Contributions**

In conclusion, this qualitative study has determined that a hybrid collegiate curriculum is necessary for the twenty-first century violinist to address the areas of inclusive scope and sequence, technique training, written theory skill development, ear training, improvisation, and diverse style authenticity. Therefore, to simultaneously develop all of these desired learning outcomes, it is appropriate and reasonable for violin instructors at the collegiate level to incorporate traditional classical pedagogy and modern commercial pedagogy into a hybrid model of structured and sequential pedagogy. All necessary learning outcomes will not be experienced

through the abandonment of traditional pedagogy in favor of commercial pedagogical offerings. Similarly, students who exclusively study traditional methodology will not be prepared for the diverse professional opportunities available for versatile violinists in the twenty-first century.

The results of this study can be an impetus to expand the traditional violin curriculum to include commercial components. As the hypotheses have been proven correct and the literature reviewed offered agreement, this project seeks further research into the amalgamation of classical and commercial training throughout the entirety of collegiate instrumental music education. The next generation of professional violinists, presented with diverse musical opportunities in the modern professional landscape in the twenty-first century, will be prepared for successful careers through this hybrid curriculum that is both sequenced and comprehensive.

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