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SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Groove Comes to the Cumberlands:
The Importance of Percussion Education in Appalachia**

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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Lynchburg, VA

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Of the Requirements for the Degree
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic study is to determine the effects and influences of percussion ensemble literature in underprivileged secondary schools in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky. This study was conducted within the framework of psychologist Yuri Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development. The aim was to research the importance of percussion pedagogy on the global musical knowledge and cultural understandings of high school music students and their communities from underprivileged schools in eastern Kentucky. The study sought to determine how percussion students, non-percussion students, and non-music students conceptualized these diverse and modern pieces of percussion literature. The study also sought to determine the frequency at which music educators from eastern Kentucky program music from cultures outside of the traditional Western classical canon, or program pieces by underrepresented composers. Additionally, this study sought to determine the level of authenticity when teaching global instruments, and the depth of discussion when performing musical styles from other parts of the world. Finally, there was an emphasis placed on determining how well students from eastern Kentucky related to pieces that were representative of or composed by traditionally underrepresented groups. The study included percussion students, non-percussion students, and non-music students from a multi-county area of eastern Kentucky. To determine this information, a series of focus groups were conducted with the stakeholders. The findings revealed that exposure to the study of percussion literature and percussion instruments drastically influences students' worldviews and conceptualization of global cultures and styles.

Keywords: Percussion Education, Appalachian, Music Education, Epistemological Colonialism

DEDICATION

This research project, thesis, and degree could not have been completed without the support of my family.

My son Jack has been constant encouragement throughout this writing process. Jack's humor and joy of learning have been an inspiration in my own academic pursuits, and I cannot imagine taking on such an educational mission without him around.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this ethnographic study is to determine the social influence of percussion education on students from underprivileged schools in the Appalachian region of Kentucky and to gain richer insight into how studying percussion literature might sway a perceived culture of epistemological colonialism in music education. Furthermore, the study also provides evidence to support the hypothesis that by studying percussion literature from a variety of cultures and works composed by traditionally underrepresented composers, students from economically depressed schools in Appalachia gain valuable insight into a larger global perspective and potentially positively influence the community in which they live. This first chapter provides a detailed analysis of the problem and outlines the reasoning for the study. Next, it provides information as to how the study will be conducted and information gathered, as well as the significance of that information to percussion students and the community at large. Finally, the chapter concludes in summation with definitions of important terms and information.

Background of the Topic

Recently, there have been a variety of published papers focusing on the perceived imbalance in the educational practice of teaching music from a global perspective. This proposed lack of effort to focus on compositional and theoretical practices of non-European composers has led to a concern that the traditional scholastic canons disproportionately eliminate important compositional and theoretical contributions from other cultures. Despite several papers on this topic, there has been little research into how certain ensembles, specifically percussion ensembles, approach music from other cultures in their particular canons of literature at the

secondary school levels.¹ Furthermore, there is a clear gap in the literature pertaining to the influence of such percussion solo and ensemble pieces on students in economically disadvantaged schools in the Appalachian region of Kentucky.

Historical Context

According to music theorist and professor Dr. Philip Ewell's recent article, music at the academic level is often taught through a clear "White racial frame."² Though there is some evidence of this, Ewell's theory does not extend beyond the theoretical practices in higher education and fails to consider the global influence of a variety of instrumental ensembles. Most notably absent is a reference to the modern and ever-increasing canon of percussion literature which features a broad variety of styles from across the globe and a diverse roster of composers. Ewell's research focuses on acknowledging and working to dismantle "whiteness" in music education and music theory.³ Though Ewell's intentions are perhaps noble, he fails to directly acknowledge the "non-whiteness" in the rapidly expanding percussion canon of literature and its influence on students. Ewell's research tends to lend itself toward the dismantling and reimagining of how concepts of music theory are taught in higher education. Dr. Ewell does present compelling evidence regarding the lack of references and examples of music by non-white composers in many of the standard music theory textbooks (Figure 1.) However, Dr. Ewell

¹ Wayne D. Bowman and Ana Lucía Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 49.

² Philip A. Ewell, "Music Theory and the White Racial Frame," *Music Theory Online*, September 1, 2020, <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.2/mto.20.26.2.ewell.html>.

³ *Ibid.*, 1.4.

fails to discuss the important contributions of non-white composers and musical styles within the percussion canon.

Figure 1. Racial demographic data for musical examples from seven American music theory textbooks

Textbook	Percentage of market share	Total # of examples	# of examples by nonwhites	Percentage of examples by nonwhites
Aldwell and Schachter, 4th ed. (2011)	5	465	0	0%
Benward and Saker, 9th ed. (2015)	13	333	8	2.40%
Burstein and Straus, 1st ed. (2016)	11	304	1	0.33%
Clendinning and Marvin, 3rd ed. (2016)	25	504	15	2.98%
Kostka, Payne, and Almén, 8th ed. (2018)	29	370	10	2.70%
Laitz, 4th ed. (2015)	8	550	2	0.36%
Roig-Francoli, 2nd ed. (2010)	5	404	13	3.22%
TOTALS	96	2930	49	1.67%

Source: *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, Philip Ewell 2020

The volume of percussion literature is quickly expanding and addresses a broad array of cultures. It also leaves many pedagogical techniques to address.⁴ Essentially, the average percussion student is learning far more than the notes and rhythms. He or she is discovering the very fabric of the culture in which the style of music originated. Noted percussion composer and educator Ed Uribe states, “Regardless of the fact that this music is now taught in schools and specific methods are in place for learning these styles and instruments, this is primarily and fundamentally the study of a culture and musical folklore. [The student] is, in essence, learning a language.”⁵

⁴ Andrew Richardson, “The Percussion Literature Class: A Survey of Common Practices,” *Percussive Notes*, November 2019.

⁵ Ed Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set: Rhythms, Song styles, Techniques, Applications* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., 2006), 9.

Sociological Context

The Appalachian region of Kentucky is a unique geographical area of America. It is common for students to have challenging home experiences that negatively affect their scholastic pursuits. This region of Kentucky is primarily Caucasian, and many counties and schools are identified as economically depressed. According to the Appalachian Regional Commission, approximately 94 percent of eastern Kentucky counties are considered economically distressed.⁶ The negative influence of inadequate economic output is seen in a variety of forms in Appalachia, most notably in education. The issues of eastern Kentucky are not new, unfortunately. Henry Caudill's seminal work *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s was written in 1963, and the central themes and topics discussed in this book continue to be problematic sixty years later.⁷

Perhaps the central issues within this region are best represented by what author and social scientist Seth Godin calls "The Icarus Deception."⁸ This phrase refers to the ancient Greek myth of Icarus and his wings of wax. The fable tells, that confined to prison, Daedalus and his son Icarus built wings of wax in which to escape over the walls of their island prison and fly to freedom. Daedalus warned his son not to fly too close to the sun, but enamored with his ability to fly, Icarus flew too high, and the heat of the sun melted his wings. The story says that Icarus crashed into the sea and drowned.⁹ This account is often repeated as a warning against hubris and

⁶ County Economic Status in Appalachia, FY 2023," Appalachian Regional Commission, June 30, 2022, <https://www.arc.gov/map/county-economic-status-in-appalachia-fy-2023/>.

⁷ Harry M. Caudill and Stewart L. Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s: *A Biography of a Depressed Area* (United States: Hassell Street Press, an imprint of Creative Media Partners, 2021), 393.

⁸ Seth Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly?* (London: Portfolio Penguin, 2014), 2.

⁹ Ibid.

ambition. The very same sentiment is often shared in the hills of Kentucky so that one may not dare exceed their social station. The research in this project showcases that when students are provided with healthy arts education opportunities, they are more likely to excel beyond their immediate microsystem. This research also alludes to the possibility that arts and music education, and more directly percussion education, can allow students to become more globally focused citizens and expand their sphere of influence far beyond the microsystem in which they were born. With these new influences from cultures around the globe, students may be able to take this information and use it to positively direct their community in ways both social and artistic.

In 2020, author and politician J.D. Vance underscored the sentiments of Caudill sixty years earlier. “It is in greater Appalachia where the fortunes of working-class whites seem dimmest. From low social mobility to poverty to divorce and drug addiction, my home is a hub of misery.”¹⁰ Misery is something that can be witnessed and experienced in the areas of Appalachia in which this study takes place. Counties in the region fall into the highest percentage categories of obesity, with many counties reporting half of their population as being obese.¹¹ In 2022, the Centers for Disease Control identified 220 counties in the nation in which the opioid epidemic was so severe that there may be long-term effects on health and the local economy. Eastern Kentucky counties represented thirty-five of the identified counties, almost all falling within the top one hundred.¹²

¹⁰ J. D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy* (Harper Collins UK, 2020), 4.

¹¹ Department of Health, “Health Indicator Report of Obesity – Adult Prevalence,” KY, accessed October 8, 2022, <https://kyibis.mc.uky.edu/ehl/dataportal/indicator/view/ObesityAdult.Cnty.html>.

¹² “Kentucky Opioid Epidemic,” amfAR, accessed October 8, 2022, <https://opioid.amfar.org/KY>.

It is easy to see the detrimental influence that these factors have on all aspects of education. Though music education in the scholastic sense is something that is widely lacking in the region, the area has produced some well-known popular musical artists, specifically in the country, bluegrass, and gospel genres. However, this has not necessarily translated into increased interest in the academic study of music. One of the many persistent disconnects between the academic study of music and the desire to create and perform traditional mountain music in the individual sense is the pervasive idea that for one to study music in the academy, one may succumb to the adage of getting above their “rasin’.”¹³ Though this concept may seem foreign or even counterintuitive to many in other parts of the country, a ubiquitous belief in the mountains is that to progress beyond one’s station is to forsake their family, friends, and region.¹⁴ The music of the traditional scholastic canon is, in the eyes of many in Appalachia, not *their* music. To study music formally is to renounce the very culture in which a student was raised.

Theoretical Context

The problem surrounding the issues is the gap in the literature when it comes to understanding the influence that percussion solo and ensemble works have on students from these economically depressed counties in the Appalachian region of Kentucky and how it affects their worldview. For students in the eastern part of Kentucky, the literature fails to properly provide answers as to how they conceptualize percussion literature from other cultures or diverse composers. Answering this question showcases that the study of global percussion music by students in underprivileged areas of Appalachia can positively influence their entire worldview,

¹³ Caudill and Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*. X.

¹⁴ Danny Duncan Collum, “Don’t Get above Your Raisin’,” *Sojourners*, July 1, 2019, <https://sojo.net/magazine/july-august-2002/dont-get-above-your-raisin>.

and potentially lead to a change in the larger macro system in which they exist. Answering this question may also lead to further research of similar topics within other economically disadvantaged and underprivileged communities across the country.

Theoretical Framework

The research for this project was conducted as a qualitative ethnographic study within the framework of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory. The theory supporting the research is that by studying percussion literature from across the globe and by underrepresented composers, a student from eastern Kentucky will be exposed to a variety of new musical and artistic influences. This exposure may allow the student to succeed despite the microsystem in which they were born. Furthermore, this idea coincides with Bronfenbrenner's belief that a child's success or failure is a result of their larger environment.¹⁵ This study demonstrates that by expanding the child's spheres of influence, the child's possibility for success is also increased. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model organizes these levels of influence and categorizes them from the most intimate level to the broadest.¹⁶ In this instance, the most familiar level of influence, the microsystem, represents the classroom teacher/student relationship, while the broadest relationship is representative of the community at large.

The study featured standard ethnographic research components including field notes and interviews. The participants in the study were not only asked for their opinions on pieces of

¹⁵ Jay Belsky, Laurence Steinberg, and Patricia Draper, "Childhood Experience, Interpersonal Development, and Reproductive Strategy: An Evolutionary Theory of Socialization," *Child Development* 62, no. 4 (1991): 647–70. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1131166>.

¹⁶ Santa Clara University, "Theoretical Framework," Theoretical Framework – Office for Multicultural Learning – Santa Clara University, accessed October 9, 2022, <https://www.scu.edu/oml/about-us/theoretical-framework/>.

percussion literature but also their reactions to these pieces were gauged and monitored. Furthermore, the thoughts and opinions of music educators, percussion directors, college percussion professors, and percussion composers from across the region and beyond were also sought. This was conducted to establish a consistent view of percussion literature as it pertains to students in secondary schools.

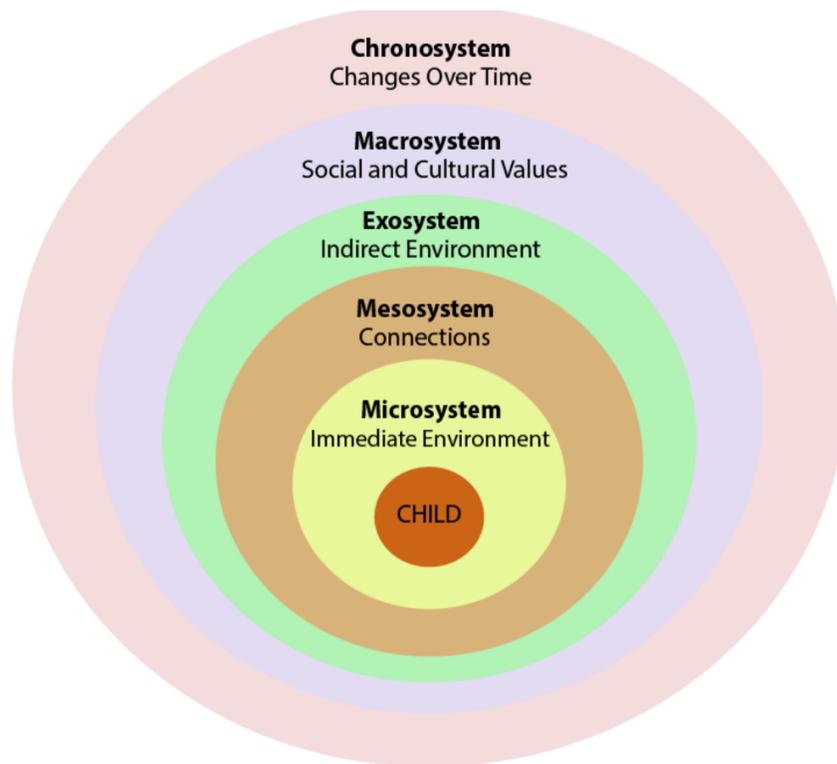


Figure 2. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System

Source: Santa Clara University, "Theoretical Framework," – Office for Multicultural Learning – Santa Clara University

Problem Statement

There is a gap in the research as it pertains to how percussion education can positively influence students of Appalachia and help them to conceptualize other cultures from across the

globe. However, there is enough research available regarding percussion pedagogy and literature for a variety of grade levels and performance abilities.¹⁷ There is also a variety of sources of research pertaining to the social difficulties and educational shortcomings found in eastern Kentucky. Information can be gathered from the available literary research and applied within the qualitative ethnographic parameters to determine the accuracy of the hypotheses within this study. What some music theorists and historians fail to acknowledge is the significance of percussion education to the overall contemporary classical musical landscape, as well as its value in the modern music classroom.

This lack of acknowledgment of percussion literature can be traced to several key factors. The relative “newness” of percussion instruments as integrated into the orchestra, as well as the circumstance that the percussion ensemble as an entity is less than one hundred years old, tends to lead some music historians and theorists to consider percussion literature as lesser academic music. Steven Schick addresses this subject in his book, *The Percussionists Art: Same Bed Different Dreams*:

Not long ago the very notion of a percussion soloist would have seemed ludicrous. Imagine a soloist taking the stage. However, instead of turning a Stradivarius or dusting off the keyboard of a Steinway, a percussionist takes a bow and sits amid a junk heap of instruments it often bought (or found) at auto salvage yards, kitchen supply, and hardware stores, garden shops, and (a few) specialty percussion stores. A classical soloist performing with brake drums, mixing bowls, gongs, cymbals, xylophones, and flowerpots.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ashley Nicole Summerlin, “A Repertoire Guide Including Annotations of High School Level Keyboard Percussion Works,” Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 2019.

¹⁸ Steven Schick, *The Percussionist’s Art Same Bed, Different Dreams* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 4.

Based on this evidence, it is not surprising that music theorists like Ewell and others would forget to include percussion education in their assessment of a “white racial frame” in music education. It is also not surprising that the literature base has failed to attempt to study percussion literature in this way. The problem is the literature has not fully addressed percussion education and its influence on students from disadvantaged regions of eastern Kentucky to understand and conceptualize music and cultures from around the globe.

The percussionist’s role within the hierarchy of music is transitioning. It was not until the late Romantic period that percussionists were even considered actual musicians, or even treated as members of the ensemble.¹⁹ Certain composers were quite concerned by this. Most notably, Hector Berlioz attributed the lack of advancement in the percussion discipline to the lack of composers who wrote works that featured the section:²⁰

There ought to be a class in every conservatoire for percussion instruments, where first-rate musicians should thoroughly teach the use of kettledrums, the tambourine, and the military drum...from their having hitherto been employed by composers only to produce more or less unpleasant noises or merely to mark the accented times in the bar, it was concluded that they were fit for nothing else...and that it was therefore quite unnecessary either to study their mechanism with care or to be a real musician to play them.²¹

The research conducted in this study shows that not only are percussion instruments a valuable part of the instrumental ensemble, but they also may serve a much larger purpose, one of social guide and cultural ambassador.

¹⁹ Sherman Hong, *Percussion in the Orchestra 1750-1850*. *Percussionist*, 8 (4) 15-29.

²⁰ Benjamin Arnold, “The Development of the Collegiate Percussion Ensemble: Its History and Education Value,” Boston University, 2016, 3.

²¹ Hong, *Percussion in the Orchestra 1750-1850*, 118.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic study is to better understand how students in economically deprived areas of southeastern Kentucky conceptualize the global influence of modern percussion literature and modern percussion composers. Developing from Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecology, this study shows that students who have studied percussion solo and ensemble literature are more open to understanding complex world music, and music as written by classically underrepresented composers.²² Therefore, these students gain valuable insight and first-hand knowledge that can potentially lead them beyond their immediate sphere of influence and potentially help change the entire community around them.

Participants in this study were high school-aged percussion students from schools in southeastern Kentucky. Each school represented was either a Title I school, or located in a county that is defined by the Appalachian Regional Commission as being economically disadvantaged.²³ Other participants were non-percussionist music students who participated in either instrumental or vocal ensembles, and non-percussion students. This study was achieved through qualitative measures of focus groups, interviews, and written reflections. The research was conducted with students and educators that live and work in Appalachia. Through this immersion, nuances of the cultural milieu within the region are easily identifiable. This allowed for the research to be better understood and more authentic. The cultural complexities of eastern Kentucky and issues with arts education were able to be dissected and better studied. These

²² Belsky, Steinberg, and Draper, *Child Development*, 647–70.

²³ "County Economic Status in Appalachia, FY 2023," Appalachian Regional Commission, June 30, 2022, <https://www.arc.gov/map/county-economic-status-in-appalachia-fy-2023/>.

students are representative of the Appalachian area of Kentucky, and some are themselves members of traditionally underrepresented people groups in contemporary classical music.²⁴

Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for much more than just percussion educators. Music educators of all types, music researchers, composers, and even music publishers can glean a wealth of pragmatic information from this research. Furthermore, cultural anthropologists and ethnographers may find the research useful when examining economic and social programs, and their application to the Appalachian region of Kentucky. Often, in areas of high poverty and low socio-economic output, school arts programs are overlooked or financially disregarded. School administrators feel like there are other more important needs and music is often viewed as a frivolous extra or an expensive nonessential course. However, this study suggests that music education, and more specifically percussion education, allows students to conceptualize and understand music and art from other cultures, thus providing generous educational and social value to the pursuit. The study of percussion education allows these students the potential to influence the community around them, and to help that community progress socially, economically, and artistically.

This study presents possible ways music education can provide avenues for disadvantaged students to exceed their situations at birth. Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecology provides evidence that a student's immediate sphere of influence is perhaps the most important factor in their development into adulthood and that their success or failure can be traced back to

²⁴ Ivan Trevino, "Thoughts on Classical Music's Status-Quo, Racism, and Activism," Ivan Trevino, March 23, 2021. <https://ivandrums.com/2021/03/22/thoughts-on-classical-music-racism-activism/>.

these influences.²⁵ This study provides evidence to indicate that through a robust and deep music education experience, the immediate sphere of influence can be expanded, thus broadening the child's scope of culture and the world. By so doing, the child's opportunities for success in areas far beyond the practice room are increased.

Although there is some research into how music education influences a student's long-term success after high school, there is very little evidence as to how it changes a student's worldview, or how it can change their immediate sphere. The reason for this is that this information is very difficult to qualify as each student, school, city, and county has so many other underlying variables that must be considered. However, what can be viewed empirically is the student's acceptance or rejection of certain pieces of music based on focus groups and observations. Students were asked to view or listen to certain pieces of music that may be outside of their normal sphere of influence or maybe a piece from a culture whose music they are not normally familiar with. From the listening and viewing of this work, research can be taken as to the level of conceptualization that students may have of the piece or the style.

Research Questions

In his pivotal work, *Night Comes to the Cumberland: A Biography of a Depressed Area*, Caudill paints the picture of eastern Kentucky as a hardscrabble and forgotten part of the world struggling to progress. "What I have written is drawn from experience—from seeing, hearing, and working with mountaineers. In a land with few books and pens, many tales are transmitted from father and mother to son and daughter. Such tales and legends breathe out a rich past to

²⁵ Belsky, Steinberg, and Draper, *Child Development*, 647–70.

anyone patient enough to hear them.”²⁶ In the years since Caudill’s words were written, students in Appalachia have picked up the previously absent books and pens and have embraced the idea of pride in the legends of their fathers, but with a new openness to artistic contributions found elsewhere in the world. This new acceptance and desire to embrace global artistic ideas can be found in the music classrooms across Appalachia, specifically in the percussion studios. Despite the belief held by some that music education is predominantly viewed through a “white racial frame,”²⁷ many students in Appalachia have expanded their musical influence far beyond the traditional Western canon through percussion solo and ensemble literature. This study will seek to understand the following questions:

Research Question One: How is modern percussion literature conceptualized by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky?

Research Question Two: How are pieces of percussion literature from underrepresented composers and non-western traditions received by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky?

Research Question Three: How can percussion education provide students in the Appalachian region of southeastern Kentucky with opportunities for musical study that go beyond the traditional Western canon?

Hypotheses

Working within the framework of Bronfenbrenner’s theory of ecology, the research for this project draws from a variety of sources and attempts to answer the stated research questions.

²⁶ Caudill and Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, X.

²⁷ Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame,” 26.

The theory of ecology defines a clear path of connection between educational content and student achievement. The hypothesis for this study is that not only does the canon of percussion solo and ensemble literature adequately allow students the ability to study, understand, and conceptualize global cultures through music, but it also allows them an opportunity to take that knowledge and potentially progress beyond their given microsystem and positively influence the larger macrosystem and chronosystem around them.

Eastern Kentucky is a difficult part of the country in which to live. Many communities have no access to interstate travel, no commercial rail systems, few airports, and little more than a patchwork of community colleges and small universities to facilitate a need for higher education. Almost all students in Appalachia have at least one challenge to overcome in their immediate sphere of influence. Many of them will require the need to extend well beyond their immediate microsystem to be successful. A substantial and consistent arts education that allows students the ability to explore beyond their immediate region can have a long-term influence on their macrosystem and help to spark change in the very fabric of their region.²⁸ The hypothesis is geared around percussion education and thus reflects what many percussion educators have said for years. Dr. Brian West of Texas Christian University was quoted in *Percussive Notes* as saying:

Percussion ensemble participation is a very strong part of [our] program that helps students in a large number of ways. Performing in a percussion ensemble gives students more experience with a wider variety of percussion instruments. It allows students the opportunity to perform the primary parts (melody), as well as accompaniment parts. Percussion ensemble performance helps students develop their listening skills within their own family of instruments. The literature available can challenge students and push them ahead with their technical and musical development. Additionally, just as it can in secondary

²⁸ Belsky, Steinberg, and Draper, *Child Development*, 647–70.

schools, percussion ensemble participation can motivate students and keep their interest in music high.²⁹

Despite being from a remote and poverty-stricken area of eastern Kentucky, percussion students conceptualize, enjoy, and understand the theoretical and virtuosic performance of percussion literature from a variety of styles. The research hopes to also find that through the study and performance of works from the growing modern percussion canon, students become more aware of the cultural and global influence of percussion literature and underrepresented composers. It is through the implementation of a global musical curriculum in percussion studies that schools in Appalachia may find themselves on a path toward further academic success in all areas, as well as progressing towards a more artistic and socially astute community.

Research Question One Hypothesis: Modern percussion literature will be received with trepidation from the general student population of Appalachia. The instrumental and timbral choices as well as the overall sonic landscape will be too different for the general public to properly embrace. Percussion students, however, will be much more open and willing to conceptualize the musical, social, cultural and theoretical context of the provided pieces. Non-percussion music students will likely draw the closest comparison with their own musical studies and have a broad conceptualization of the works.

Research Question Two Hypothesis: The pieces presented from non-western and traditionally underrepresented composers will be generally well received from the community at large. The pieces as represented from those groups often feature compositional traits most in-line with modern commercial music. The percussionists and music students who participate in the

²⁹ Jason Baker, et al., "The Pedagogy of the College Percussion Ensemble," *Percussive Notes*, November 2018.

research will likely be able to understand the instrumental, and rhythmic choices within the particular pieces.

Research Question Three Hypothesis: Percussion students within the research will demonstrate a better grasp and understanding of advanced and difficult rhythmic and compositional ideas and be able to equate those musical ideas with cultural significance. This ability to understand and process the cultural and musical nuances found in percussion literature will provide avenues for social advancement within the Appalachian community.

Core Concepts

The problems of education in areas like Appalachia are well known. The region is remote, and many locals are not interested in venturing far outside their established sphere of influence. This history of backward thoughts towards education, and more specifically arts education feed into what Caudill refers to as a “stark and popular anti-intellectualism.”³⁰ This is a sociological phenomenon that goes back generations,³¹ and has contributed to the national perception of life in Appalachia, the common belief of which is that people in this area are backward, odd, or “hillbillies.”³² In looking at this region of Appalachia, it is important to note the demographics in question. This mostly White and extremely poor section of the country often has systemic and generational issues. These issues manifest themselves in a variety of forms and even can be seen in the local approach to music education. Researchers William Dabbak and Janice Waldron write, “Yet even with experienced musicians taking leadership roles, no one

³⁰ Caudill and Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberlandds*, 52.

³¹ Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers* (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Co., 2008), 161.

³² Caudill and Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberlandds*, 52.

person considers him- or herself as the sole director. The music belongs to everyone.”³³ The widely held belief is that formal music education is little more than frivolity within a school and should only be used to support athletic and social programs within the school system.³⁴ This policy is indicative of a widely held belief within the larger macrosystem of Appalachia. This fiercely independent and proud region of people looks inward for problem-solving as opposed to outward for inspiration. Through engagement with globally representative music in an educational setting, the available sphere of influence is widened. This allows students in Appalachia to embrace a wider context of influence and potentially succeed beyond their microsystem.³⁵

There are a variety of outside influences that make artistic advancement in the region difficult, but one of them is low socio-economic output. Many schools in the region operate as Title I schools and receive funds from the federal government based on area poverty rates.³⁶ This, paired with a crumbling infrastructure, health concerns, collapsing local economy, and high rates of substance abuse make the support for arts programs difficult. In the mountains, there is a long, and warranted, history of trepidation when it comes to embracing something new, especially when it comes to education. According to Caudill, formal education initially began in many communities in Eastern Kentucky via the coal companies that controlled much of the region. He writes, “During those early years, when a school system in the modern sense was

³³ William Dabback and Janice Waldron, “Circles of Learning: Appalachian Mountain Music and Issues of Tradition in the Twenty-First Century” *International Journal of Community Music* 5 (3) (2012): 253-63.

³⁴ Caudill and Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 132.

³⁵ Belsky, Steinberg, and Draper, *Child Development*, 647–70.

³⁶ “Title I, Part a Program,” Title I, Part A Program. US Department of Education (ED), November 7, 2018. <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html>.

being organized and given its initial impetus, the overwhelming majority of the people possessed little concept of the role of learning in the building and nurturing a civilization.”³⁷ Statistical evidence from the Appalachian Regional Commission clearly shows the educational endeavors Caudill references did not lead to widespread economic success (Figure 3). However, it is possible that through the conceptual study of musical and artistic forms poverty-stricken areas in Appalachia may begin to find themselves advancing far beyond their local communities. The information that can be gained from this study potentially provides important pedagogical practices for a variety of schools in low socio-economic areas across the country. Furthermore, the integration of strong arts and music courses into the daily practice of education in this area could be something that helps pull this region of the country out of the quagmire of systemic poverty that has plagued it for generations.

³⁷ Caudill and Udall, *Night Comes to the Cumberlandds*, 131.

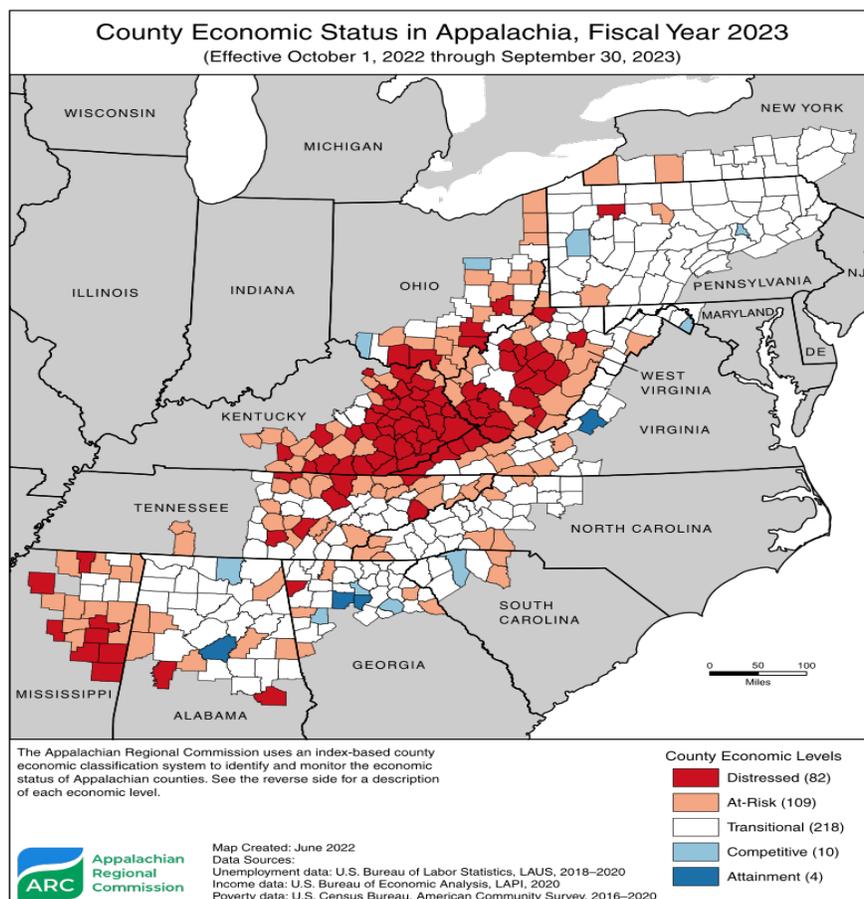


Figure 3. Economic Status of Eastern Kentucky Counties 2023

Source: “County Economic Status in Appalachia, FY 2023,” Appalachian Regional Commission, June 30, 2022, <https://www.arc.gov/map/county-economic-status-in-appalachia-fy-2023/>.

Definition of Terms

1. *Modern Percussion Literature* – Percussion ensemble literature as a concept is less than one hundred years old. Therefore, it could be argued that *all* the literature in this study is modern. However, this study refers to modern percussion solo and ensemble literature, it is specifically referring to percussion ensemble literature written in the last thirty years. Even more

specifically, the very modern compositional styles of literature are written specifically as part of the academic canon.³⁸

2. *Underrepresented Composers* – It has been argued that a disproportionate number of composers in the classical canon represent only the White, male, and European demographic.³⁹ When discussing modern percussion literature, there has been an effort to include composers from backgrounds and ethnicities that are not normally seen in the contemporary classical world. These underrepresented groups may include female composers, composers of color, or composers from non-western countries.⁴⁰

3. *Title I School* – Title I is a program for schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families that are given financial support to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. According to the Department of Education, “Title I funds to provide additional academic support and learning opportunities to help low-achieving children master challenging curricula and meet state standards in core academic subjects.”⁴¹

4. *Appalachian Region of Kentucky* – The Appalachian Mountains cover a large area of the eastern portion of the state. Though this research could have taken place with similar results

³⁸ Richardson, “*Percussive Notes*, November 2019.

³⁹ Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame,” 26.

⁴⁰ Trevino, “Thoughts on Classical Music’s Status-Quo, Racism, and Activism.”

⁴¹ “Title I, Part a Program,” Title I, Part A Program, US Department of Education (ED), November 7, 2018, <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html>.

in many areas of the state, this study will focus on a multi-county area in the southeastern portion of the state at the edge of the Cumberland plateau lying east of the Cumberland River.⁴²

5. *Epistemological Colonialism* – As it pertains to music education, Epistemological Colonialism is the belief that music representative of European, western classical traditions is disproportionately taught in schools. It is also the belief that music from other cultures is either ignored altogether or taught incorrectly.⁴³

Chapter Summary

There is no shortage of research into percussion literature and its importance at various levels of instruction. However, there was a clear gap in the research as it pertains to how students—particularly poor, White students—can understand other global cultures and musical styles through the study of percussion literature. Philip Ewell talks openly about the “pro-white subframe”⁴⁴ of music education, where he studied, analyzed, and taught composers and compositional practices leaving out music from specific parts of the world.⁴⁵ This research argues that while Ewell’s theory may be valid within some parts of music education, it is not the case within the modern percussion classroom. The growing canon of literature on percussion represents a variety of styles and composer backgrounds. Because of this, the very desire that music theorists and educators like Ewell have for a more inclusive and representative form of music education is being achieved in the percussion classroom. This has proven useful in

⁴² “About the Appalachian Region,” Appalachian Regional Commission, October 4, 2022, <https://www.arc.gov/about-the-appalachian-region/>.

⁴³ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*. 482.

⁴⁴ Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame,” 26.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

developing a student's understanding of global music contributions and how to authentically master and perform these styles. The expansion and wider inclusion of composers that represent a more diverse and broad background is also reflected in students' exposure through percussion education.

In low socio-economic regions of the country—or specifically, as it pertains to this study, Appalachia—arts education is something that is often neglected in favor of core content interventions to close learning gaps. The more immediate need, according to many in administrative roles, is to focus on the vocational courses within the school day as opposed to the creative or artistic options.⁴⁶ Music programs as specific as percussion ensemble or percussion class are often viewed as an extra class that could be done without. Music teachers may often feel that they are constantly burdened with the need to justify their own position within the school. However, this research shows that through the study of percussion ensemble and solo literature, students gain a first-hand perspective into a larger global dynamic. They become more aware and empathetic to their fellow man and thus grasp nuance and important aspects of other cultures. This may pay dividends in the larger sense because the study of global music can help allow students the opportunity to break out of their immediate sphere of influence and combat the larger systemic issues that may plague their community.

⁴⁶ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*. 422.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter seeks to outline and provide information regarding the ecological theory of psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, and how it may be used in percussion education. Through the in-depth analysis of Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecology and the five systems of ecology framework, a clear connection can be made to the importance of education as it pertains to the growth and development of a child's social and human development.¹ This importance may include arts education, and more directly music education and percussion education.

Bronfenbrenner writes, "The ecology of human development lies at a point of convergence among the disciplines of the biological, psychological, and social science as they bear on the evolution of the individual in society."² This chapter will look at Bronfenbrenner's five systems and the theoretical connections between the student and the larger spheres of influence around them. It will also draw connections between Bronfenbrenner himself as a psychologist and the practical applications of his theories within the realm of music education. This chapter will also seek to provide information as to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks within Bronfenbrenner's systems of ecology by critically observing each of the five systems. The information will be further corroborated through related literature by other educational theorists and researchers. Beyond Bronfenbrenner's theories, the suggested musical examples will be scrutinized and examined. The chapter will conclude in summation by reestablishing a connection with key terms, concepts, and theories.

¹ Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* (Harvard University Press, 2006), 24.

² *Ibid.*, 13.

Educational Theory

Bronfenbrenner's seminal work *The Ecology of Human Development*,³ lays out the systems of ecology that directly influence a child's development. Bronfenbrenner defined the ecology of human development as, "[involving] the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as their process is affected by the relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded."⁴ The goal of this research is to identify the properties of change a student may receive through music education or percussion education that positively influence the student's immediate settings, thus making them a more well-rounded and conscientious global citizen.

Through careful analysis of Bronfenbrenner's theory, music educators and researchers can identify ways to modify and adjust their programs to provide maximum service to the child and better shape their future through positive and influential connections. In rural and economically disadvantaged areas, Bronfenbrenner's theories can be used as a guide for programs to better serve not only the child but also help to establish changes within the immediate microsystemic settings and network of relationships of a child as well as the larger systems of ecology to create a broader and more long-lasting positive influence (Figure 4).

³ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 22.

⁴ Ibid.

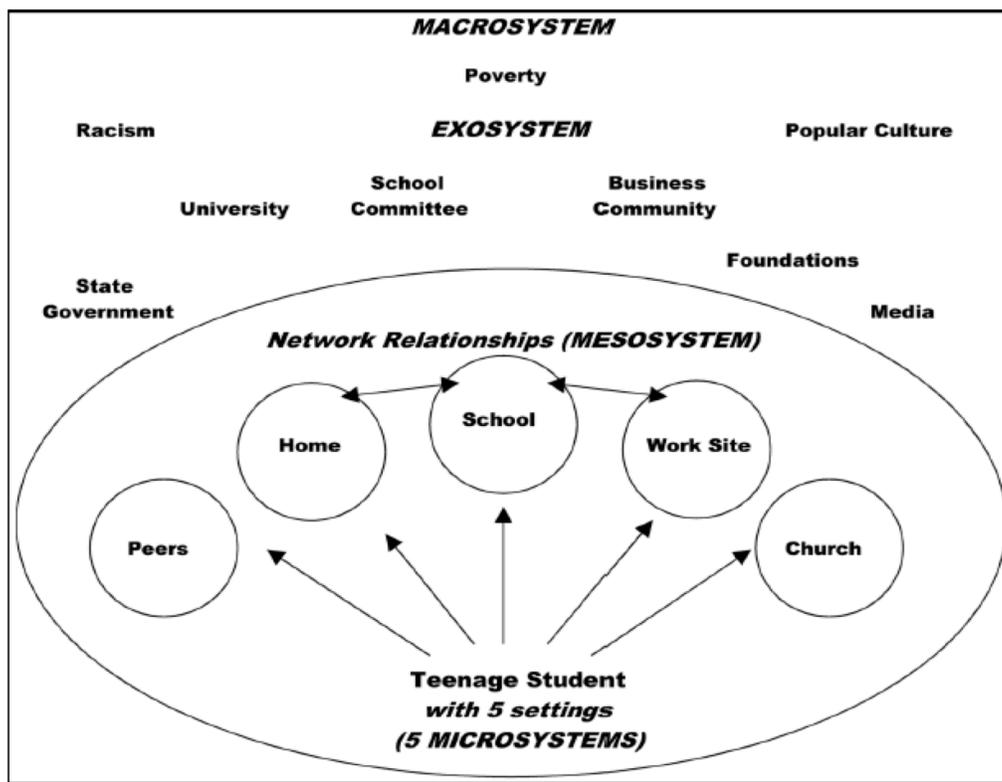


Figure 4. Bronfenbrenner's Systems

Source: Leonard, J. (2011). Using Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory to understand community partnerships: A historical case study of one urban high school. *Urban Education*, 0042085911400337.

Bronfenbrenner's Systems

Microsystem

Bronfenbrenner defines the ecological environment as a “nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next.”⁵ The microsystem is the first and most inward system that influences the student. The microsystem is made up of not only a variety of

⁵ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 22.

institutions that have the closest and most direct connection with the student but also the patterns that are represented within those relationships.⁶ A microsystem is defined as a “pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics.”⁷ The *setting* and the *elements* lay the foundation for what will be a microsystem.

Parents, siblings, schools, and religious institutions all fall into the microsystem sphere.⁸ *Elements* as outlined in Bronfenbrenner’s research refer to the activity, role, and interpersonal relationships that a child has with the patterns in their microsystem.⁹ More often than not, in underserved areas of the country like Appalachia, many students find that the interactions they have within their immediate microsystem are not positive. Parents are often absent, and many students live in single-family households.¹⁰ It is not uncommon for schools in these areas to be underserved and lack many programs and learning options that are found in more affluent areas of the country. This absence of services can be seen in even the most basic of scholastic underpinnings and is especially true pertaining to more extensive and artistic course options. This has an obvious effect on a student, and the negative ramifications of the lack of a strong central microsystem can be seen in the long-term educational influence on children.

As certain elements of a child’s microsystem fail to meet their needs, other parts of the system are overused, and those relationships can sometimes also become strained. This is

⁶ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 22.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “Household Types in Kentucky (State),” The Demographic Statistical Atlas of the United States – Statistical Atlas, accessed January 21, 2023, <https://statisticalatlas.com/state/Kentucky/Household-Types>.

something that Bronfenbrenner discusses in relation to the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin. Lewin discusses the phenomenological perspective of “microsystem” in his papers and specifically refers to the notion of *Role*.¹¹ The concept of *Role* as discussed within these parameters not only refers to the expectations of a particular position within a given microsystem but also the level of engagement that a student may have with a particular entity.¹² Bronfenbrenner maintains that these relationships form the most basic system that will influence a child’s success or failure socially and academically.

Mesosystem

Expanding out, the mesosystem includes the connections between influences within a child’s microsystem. Bronfenbrenner describes the Mesosystem as actually being a “system of Microsystems.”¹³ It is important to note, that these connections may not be directly related to the child. For example, the connection of the child’s parents to teachers, or the connection of teachers to the larger community would be examples of mesosystemic connections that influence a child. If a child’s parent does not have a positive interaction with a teacher or the school at large, this may result in negative adverse connections between the child and the school. Thus, the mesosystemic connections of the child negatively influence their opportunities for education and growth.

The interconnected relationships between the players within a child’s microsystem and the larger mesosystemic sphere have a direct relationship with a child’s success. Building on the

¹¹Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 25.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

phenomenological concepts of psychologist Kurt Lewin, Bronfenbrenner concedes that abstract connections of external actors within a child's life may appear to have little effect on their success.¹⁴ However, the concrete fact remains that for a child to have the greatest chance for success, the interactions between all the mesosystemic players must be generally positive. For areas of the country like Appalachia, this may be sometimes difficult. Rural towns and communities are often very close-knit, with both positive and negative connections between parties being long-lasting and apparent.¹⁵ These potentially difficult relationships may become troublesome for young students when trying to extend beyond their mesosystem.

Exosystem

Beyond the mesosystem is what Bronfenbrenner refers to as the Exosystem. Exosystemic factors include connections that may not directly influence the child themselves. As defined by Bronfenbrenner, "The ecosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the developing person."¹⁶ This may include relationships between the parents and their employer, or school administration and the child's teachers.¹⁷ In financially strained or economically deprived areas of the country, these connections can be particularly volatile. Parents' connections to employers, or lack thereof, can carry over to a child's home life and into their microsystem. For example, if a local employer

¹⁴ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 24.

¹⁵ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*, 45.

¹⁶ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 25.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

closes a factory resulting in increased unemployment within a given geographical region, then the child may feel those negative ramifications in their microsystem through no fault of their own.

Exosystemic factors can also include the larger levels of education and industry within a given community.¹⁸ In many poor and underserved areas of the country, the severe lack of employment and educational opportunities lead to continued issues pertaining to economic and infrastructural growth. The decisions made by local government or local school boards may have direct exosystemic ramifications on a student. However, the consequences of the actions of parties within the exosystem are beyond the ability of the student to change. Because of this, students from underprivileged areas of the country, like Appalachia, are more likely to incur negative results from exosystemic factors than students in more affluent locations.

Macrosystem

Perhaps the most important system as it pertains to student growth and development is the macro system. Bronfenbrenner states that the Macrosystem “refers to consistencies, in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist or could exist at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole along with any belief system or ideology underlying such consistencies.”¹⁹ This large system is made up of regional and communal values and beliefs, as well as a child’s ethnicity.²⁰ Within a macrosystem, the decisions within local government, school policy, and individual choices are made based on the beliefs and cultural

¹⁸ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 26.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

milieus of the people within that system. Without an adjustment to the larger held beliefs of a given community, the lesser decisions that directly impact student learning and the smaller microsystems of individual children may be stifled.

Though some negative macrosystemic connections may be adjusted, they are often difficult to move beyond. For example, if a child from a predominantly poor school moves to a more wealthy and affluent area with better schools, they likely will be seen as an outsider, and have difficulty taking full advantage of their new opportunities.²¹ On a macro-level, the child will still have difficulty extending beyond their station regardless of potential.

Bronfenbrenner points out that a macrosystem is manifested within the culture or subculture of a given community.²² This culture or subculture includes the neighborhood and or the community influences that surround a child. Many areas of the Appalachian region of Kentucky are remote and feature centralized themes of pride in their community. Many of these communities are in fact unincorporated areas of larger counties or towns that each hold unique regional traditions and themes. Because of this, it is not uncommon for people to never leave their neighborhood, “holler,” or community to seek broader and more diverse employment or educational opportunities.²³ For this reason, many students view the macrosystem in which they were born as the edge of their available world. It is important that those students are provided educational opportunities that expand their view of available options and possibilities to move

²¹ Sprouts, *Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems: 5 Forces Impacting Our Lives*, YouTube (Sprouts, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6pUQ4EDHeQ>.

²² Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 259.

²³ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 34.

beyond their immediate macrosystem and neighborhood. Bronfenbrenner points out that a macrosystem is manifested within the culture or subculture of a given community.²⁴

Chronosystem

The final system as described by Bronfenbrenner is the Chronosystem. Chronosystemic changes are defined as large-spread community changes that take place over time. The most abstract of the systems as defined by Bronfenbrenner, the Chronosystem is only changed or modified through years of slow and deliberate systemic changes and beliefs that influence the ethos and larger beliefs system of the community at large. Bronfenbrenner describes this as “the ecology of human development lies at the point of convergence among the disciplines of the biological, psychological, and social science as they bear on the evolution of the individual in society.”²⁵

Related Literature

According to educational philosophers Rose M. Marra and Betsy Palmer, “epistemology refers to the study of knowledge and sources of knowledge.”²⁶ The term “epistemology” comes with a level of controversy in some circles of education about a specific framing of education that colonizes disciplines and views certain practices through a white racial frame.²⁷ Marra and Palmer acknowledge that higher education institutions have taken an interest in epistemology as they are believed to influence behavior or knowledge within an educational setting. This can be

²⁴ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 259.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁶ Rose M. Marra and Betsy Palmer, “Epistemologies of the Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences: Liberal Arts Students’ Perceptions,” *The Journal of General Education* 57, no. 2 (2008): 100.

²⁷ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 1.1.

seen in the music field, with the recent push to include more theoretical and historical knowledge as part of the music canon from outside of Western Europe. Marra and Palmer propose that multiple environmental and exposure options for students can “affect the development of personal domain-specific and domain-general epistemologies.”²⁸ This links a direct connection to the theories of Bronfenbrenner and showcases a relationship between a student’s society, knowledge domain, and instructional experiences and how they develop a unique epistemological view.

Ewell’s theory is further corroborated by philosophers such as Deborah Bradley. Bradley writes, “The recent trend toward greater inclusion of world music in education often takes colonialist form through unauthorized appropriation and publication, through multiple forms of misrepresentation.”²⁹ Bradley also states, “The restrictive framework of ‘school music’ not only fails to connect with many students but it implies through omission that music existing outside of school is unworthy of study and therefore inferior.”³⁰

The concern outlined by Ewell and Bradley are both valid and reasonable. There is a well-documented history of instances surrounding epistemological colonialism in music education.³¹ Though misrepresentation and misappropriation can be a concern when presenting music forms from across the globe, it is short-sighted to assume that authentic and accurate musical study of other cultures would be inappropriate for underprivileged students. Opining on the lack of emphasis and study of music from other parts of the world beyond Europe, Bradley

²⁸ Marra and Palmer, “*Epistemologies of the Sciences*” 100.

²⁹ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 410.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 415.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 418.

goes on to say, “Within [the music education] system, aural music traditions, popular music, and even the venerated classical traditions of, for instance, India or China have little currency.”³² The percussion canon is expanding rapidly and often includes authentic and well-composed pieces of global literature.³³ The pieces that are composed often reflect the important global contributions of a variety of cultures and people groups. Within the percussion community as well there seems to be a growing interest in a variety of musical styles from across the globe, and careful consideration is often made to maintain authenticity in study and performance.

The concerns of both Ewell and Bradley raise a noble argument regarding the overemphasis of certain scholastic ensembles and instrumental pursuits over others. Bradley states, “Developing students’ unique relationships with music ought to be a fundamental goal of music education. Unfortunately, this goal is frequently neglected, even ignored in favor of developing performing groups that by their nature exclude students whose interests lie elsewhere.”³⁴ Bradley’s argument can be seen in the emphasis on competitive performance-based ensembles in many high schools, particularly in traditionally poor areas of the country. It is not uncommon for those programs to emphasize performance-based groups to justify or validate their own existence to a community or administration. The danger in this method is that it focuses too much time and resources on only one side of the music education coin and leaves out opportunities for students to have a deep study into global and culturally appropriate music that extends beyond the Western Canon.

³² Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 413.

³³ Schick. *The Percussionist’s Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 6.

³⁴ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 414.

Bradley points out a concern that “music education reproduces this epistemological tyranny through the absorption of indigenous musical forms and the imposition of Western musical concepts onto other musicking practices.”³⁵ This is to say, that the inclusion of many traditional and global musical influences and practices have been modified and westernized to properly fit into the standard academic system. This statement sits in antithesis to the statements made by percussionists and educators like Schick and Uribe, who maintain the importance of authentic and meaningful percussion study from a variety of global traditions.³⁶ Percussion literature and music affords students those opportunities, and when approached with authenticity provides students with the ability to expand their cultural knowledge. In addition, by performing these works locally within low socio-economic areas like Appalachia, the community itself benefits from the artistic and cultural expansion.

A goal of education should be to positively influence students at a variety of levels and systems to help them reach their maximum potential as people and to have the most positive influence on their community. Music educators and philosophers Wayne Bowman and Ana Lucía Frega contend that “nothing in music education should be exempt from philosophical scrutiny.”³⁷ Bowman and Frega believe that placing music education underneath the hard microscope of philosophical study creates a climate of growth within the field and that “critical analysis subverts and challenges habitual thought.”³⁸ In their compilation, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, they touch on a variety of topics that are central to the

³⁵ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 416.

³⁶ Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set*, 9.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁸ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 6.

advancement of the field of music education. Never far from the forefront of this text are the concepts about a child's growth and development.

Though Bronfenbrenner is never mentioned specifically in the text, the concepts of ecology are brought up. Specifically, the idea of "ecological sustainability."³⁹ The understanding of which is that to properly advance the field of academic music education, there must first be a recognition that music educators are often trained as musicians first, and educators second. This perceived imbalance directly influences the ecology of the classroom and shifts the focus of musical pursuit to little more than the technical demands of the instrument. According to Bowman, this is concerning for several reasons. Most notably, the "preponderantly technical orientation of modern schools, and their pathetically narrow vision of human purpose."⁴⁰ Though technical ability and proficiency of an instrument is certainly a larger portion of music education, that must not be where the process ends.

Bowman's words underscore a very real feeling in education, specifically public education. The feeling among many educators is that they and their students are little more than numbers and the quantifiable output of their classroom's terms of test scores and ratings is more important than real relationships and educational value. Bowman goes on to suggest that cross-curricular implementation of social and cultural values within a given system may positively contribute to student learning and to the growth of students as musicians.⁴¹ Bowman suggests developing the artistic and cultural education of the child is as important as the vocational

³⁹ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 484.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 485.

progression.⁴² This is also the basis for many of the programming considerations found in healthy and advanced percussion programs. .⁴³ This type of education is something that may create positive and long-lasting learning opportunities for students and lead to advancements and change within their macro system.

Bronfenbrenner's Theory in Practice

In 1964, Yuri Bronfenbrenner demonstrated his findings and submitted his theories before the U.S. Congress.⁴⁴ One year prior, Henry Caudill published his book, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*.⁴⁵ The connections between Bronfenbrenner's theory and the picture painted by Caudill are remarkable. It is clear to see the obvious associations between the work of these two men, even if their correlation was not intended. In his book, Caudill describes the systemic failures that have led to repeated shortcomings in all manner of mountain life. Specifically, he has strong words for the lack of interest in education, commonly seen in rural and Appalachian communities:

Even more ruinous than the loss of its physical resources is the disappearance of the plateau's best human material. Most of the thousands who left were people who recognized the towering importance of education in the lives of their children and craved for them better schools than Kentucky afforded. Too many of those who remained behind were without interest in real education as distinguished from its trappings. If their children attended the neighborhood schools the parents had done their duty. Too often, they were far less ambitious and such ambition, as they possessed, was to evaporate in the arms of Welfarism and the face of repeated failures.⁴⁶

⁴² Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 485.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems: *5 Forces Impacting Our Lives*, YouTube (YouTube, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6pUQ4EDHeQ>.

⁴⁵ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, X.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 326.

Caudill's words showcase the negative ramification of long-term apathy toward education within a given system. What is highlighted within this passage is the failure at each level of a child's ecological system, to properly provide and inspire students to better themselves and the entire community. Caudill's reference to the lack of ambition connects to the words of Godin regarding Icarus.⁴⁷ Those in Appalachia ambitious enough to seek a better life for themselves and gain valuable and potentially systematically revolutionary education often left the mountains for larger cities in the south or mid-west.⁴⁸ What is unfortunate about Caudill's words is that they are still mostly true sixty years after they were penned. Despite the acknowledgment and advancements of psychological and educational theories of people like Bronfenbrenner, the educational opportunities in many Appalachian school districts are perfunctory and only exist to provide the most basic educational needs of students to fulfill federal and state requirements. Godin and Caudill would likely agree that this is due to the industrialist economy and corporate expansion into the region to procure the mountains' resources.⁴⁹ However, what is perhaps the most long-standing detrimental part of the industrialist invasion of Appalachia is the influence on education in the region. It became almost a type of propaganda given to those in the region to take pride in their lack of ambition, thus giving the corporations who controlled the company towns power to maintain stability. As Godin says, "If what you dream of when you dream of success matches what the overlords need from you,

⁴⁷ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 2.

⁴⁸ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 326.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 112.

stability follows.”⁵⁰ The lack of ambition and desire to progress is reflected not just in the attitudes and social milieus of those in Appalachia, but also in the schools.

Caudill provides information that may allow researchers to make connections between the micro and macrosystemic theories of Bronfenbrenner and the attitude towards education in Appalachia. Caudill suggests that many in Appalachia focus on the secondary or tertiary portions of the academic experience more than the actual educational function of the institution. This is seen in the support of athletic teams and visible competitive factions within a school, even to the detriment of more quality educational offerings:

In these circumstances, such new schools as the bond issues provided fell prey to athletics to an extent that is difficult to overstate. The miner learned quickly to escape from the dreary routines of camp life and coal digging into the exhilaration of a basketball gymnasium or a football stadium and was far more interested in the hoopla of school sports than in the riddles of grammar and mathematics.⁵¹

This desire to forget the dreary routines of one’s lackluster life through escapism into the area of athletic events is not specific to only Appalachia. However, as can be seen in a variety of other low-income parts of the country, there is a universally held cultural belief that one of the only acceptable ways to extend beyond one’s macro system is through athletic prowess or fame. Caudill goes on to state, “[The miner’s] enthusiasm went to the sterile playing fields and his children, imbued with his infectious zeal, sought to emulate his heroes on grid and court.”⁵² This passage points out that this overemphasis on athletic competition may in effect cause negative long-term issues, and potentially harm relationships with a student and their parent. This would

⁵⁰ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 77.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 132.

represent a breakdown in the micro- and possibly even the mesosystemic spheres of a child's ecology. A child is more interested in pleasing their parent through their ability to perform on the athletic field as opposed to proficient production within the walls of the classroom. Similarly, this can be seen in the arts. It appears that the long-held belief within Appalachia scholastic culture is that arts education, and more specifically music and percussion education, serve no real purpose. Many schools in Appalachia view the arts as triviality, as the arts do not adequately prepare a student for a life of faithful labor and, based strictly on their merit, will not likely lead a student to substantial economic. It is assessed by many that the vocational need of percussion education does not warrant an encouraged and dedicated course load. This emphasis on practicality of studies is common in mountain culture and other poor areas, except when it comes to athletics.⁵³

Record producer, arts advocate, and culture icon Rick Rubin attempts to explain artistic thinking in his book *The Creative Act: A Way of Being*. In it, he defines the difference between the non-artist and the artist's view of artistic study. He writes, "To navigate our way through this immense world of data, we learn early in life to focus on information that appears essential or of a particular interest, and to tune out the rest."⁵⁴ This view is one that is often taken by community members and most notably educational administrators in Appalachia. Arts study and the pursuit of musical excellence is often viewed with suspicion or contempt. Rubin suggests a more artistic approach to education, and life in general. "As artists, we seek to restore our childlike perception: a more innocent state of wonder and appreciation not tethered to utility or

⁵³ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s, 133.

⁵⁴ Rick Rubin and Neil Strauss, *The Creative Act: A Way of Being* (Penguin Press, 2023), 26.

survival.”⁵⁵ In order to progress beyond the trappings of poverty within the Appalachian community, students must begin to view the world as an artist. For this to be effective, school administrators will have to support and encourage this artistic growth and exploration, and perhaps reconsider their own positions on education.

Social scientist and business author Adam Grant writes in his book, *Think Again*, that one of the most difficult things we can do as educators, professionals, and people in general is to rethink our positions.⁵⁶ The problem with education in Appalachia is that many times, the culture does not imbue itself to rethinking concepts that are already determined to be successful.⁵⁷ Grant references the story of BlackBerry phones, in the rise of iPhone era. BlackBerry, once the leader in the smartphone field lost huge percentages of market space due to the unwillingness to adapt to the changing landscape of needs by the consumer.⁵⁸ At around the same time of BlackBerry’s rise to prominence, a small group of engineers at Apple pitched the idea of developing a phone to Chief Executive Officer Steve Jobs. Jobs reportedly hated the idea and required convincing to even allow the product to be discussed.⁵⁹ Ultimately, Jobs reassessed his position, and allowed the project to move forward, effectively changing communication technology and essentially putting BlackBerry out of business.⁶⁰ As different parts of the country progressed in their offerings for local education following World War II, the schools of Appalachia remained stuck

⁵⁵ Rubin and Strauss, *The Creative Act*, 26.

⁵⁶ Adam Grant, *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don’t Know* (Viking, 2021), 15.

⁵⁷ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*, X.

⁵⁸ Grant, *Think Again*, 23.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

in their concepts and perceptions of the purpose of education. This would have long term negative influences for years to come.

The theoretical achievements in education and research findings posed by Bronfenbrenner open the door to larger discussion of how music education and educational theories coexist. A point discussed by Bowman and Frega is the question so commonly heard amongst administrators, “Why teach music?”⁶¹ For this question, the authors submit the point that this question opens the doors to many other questions, and thus is one that administrators often avoid. Bowman and Frega submit in their writings, “Establishing that music warrants systemic instruction leaves unanswered questions about what that instruction should involve, and how to distinguish instructional success from failures. What is music? What is value? Why teach it? How should it be taught?”⁶²

It is often the case in underserved areas of the country, that rather than question how to improve arts education for students and a community, the validity of the craft of arts education is placed into question. The entire field is a denigrated thought of as un-needed, time wasting, addition to the academic calendar. Connecting educational theory and philosophy with the philosophy of music education does a great amount of good for both fields of study. The association allows for administrators in traditionally lower or economically disadvantaged areas of the country to draw connections between the net positives of both. This is especially true in areas where music study is viewed as “an unnecessary extravagance or diversion from the

⁶¹ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 21.

⁶² Ibid.

practical business [of education].”⁶³ By providing validity to arts education, and more specifically music education, the administrative perception may be softened and more accepting.

By understanding the influence of Bronfenbrenner’s theories of ecology, and through careful study of other influential social scientists and thinkers, important connections may be made. The information as determined within this research suggests that not only is a child influenced by the ecological systems around them, but also the child themselves may in turn influence and positively change those same systems overtime.⁶⁴ To do so, there must be a clear variable to ignite this change and develop community connections. The macrosystemic intricacies of many rural and socioeconomically deprived areas lead to many artistic and socially mobile families and students leaving to find better opportunities elsewhere.⁶⁵ This research suggests that perhaps over time, the importance placed on arts, specifically music and percussion studies, may be the ignition point to help those students feel empowered to stay in their original communities, and positively influence the area.

Musical Literature

The canon of percussion literature is expanding quickly and represents common compositional practices of Western classical music as well as global scales, rhythms, and harmonies.⁶⁶ As it pertains to this research, a brief catalog of music was curated to represent a wide variety of modern as well as traditional pieces of percussion literature from across the

⁶³ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 19.

⁶⁴ Sprouts, *Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems: 5 Forces Impacting Our Lives*, YouTube (Sprouts, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6pUQ4EDHeQ>.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set*, x.

globe. This carefully assembled list of percussion selections also aimed to showcase works from traditionally under-represented composers. Frequently, percussion music is classified by distinguishing if the prominent voices are either pitched or unpitched. However, for this research, the distinctions of percussion works may be considered more abstract. Classifications included both traditional and modern works that may be described as “highly artistic,” and works from across the world that represent the different percussion traditions of a variety of cultures.⁶⁷ The works fell into three categories:

1. Traditional – Works representing conventional percussion compositional concepts.
2. Modern – Works that represent progressive soundscapes, sonic palettes, and compositional ideas.
3. Global – Works that represent music from other parts of the world. These works may be representative of the communal heritage found within a given culture.

Musical Categories

Traditional

Percussion music at the academic level is “music of the twentieth century” so the term “traditional” is used in the relative sense.⁶⁸ Traditional works for solo percussion or percussion ensemble can be described as having compositional and artistic qualities similar to other instrumental ensembles. The sonic landscape and sound palette do not necessarily reflect the unique complete options that may be provided through percussion instruments. In some

⁶⁷ Lisa Rogers, “Choices: Researching Percussion Ensemble Literature,” publications.pas.org, December 2004, <http://publications.pas.org/Education/0412>. 64.

⁶⁸ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 1.

instances, these traditional pieces of percussion are arrangements of works that were not originally composed for the percussion section. Nevertheless, these selected pieces are important in allowing an audience to witness and hear the traditional large percussion ensemble at work and provide them with quality examples of instrumentation and compositional attributes associated with percussion literature. It is critical to note that these pieces are just a small sample of a much larger library of traditional percussion works that are important and often played as part of the percussion repertoire.

Stained Glass by David Gillingham

One of the more standard large ensembles works in the repertoire of percussion ensemble literature is “Stained Glass.” Composed of eleven percussionists and a piano player, “Stained Glass” features large programmatic and thematic compositional elements which move seamlessly throughout the multi-movement work. Each of the continuous movements – Foyers, Cathedrals, and Suncatchers – were inspired by the locations and beauty of stained-glass windows around the world. The piece moves between 2/4 and 6/16 to provide a unique and somewhat mysterious rhythmic pallet. Stylistically, this piece is profoundly academic and intentionally structured. Each moment of the work draws from traditional Western-classical methods of composition (Appendix A).⁶⁹

Though this piece has stood the test of time as part of the catalog of standards within the world of percussion literature, its large scale and cinematic qualities may leave the listener unconnected with the percussion instruments represented within the piece. The addition of the piano voice, while unique timbral offering, may confuse non-musicians when listening to what

⁶⁹ David Gillingham, *Stained Glass* (Greensboro, NC: C. Alan Publications, 1994).

they had thought was exclusively a percussion piece. Nevertheless, this piece is important to the growth and progression of percussion literature, making it important to include within this study.

La Forza del Destino by Giuseppe Verdi (arr. Luke Aylsworth)

This piece is an interpretation of Verdi's opera overture "La Forza del Destino," and works well as a tool of introduction for students as they begin to study the orchestral components of opera. This work may be performed with thirteen or fourteen players and features an exciting and well-designed range of dynamic moments and melodic motifs. This compositional structure is common for many opera overtures and by adapting this work for a percussion ensemble, a new sonic pallet. From a percussion standpoint, this piece does not require an extensive level of advanced performance virtuosity such as four-mallet technique or extensive snare drum proficiency. However, this piece does require performers to display a comprehensive musical knowledge of balance and phrasing that extends beyond standard percussionist ability. The compositional elements of this piece mirror classic compositional elements (Appendix B).⁷⁰

When transcribing a larger work from the stage to a smaller ensemble, it is difficult to maintain important musical nuance within an ensemble. This can be especially true when rearranging works for different ensembles. It may be difficult to identify the subtle nuance and textural changes within this piece for those participating in the research that are not previously familiar with the compositional techniques of opera. The percussion ensemble medium allows for a unique sonic pallet to be used within the compositional and arranging process. However, the differences between the original composition of Verdi and the arrangement for percussion ensemble may be a staggering leap for some listeners who are participating in this research.

⁷⁰ Giuseppe Verdi, *La Forza del Destino* (Portland, OR: Tapspace Publishing, 2006).

Firefly by Nathan Daughtrey

Commissioned by the Texas Christian University Percussion Orchestra, “Firefly,” tells the story of the Japanese legend of the “Tale of the Heike.” This fairytale centers around the battle of two rival species of fireflies that do battle once a year. Compositionally, the piece begins in 9/8 but features many duplets and metric changes to underscore the motion of the piece. The sonic make-up of the work features a variety of traditional percussive elements, as well as unique thematic choices. This is evident in a variety of moments, such as the playing of certain passages with the birch or rattan end of the mallet to simulate the sound of insect wings flapping. The melodic and harmonic structures of the piece are derived from the implementation of words into a series of chromatic pitches using a serial alphabet. From there, the thematic elements of a battle are implied musically throughout the structure of the piece. The piece is composed similarly to that of a movie score, which will allow listeners to easily follow the pacing and structure of the work (Appendix C).⁷¹

This piece thematically represents the unique characteristics found within the legend, “Tale of the Heike.” To completely understand the subtle natures of the piece, it would be important for all students who are participating within the research to know and understand the tale itself. Within pro-contextual knowledge of the legend, it may be difficult for some students to completely understand the dramatic compositional tools that Daughtrey used in his composition. However, with some explanation of the legend and how it relates to the writing style of Dr. Daughtrey, students will be able to recognize the unique voices and textures provided within the piece.

⁷¹ Nathan Daughtry, *Firefly* (Greensboro, NC: C. Alan Publications, 2014.)

Modern

Modern percussion works, as described in this research, represent pieces that attempt to create new and exciting sonic and compositional ideas within the music. These pieces may reflect interesting uses of rhythm, timbre, or phrasing, or expand beyond traditional instruments to include electronic means and found sources. For purposes of this research, the pieces identified as “modern” percussion works, are chosen to still be palatable by an audience whose understanding of percussion methods may be limited. However, these selections still reflect the broader compositional ideas and themes that are often found in modern percussion music. Percussion composers have immersed themselves in the details of sound and sound creation.⁷² The spirit of exploration in terms of sound can be seen in the expansion of solo percussion and percussion ensemble literature. As composers push the percussion art form forward, new compositional territories are being explored.⁷³ These examples represent a small part of that expansion.

Clapping Music by Steve Reich

Written in 1972, “Clapping Music,” features the minimalistic compositional technique of “phase.” Written for two performers, performer one maintains a rhythmic ostinato for the entirety of the piece, while performer two displaces the same rhythm by one-eighth note at an appointed time. The piece eventually cycles through all the possible phases and permutations until it arrives back at the original unison rhythmic pattern. The piece may be performed by

⁷² Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 6.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 1.

clapping, or on membranonic percussion instrument. The work may also be expanded to feature the addition of other performers (Appendix D).⁷⁴

Time is Relative by Ivan Trevino

Ivan Trevino's piece "Time is Relative," attempts to hide any discernable meter within the piece. The audience often internalizes the "one" of the beats differently based on their location within the performance venue. Like "Clapping Music," there is a phase factor throughout the structure of the piece that brings the players back together as the piece progresses. The piece eventually does place a heavy "backbeat" style snare drum and electronics part to finally establish a rhythmic center, only for it to be removed again and the ambiguity of the rhythmic structure to return. Instrumentally, there is an emphasis placed on digital sounds and electronic instruments. The inclusion of digital or computer-generated sounds is becoming more frequently seen in the landscape of percussion literature. Composers like Trevino and other modern writers are becoming more comfortable in their integration of electronic sound sources into compositions.⁷⁵ This sound profile has become synonymous with modern percussion compositions (Appendix E).⁷⁶

Res(pi)t by Dave Hall

The first movement of the larger work entitled *Innerludes*, "Res(pi)t" is a piece for solo vibraphone, bowed vibraphone choir, and melodic. The melodic and harmonic structure of the piece was determined using mathematical interpretations related to pi. Though the piece is

⁷⁴ Steve Reich, *Clapping Music*. New York, NY: 1980.

⁷⁵ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 6.

⁷⁶ Ivan Trevino, *Time is Relative*, Austin, TX: Ivan Trevino Publishing, 2020.

mathematical in nature, the structure is extremely palatable for listeners and creates an eerie, dreamlike sonic quality. The combination of the bowed marimbas and melodicas creates a sonic pallet that is like that of an electronic synth or vocoder.⁷⁷

The bowing of vibraphones is an advanced technique that may be very unfamiliar to students who are not accustomed to modern percussion. However, in percussion literature, the exploration of sound and sonic qualities of items that are not otherwise viewed as musical instruments is an important component of percussion music.⁷⁸ It is often the goal to explore the broad spectrum of sound options and not necessarily the most obvious sonic choice (Appendix F).⁷⁹ Though this piece may be sonically uncomfortable for some listeners, the eerie compositional qualities and unique sounds will offer an important and challenging listening experience for the research participants.

Repente by Anders Astrand

The second movement of *Tribus Coloribus*, “Repente” is a musical phase piece that creates an interesting sonic texture through unconventional percussion implements. Astrand calls for composers to use ping-pong and tennis balls to create a unique sonic quality and texture. The piece itself is an off-set rhythmic and melodic ostinato that adds or takes away notes for each player after every repeated phrase. Written for percussion quartet, the ostinatos move between players until the climactic moment where all players dump extra ping-pong balls across the instruments and onto the floor. The rhythmic ambiguity created by this action may leave the

⁷⁷ Dave Hall, *Res(pi)t* (Greensboro, NC: C. Alan Publishing, 2019).

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 178.

audience confused as to the goal of the piece. However, the uniqueness of the work makes it memorable and interesting. (Appendix G).⁸⁰

Global

To study percussion is to study the world as a whole. Being that almost every great civilization made some type of contribution to the percussion landscape, it is easy to trace the development and globalization of music through percussion itself.⁸¹ It is important that students who study percussion at the academic level have some working knowledge of a variety of broad global percussion topics and techniques. It is also important that students be able to identify basic compositional and timbral qualities of different music from across the world. It would take years to properly explore the depths of the global percussion canon and to become a master of every style of global percussion instruments would be extremely difficult. However, these selected pieces provide a good look into some of the more popular styles of global percussion music.

Magalenha by Sergio Mendez; arr. Julie Hill; trans. Adam Hopper

“Magalenha” is a popular song by Brazilian musician Sergio Mendes. Originally recorded in 1992, it has since been reimagined by a number of artists. Percussionist Dr. Julie Hill arranged the piece for her Batucada Percussion Ensemble at the University of Tennessee at Martin, which features traditional Brazilian and Samba Reggae compositional styles, complete with vocalists and choir. This adaptation is quite different from other traditional percussion

⁸⁰ Anders Astrand, *Repente* (Stockholm, Sweden: Orange Percussion Works, 2017).

⁸¹ Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set*, 14.

ensemble arrangements and speaks to the global influence of the percussion literature. Sung entirely in Portuguese, this work requires a commitment to authenticity from the performers.⁸²

Shumba Traditional Zimbabwean; arr. Julie Hill; trans. Adam Hopper

“Shumba” was also arranged for the University of Tennessee at Martin percussion studio by Dr. Julie Hill. The Zimbabwean marimba features a single manual instrument that is naturally arranged in the key of G major.⁸³ The instruments also traditionally contain a small piece of cellophane or plastic on the bottom of the resonator to produce a buzzing sound. These instruments are paired with traditional African djembe, Shakers, and bells, and augmented with modern instruments like bass guitar, and drums set. “Shumba” is a loud and frantic piece that weaves between duple and triple meter. The piece itself also features moments for improvisation from a variety of performers (Appendix H).⁸⁴

The performance video of “Shumba” highlights for the students participating in the research not just the emotional and energetic performance style of the piece, but also forces them to focus on the unique rhythmic complexities that are common in traditional West African music.

Baila by Ivan Trevino

Ivan Trevino’s piece “Baila” for solo marimba includes the unique addition of a vocal part to the composition. In addition to the challenging and beautiful marimba part, which mirrors a Central American marimba style, the performer is required to sing the traditional lyrical

⁸² Sergio Mendes, *Magalehna*, 1992.

⁸³ “Zimbabwean Marimba Ensemble,” Eastman Community Music School, April 14, 2022. <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/community/course/zimbabwean-marimba-ensemble/#:text=Designed%20in%20the%201960's%2C%20the,is%20played%20using%20rubber%20mallets.>

⁸⁴ Julie Hill, *Shumba* (Traditional Zimbabwean, 2018.)

accompaniment in Spanish. The piece itself is a moving work that allows audience members to make a connection to not only the sonic components of the work but the lyrical and vocal motifs as well. The word “Baila” translates to “Dance” in Spanish. The piece has a clear and haunting dance-like feel (Appendix I).⁸⁵

Alloy by Andy Akiho

The steel pan is one of the more recent additions to the percussion instrument world. Composer Andy Akiho draws inspiration from his study of steel pans in his native South Carolina, as well as his Japanese heritage. “Alloy” for steel percussion ensemble includes not just traditional methods of performance on the steel pan, but a variety of other metallic and “uncomfortable” sounds. The piece is written with a variety of metric modulations to leave the listener disoriented and constantly guessing what will come next (Appendix J).⁸⁶

Chapter Summary

To properly understand the research portion of this project, it is first important to consider the theoretical importance of Bronfenbrenner’s work and how it applies to daily student life in Appalachia. The theoretical concepts discussed within this chapter highlight the structures on which the research will be based and qualified. Through a better understanding of Bronfenbrenner’s Systems of Ecology, the modern music educator may be able to draw connections between students and influences so they may better prepare students for an ever-expanding world.⁸⁷ This allows an educator to see beyond the student as just a pupil in the

⁸⁵ Ivan Trevino, *Baila* (Austin, TX: Ivan Trevino Publishing, 2017).

⁸⁶ Andy Akiho, *Alloy* (New York, NY: Andy Akiho Publishing, 2015).

⁸⁷ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

classroom and allows them to consider the whole of their circumstances, and how those circumstances affect their development via their spheres of influence. Educators can determine the best course of action to positively sway these students and potentially allow them to extend beyond their given microsystem. The structures that Bronfenbrenner describes also shed light on the concepts of growth and development within a broader chronosystem to possibly effect change over time. Bronfenbrenner's findings are further corroborated by other music philosophers and pedagogues. With this information, there is a clear directive to pursue research into this topic.

In addition to the work of Bronfenbrenner, it is imperative to comprehend the depth of percussion ensemble literature that will be discussed during this research. Students will be exposed to a great amount of modern and traditional forms of percussion literature, as well as works from across the globe. The key point of this exposure within the research is to better ascertain how percussion students from low socio-economic areas of the country, specifically Appalachia, can conceptualize and understand these pieces of literature.

The literature that is offered further enhanced the research opportunities by helping to guide the questions and proposed outcomes of the study. Through making connections between Bronfenbrenner's work, and the available percussion literature, connections are made through the research. The extensive amount of philosophical as well as musical literature allow for a wealth of information to be gathered from within the research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

There is no shortage of research on the influences of music education on the growth and development of students within a school system. However, there is a lack of adequate data regarding how percussion education may positively influence students' education and ecological development. This is especially true regarding students from low-income and economically disadvantaged rural schools. Furthermore, there is a clear lack of research in reference to percussion students, and how they conceptualize advanced musical techniques, non-western musical traditions, electronic medium implementation, and works by traditionally underrepresented composers within the ever-expanding canon of percussion literature. The purpose of this study was to gauge the understanding and conceptualization of students when exposed to percussion solo and ensemble literature. This chapter contains the methodology and approach of the research project as well as information about the participants, literature, and school environments.

Design

This study was conducted with the goal of determining how music students from low socio-economic and Title I schools from the Appalachian region of Eastern Kentucky conceptualize and understand modern percussion literature. Since percussion music as a performance idiom is a relatively new concept, this research focused on pieces that have been composed and popularized since the 1970s.¹ By employing methods of qualitative study, the

¹ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 1.

research gathered information as to how students who participate in the study are able to comprehend and appreciate these works of percussion literature.

The qualitative method is an accurate means of gathering information on a student's opinions and understanding of abstract stimuli.² Researchers John W. and J. David Creswell define qualitative research as a focus on "anthropology, sociology, the humanities, and evaluation."³ The focus of these terms worked well within the prescribed research of this topic, and students' feelings were explored as part of the larger research requirement.⁴ Due to the fact that students' individual feelings and thoughts are incalculable and un-quantifiable, the research aimed to ascertain students' conceptualizations and understanding of percussion literature by gathering data via the Likert Scale.⁵

The ethnographic component within the research was significant to the overall understanding of the topic. Through the platform of a focus group, students engaged in listening exercises and discussions while being observed by the researcher. The anthropological and sociological design of the inquiry sought to study the behaviors and actions of a cultural group, namely the students of the Appalachian region of Kentucky.⁶ This research contributes to the literature as defined by Creswell, by examining the thoughts and experiences of unusual participants from an unusual location.⁷ The participants in this study are part of an often

² Creswell, *Research Design*, 205.

³ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, 293.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

overlooked and sometimes forgotten part of the country where hope may sometimes seem dim.⁸ Though these participants are not often measured for research and review, especially when it comes to matters of arts education, it is still important to include students from this region and consider them when expanding the literature base.

Research Questions

The questions for this research were devised to add to the larger literature base and pedagogical approach to percussion education. The aim was to provide information and insight that may be beneficial to all manner of music educators and researchers, especially those who work with underprivileged and socio-economically challenged students. The ambition of qualitative research is to gain information from questions, and not objectives, hypotheses, or specific research goals.⁹ Therefore, all questioning was directed toward a specific strategy of inquiry.¹⁰ These questions and inquiries showcased the ethnographic relationships between members of the Appalachian community and percussion solo and ensemble literature.

Research Question One: How can percussion education provide students in the Appalachian region of southeastern Kentucky with opportunities for musical study that go beyond the traditional Western canon?

Research Question Two: How is modern percussion literature conceptualized by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky?

⁸ Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy*, 4.

⁹ Creswell, *Research Design*, 155.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Research Question Three: How are pieces of percussion literature from underrepresented composers received by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky?

Participants

The participants in this study were crucial to gathering the necessary information regarding the influence of percussion education on a broader student population. For this reason, students who are currently enrolled in a Title I or low-income school in Eastern Kentucky were eligible to participate. The participating students and schools were selected in advance, and represent a mixture of percussion students, non-percussion students, and non-music students within the participant field. There were numerous options for participant recruitment and acquisition of research subjects.¹¹ For this project, there was a critical partnership with participating schools and music educators. Without this direct partnership, the data acquisition for this partnership would have been difficult to achieve. This partnership was not only to help expedite and streamline the research process, but also to help lend valuable ethnographic information as to the internal climate of the participating music program, school, city, and district.¹²

The participants identified themselves as being either a percussionist/music student, a non-percussionist/music student, or a non-music student. The anonymity of the student was critical to the rest of the research. Other than these distinctions, students in no way identified themselves to the researcher. The researcher was also careful to not seek any information from

¹¹ Creswell, *Research Design*, 183.

¹² Ibid.

the participating music educator regarding the identification of research participants, or any other superfluous individual information.

Setting

The research took place on location at the participating schools, in either their music, band, or choir room. The choice of location was congruent with the writings of Creswell and Creswell regarding the characteristics of qualitative research. The participants were asked to participate in the study in a “natural setting” where they are more comfortable and confident with discussing the subject under study.¹³ The goal was for students to feel comfortable in a safe space to articulate their thoughts and feelings regarding the discussed subject matter. This setting also provided ease of accommodation for all participating schools.

Procedures

To best find the answers to the proposed research questions, procedural considerations were made.¹⁴ Students first entered the prescribed room and were given a document containing a Likert Scale. The Likert scale required the participant to define their level of understanding or agreement in response to a particular question by identifying on the scale. Each scale was categorized and represented a piece of music. Students were then shown the curated percussion selections and they graphed their responses and feelings on the provided scale with (1) representing “strong dislike,” and (10) representing extreme enjoyment. Students were then asked to articulate and openly discuss their thoughts and feelings on each selection.

¹³ Creswell, *Research Design*, 205.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 220.

Volunteers were selected from the participants after each selection to define why they either enjoyed or did not enjoy the selected piece. They were requested to hold these discussions in “as musical of terms as possible.” This was done to ascertain information from the ethnographic group being studied. Questions were open-ended and allowed the participants to answer as broadly as they felt comfortable.¹⁵ It was possible that using an open platform to inspire discussion may have influenced the overall opinion of the participants in the group. To mitigate this risk, students were also asked to write their thoughts about each piece. In addition to the provided information from the participants, the researcher observed the reactions to the pieces from the selected group. This assessment provided a glimpse into each participant's initial thoughts and feelings regarding the pieces being presented.¹⁶ The opinion data of the students as provided by the Likert Scale and the discussions within the focus group provided the information and data to be analyzed.

Data Analysis

The analysis of findings from this study were compiled using a combination of written information from the Likert scale as well as comments from the participants regarding the prescribed pieces. The Likert Scale, as well as open response portion of the study, allowed the students to expound openly on their own thoughts and feelings, while still providing hard statistical data.¹⁷

¹⁵ Creswell, *Research Design*, 211.

¹⁶ Joanna K. Hubbard, Macy A. Potts, and Brian A. Couch, “How Question Types Reveal Student Thinking: An Experimental Comparison of Multiple-True-False and Free-Response Formats,” *CBE Life Sciences Education* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2017), 2, <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.16-12-0339>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

Participants identified if they were a Percussionist-Music Student, Non-Percussionist-Music Student, or Non-Music Student. It is logical to surmise that all music students will possess the ability to conceptualize and understand musical and compositional mechanisms within a given piece of music more than their non-music colleagues. However, the research sought to identify and qualify exactly how much percussion students may be able to understand, accept, and conceptualize these unique and abstract musical choices as compared to their peers.

Based on the information gathered via the Likert Scale, the research can identify opinion trends within the study. This, combined with the open and free response portion of the questioning, and the ethnographic observations of the participants, allowed the researcher to properly evaluate the level of conceptualization and understanding of these pieces. This may provide insight into the idea that students who understand and enjoy the prescribed pieces may also begin to move out of their given microsystem and help to alter the perceptions of their immediate social sphere.

Chapter Summary

This research aimed to identify exactly how percussion students are able to understand and conceptualize percussion solo and ensemble literature, and how they may use that information to excel beyond their immediate sphere of influence.¹⁸ The research also sought to define how students from underprivileged schools in the Appalachian region of Kentucky are able to use this percussion ensemble literature to potentially grasp and implement broader global and music concepts within their community. The pieces were selected based on not only their

¹⁸ Rose M. Marra and Betsy Palmer, "Epistemologies of the Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences: Liberal Arts Students' Perceptions," *The Journal of General Education* 57, no. 2 (2008): 100–11.

sonic and compositional qualities, but also the identities of the composers themselves. Exposure to musical and compositional influences of artists that extended beyond the traditional cultural makeup of Appalachia was key to the curation of the musical selections. The idea of the research stems from the desire to approach music education beyond the White racial frame of traditional pedagogical practices.¹⁹ The data acquired within this study may open the doors for extended study into the possibilities that music education may have on traditionally socio-economically disadvantaged communities in Appalachia and beyond.

¹⁹ Ewell, "Music Theory and the White Racial Frame."

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

The indicated results of the research displayed the desired information through provided quantitative data as well as ethnographic study techniques and discussions.¹ This chapter discusses how the study provided insight into the research questions, and how the hypothesis of the investigation relates to percussion education. Through the discussions conducted during the research process, participants produced results regarding Research Question One: How is modern percussion literature conceptualized by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky? The study also allowed for the compilation of information regarding Research Question Two: How are pieces of percussion literature from underrepresented composers and non-western traditions received by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky? Finally, the study provided insight into Research Question Three: How can percussion education provide students in the Appalachian region of southeastern Kentucky with opportunities for musical study that go beyond the traditional Western canon? This final question allows for exposition and connection into the larger theoretical and conceptual ramifications, based on the work of Bronfenbrenner.²

Research Question One

The percussion solo and ensemble selections presented to the students were chosen to represent one of three categories: Traditional, Modern, and Global. The research indicated that each category attracted a specific type of student's interest. This question centered around the hypothesis that each category of student would likely comprehend and connect with a different

¹ Creswell, *Research Design*, 205.

² Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

category of percussion literature that was presented. The findings revealed that the students who participated in the research's enjoyment and understanding of selected pieces trended toward specific connections regarding their own level of proficiency with percussion and their understanding of music.

Traditional

Traditional percussion ensemble literature tended to be most well-received by non-percussionist music students (Figure 5). Based on the data as ascertained during the research, the students who participated in either instrumental or vocal music study, but were not percussionists, rated the pieces that fell into the "traditional" category the highest (Appendix N). This data is congruent with the hypothesis presented prior to conducting the research. It is also consistent with what many percussionists and composers have discussed in their own writings and research.³ These students favored the melodic and harmonic structures of these works and found them to be most akin to the large choral or symphonic works in which they perform with their respective ensembles. Though some found these pieces to be boring, all non-percussion music students acknowledge and admired the technical demands and musical nuances of these pieces, and that understanding is reflected in the average Likert Scale score (Figure 5).

The "traditional" percussion pieces fell within the standard compositional practices that many instrumental and vocal music students are familiar. Because of this, many students were able to understand and anticipate the musical and compositional choices that were being made. Often, these percussion works represent "safe" choices in the compositional development of the percussion work. Though the meters, keys, or range may be challenging as it pertains to what

³ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 178.

non-percussion music students may be accustomed to, the overall concept regarding the compositions was very easy to follow and understand.

Percussion students rated traditional percussion works as the second highest (Figure 5). These students were able to easily identify and conceptualize the structural and technical aspects of the pieces, but research revealed that many found the pieces overly composed, and somewhat boring as compared to other categories (Appendix N). The percussionists provided unique insight and discussion of these works but failed to display a level of excitement and interest in these works that equated to the non-percussionist music students. The safety and ability to understand these types of compositions was a selling point to the non-percussionists, but the percussion students discovered that safety was not interesting. The percussion students were captivated by the technical aptitudes required for pieces such as “Firefly” and less with the emotional connection of the works themselves.⁴

The non-music students displayed the least level of interest or understanding in the traditional percussion works with an average rating of 4.1 out of 10 (Figure 5). These students were both unable to grasp the compositional techniques and challenges of the works themselves and failed to show interest in the technical or thematic elements as displayed by the performers. These students respectfully expressed their lack of interest in the works and were much more interested in other categories of percussion literature. This could be due to the pieces being significantly longer, more harmonically dense, and thoroughly composed as compared to the pop or rock music to which the students are more accustomed. Record producer and professor Susan Rogers explains in her book, *This is What it Sounds Like: What the Music You Love Says About*

⁴ Daughtry, *Firefly*, 2014.

You, that a listener possesses multiple “sweet spots” in their sonic pallet.⁵ These are represented throughout the traditional aspects and components of music such as melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, etc.⁶ It could be deduced based on the responses from the non-music students who took part in the research, that the musical “sweet spot” for them was not represented in the traditional percussion offerings.⁷ Furthermore, the musical preferences of these students would likely be less indicative of personal taste and more so of culture. The culture within which these students exist places a premium on certain kinds of art versus others.⁸ There is cause to assume that this type of traditional percussion ensemble literature did not represent styles of music that were acceptable within the culture of Appalachia, which may have led to the distaste represented by the students who participated in this study. Many non-music and non-percussion students defined these works ultimately as uninspiring and quickly lost interest.

Modern

The modern percussion pieces displayed advanced sonic and compositional techniques with which many students were unfamiliar. A larger number of students who participated in the study were unable to grasp the unique and highly abstract pieces that were curated as part of this research. However, the pieces prescribed did evoke strong emotions from all participants and sparked interesting conversations and spirited debate amongst those being researched. The sense

⁵ Susan Rogers and Ogi Ogas, *This Is What It Sounds like: Why We Fall in Love with Music* (Jonathan Cape, 2022), 90.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

of modern percussion music pushing the boundaries of compositional and sonic comfort was on display amongst those participating in the study (Figure 5).⁹

Keeping congruent with the hypothesis, the percussion students were the most proficient in understanding the unique timbral pallet and compositional practices as displayed in the “modern” percussion category of pieces (Appendix N). Students were able to not only hear but also identify the sonic offerings of the works and respect the technical and unique timbral choices that were made by the composers. Percussion students proved they were able to identify subtly compositional choices within works. For example, *Clapping Music* by Steve Reich was quickly analyzed by several percussionists and correctly decoded as being one measure of music with a group of players shifting the measure by one eighth note.¹⁰ Various other choices of timbral texture and rhythmic density within the selected works were also dissected by the percussion students, leading to thoughtful discussion and debate. According to the discussions amongst students, it was easily determined that percussion participants were intrigued and delighted with the modern ensembled selections and were inspired by the compositions.

The non-percussionist music students enjoyed the modern percussion works but scored this set of pieces much lower than their percussionist colleagues. Usual comments on the works articulated the students’ lack of understanding of the technical and sonic demands of the pieces. Non-percussionist students provided insight that would lead researchers to conclude that their knowledge of advanced compositional techniques and rhythmic complexities was below what was displayed by percussion students who participated in the study. Many commented on the

⁹ Schick, *The Percussionist’s Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 178.

¹⁰ Reich, *Clapping Music*, 1980.

repetitiveness of the selections and found it difficult to detect differences in the pieces as they progressed. The data suggests the subtle nature of the compositional development was much more challenging for the non-percussionists to identify than those who studied percussion music (Appendix N).

The non-music students who participated in the study failed to properly conceptualize or understand these works and provided a shortage of quality feedback. It is not difficult to rationalize why this may be the case. For a listener to properly hear and understand many of the works as prescribed in the “modern” percussion catalog for this research, one would first need to have a basic working knowledge of musical demands and structure. The students who participated in this study lacked a basic understanding of these concepts and because of this, many were unable to properly grasp the musical demands of the pieces within this category. Many of the non-music students seemed to question the compositional importance of these modern pieces. They were often described as being hectic, noisy, chaotic, or strange. It is true the music pushed the boundaries of the traditional compositional practices, but the non-music students failed to properly account for the revolutionary tendencies of the composers based on their assessment of an immediate emotional response as opposed to technical understanding. This assessment of the curated pieces was reflected in the data (Figure 5).

This category of percussion music study is important to include within the study to provide examples of higher-level creativity within percussion compositions to the participants. According to Rogers, creativity and creative thought can be viewed as a process. When thinking creatively, the mind moves back and forth between spontaneous thinking and analytical

evaluation.¹¹ When composing a piece, the composer considers how they may analytically apply their spontaneous thoughts into a musical context.¹² This may be true for listeners as well. Students who are exposed to modern percussion works like the ones used within this study consider multiple factors regarding composition and inspiration while listening to and comprehending these selections.

Global

The category of global percussion literature was the most widely debated category from all groups within the study. The fascinating part of this discovery was the reason why each group of students found the global category intriguing. Amongst the three groups, each was able to articulate an interest in the “global” category, but each for different reasons. The connection between these students and larger global percussion compositional methods was perhaps not as uncommon as one may assume.¹³ However, the students who rated the global category the lowest were strongly opposed to the sounds of the global offerings. These polarizing interpretations of the provided literature led to spirited debate and discussion.

The non-percussionist music students enjoyed the “global” percussion choices based on the rhythmic process within the pieces. However, as a group, they scored the global pieces the second lowest among the three studied groups. Many times, the rhythmic offerings of a piece were more openly accepted than the melodic or harmonic offerings. The non-percussionist’s comments featured many opinions on the motion and rhythmic groove of the works. The non-

¹¹ Rogers, *This is What it Sounds Like*, 232.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set*, 14.

percussionist students, especially those who have been trained in vocal music, only connected with the energy of the pieces, and did not fully grasp the technical challenges of the work. Many defined the pieces as fun or lively, but few acknowledged the technical demands.

Of the three categories, percussionists rated the “global” portion of the research the second highest (Table 5). Their comments and discussions centered around the similarities between seemingly very different styles of music. For example, percussion students were able to make compositional and rhythmic connections between the music of West Africa, as represented in “Shumba,” and the Brazilian Batucada percussion ensemble performance of “Magalenha.” Cultural anthropologists and music psychologists can properly identify the reasons why these styles of music are so similar despite being an ocean apart.¹⁴ What is fascinating is that many percussion students in Appalachia were able to identify these musical connections based strictly on sonic qualities. During their discussions, students were able to draw connections and conclusions linking the two styles of music as well as making associations to many modern compositional practices with which they were more familiar. Furthermore, most percussion students were able to identify the language of the performers during *Magalenha* based not on the student’s ability to speak Portuguese, but their ability to identify Brazilian percussion instruments and techniques and ascertain the likelihood that the performer was speaking Portuguese.¹⁵

¹⁴ Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set*, 14.

¹⁵ Mendes, *Magalenha*.

Research Question One Summary

Of the three groups of students being studied, each provided useable feedback and research-quality information pertaining to the three categories of curated percussion music. Though all groups fell within the hypothetical parameters as defined by the researcher, the reasoning of the participant's enjoyment or lack of interest in musical selections allowed for the most fascinating data. Music students were more often able to articulate their likes and dislikes as pertaining to the works studied than their non-musical counterparts. This held truer for percussion students involved in the study as they were able to properly identify and eloquently communicate their likes and dislikes based on common percussion vernacular and parlance. Percussion students were also more likely to express their opinions based on rhythmic and expressive understanding as opposed to other music students, who focused more on melodic and harmonic compositional decisions. Students who study music were dramatically more confident in their answers, and able to articulate findings, feelings, and concepts better than their non-musical peers.

Table 1

	Percussionists	Non-Percussionists	Non-Musicians
Traditional	6.0	7.3	4.1
Modern	7.2	5.2	3.0
Global	6.8	5.8	4.5

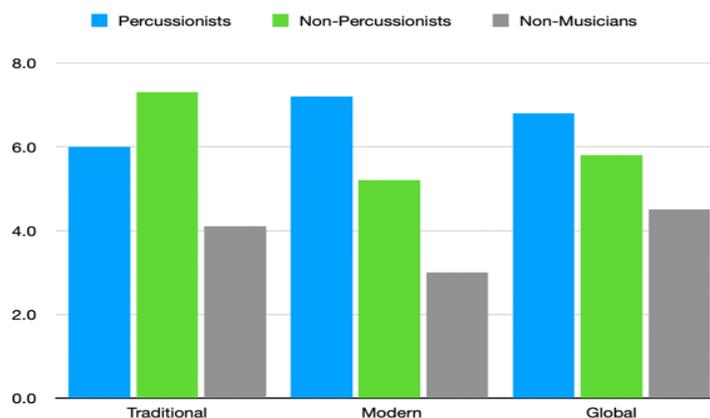


Figure 5. Graphed results from research project demonstrating average Likert Scale score response

Source: *Groove Comes to the Cumberlands*, Hopper 2023.

Perhaps the largest take away from the research regarding question one was how different the three groups of students conceptualized the provided selections. Non-music students were only ever able to determine the likes and dislikes of music based on their emotional response to the music itself. For example, when listening to *Res(pi)t* the non-music students were visibly uncomfortable with the sonic palette of the work. Students began immediately writing and defining the piece as ugly or awful. This was in sharp contrast to the music students who found the piece beautiful. Even those music students who did not enjoy the piece were still able to articulate a strong respect for the technical requirements of such a work. This drastic difference in opinion highlights the fact that non-music students in this study gravitated toward forming opinions of selections based on their initial emotional response to the selection and did not allow time for the selection to progress to completion. Furthermore, the music students, especially

percussion students, were much more likely to allow the piece time to progress before forming an opinion. These music students were also able to articulate an appreciation for technical aspects of works and not just emotional responses.

Research Question Two

The percussion community has been at the forefront of encouraging and championing new works from composers who identify as being from traditionally underrepresented groups.¹⁶ The expansion of the percussion canon and catalog of pieces is not only critically based on the sonic and compositional qualities of the works, but also the unique qualities of the individuals who create these pieces. By programming pieces from members of communities that are not traditionally represented in contemporary classical music, many percussion educators maintain that this may provide students with limited exposure to diverse communities the opportunities for engagement through music.¹⁷ The second research question conducted within this study was how are pieces of percussion literature from underrepresented composers and non-western traditions received by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of Eastern Kentucky?

Within the three groups studied, this question featured distinct trends or strata. The pieces that were composed by members of traditionally underrepresented groups were, or featured non-western musical styles were well received by all participants. However, students who have studied percussion seemed to be able to grasp and conceptualize the global and multicultural trends that were featured within these pieces.

¹⁶ Adam Groh, et al., "Creating Diverse University Curriculum," *Percussive Notes*, October 2021, 55, <http://publications.pas.org/archive/October2021/2110.55.odf#search=%22diversity%22>.

¹⁷ Groh, et al., "Creating Diverse University Curriculum."

Non-Music Students

The students who participated in the survey who were identified as non-music students were the group that was least able to fluently express their understanding and acceptance of music from other traditions. Though many found the pieces discussed interesting, the discussion portion of the focus group determined there was little to no ethnographic understanding of these global pieces or interest in diverse and under-represented composers (Appendix N). For every student who was excited and enthusiastically supported diversity within these compositions, there were a roughly equal number of students who provided very negative feedback. Sadly, when providing comments on the research sheets, some students indicated a lack of desire to understand music from different cultures based on comments with thinly veiled racist undertones.

This lack of understanding and interest in the music of other cultures showcased a prevalent theme amongst many in Appalachia.¹⁸ A cultural interest that extends beyond these close-knit communities is often met with suspicion and caution. Many in Appalachia view those beyond their borders as being non-participants in their daily life and thus require no further thought. The arts and study of music place these diverse influences on the doorstep of Appalachian residents. Noted philosopher and education reformer John Dewey once stated, “To educate is to develop the capacities and inclinations conducive to continued growth: the aim of education growth is to facilitate further growth.”¹⁹ Within the schools of Appalachia, there is a tradition of trepidation when it comes to the concept of further growth. According to Caudill, “If

¹⁸ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 132.

¹⁹ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 35.

educators within the coal fields ever thought of adding indispensable parts of an effective school system, they quietly put such thoughts out of their minds.”²⁰ What can be witnessed through this research is continued generational apprehension as it pertains to the acceptance of new ideas and viewpoints.²¹ Despite Caudill’s words being sixty years old, the same general fear of progressive education ideas seems to be in place within many students, parents, and school administrations.

Non-Percussionists Music Students

The non-percussionists were much more welcoming of the conceptual offerings of music from different cultures and underrepresented composers. Specifically, the identification of compositional choices made by composers of these pieces. For example, many non-percussionists were able to identify the elements within the pieces that were indicative of the culture being represented. The African-Percussion and 6/8 rhythmic structure was easily identifiable by non-percussionists within the piece “Shumba.”²² Similarly, Mexican American composer Ivan Trevino’s piece “Baila” was well received by the non-percussion participants. The word “baila” translates to “dance” in Spanish, an obvious connection to Trevino’s Mexican American heritage.²³ The bilingual participants in the research group who spoke Spanish were able to connect the words of the piece and the title, with the dance-like qualities and rhythmic structures contained in the music. Though some students commented that Trevino’s piece felt more like a simple pop-song than a piece of contemporary-classical solo literature, the general

²⁰ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*, 136.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 132.

²² Julie Hill, *Shumba*, 2018.

²³ Trevino, *Baila*.

concept of the piece was understood and accepted. The students who studied music and participated in the musical study at the academic level were much more open, attentive, and willing to accept compositions from members of people groups who were different than their own.

Percussionist Music Students

The percussion students who participated in the study were the most able to comprehend and conceptualize the musical offerings from other cultures. Based on the Likert Scale results, as well as the discussions following the presentation of the pieces, percussion students were much more likely to interpret the compositional as well as cultural aspects of each piece. The selections from under-represented composers and from diverse people groups were not only well-received but also well understood.

Specifically, students were able to draw rhythmic parallels between Africa, Brazilian, and Latin-American pieces that were discussed. The vocal conception of “Baila” and “Magalenna” were equally understood and commented on by percussion students (Appendix N).²⁴ More precisely, the rhythmic juxtaposition of the melodic lines versus the rhythmic parts was easily comprehended by percussion students.²⁵ The melodic and harmonic choices made by the composers represent and are influenced by their own unique experiences and musical upbringing. Additionally, students were able to identify similarities to technical approaches in performing these pieces, as well as instrumental similarities. These compositional decisions help to expose students from traditionally non-diverse regions of the country to global musical motifs.

²⁴ Mendes, *Magalenna*.

²⁵ Trevino, *Baila*.

The percussion students who participated in the survey were able to articulate the unique differences in a variety of culturally significant musical motifs and how they are interconnected.

The percussion students created quick and accurate analyses of the global pieces and immediately determined time signatures and melodic structures. They also provided insight into the region being scrutinized. For example, many were able to discuss with some level of competence the importance of the Batucada ensemble from the Northeastern part of Brazil and its connection to the slave trade. Many were also able to identify similarities to Mexican guitar styles and the marimba structures provided within Trevino's piece, "Biala." These understandings were most noted amongst the percussionist who participated in the research.

Research Question Two Summary

The evidence of this study showcases that students with formal percussion training tend to be more open to the conceptualization of global music, and acceptance of music by composers from traditionally underrepresented groups. The interest and understanding of these students as it pertains to these musical offerings help to showcase the possibility of a shift in the cultural paradigm. The students who are more open to accepting and learning from musical forms that are different from the regionally pervasive music of Appalachia may be more likely to use this new knowledge to evoke a more socially and economically open standard within their given community. This societal change may be the first step in changing the systems of ecology as defined by Bronfenbrenner.²⁶

²⁶ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

Research Question Three

Question Three directly relates to the study of Dr. Philip Ewell in his article “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame.” In this article, Ewell outlines his concerns and findings to suggest a lack of diversity in music education.²⁷ Specifically, Ewell’s concerns are not directed toward a lack of diversity in the ranks of music educators, but rather the specific canon of literature and research that students are exposed to during formal education. Ewell goes on to state his belief in a “white racial frame in music theory that is structural and institutionalized.” The final research question pertaining to the research and study conducted with participants was how can percussion education provide students in the Appalachian region of southeastern Kentucky with opportunities for musical study that go beyond the traditional Western canon? Though not directly related to the study of traditional music theory, the studies conducted showcased how students from a region of the country with limited racial diversity were able to grasp music and theoretical concepts from non-White and non-European sources.

Legal Scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw’s 1989 work on intersectionality sought to define how marginalized groups were affected within the legal system and has some bearing within the field of education.²⁸ The marginalized society in question within this study is the economically disadvantaged students of Eastern Kentucky. Many of them have not been afforded opportunities to study or experience cultures beyond those in their own microsystem. Percussion education has allowed these students to experience music and culture that extends well beyond what they would have otherwise been exposed to within their own community or through traditional

²⁷ Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame.”

²⁸ Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241-99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>.

musical study. Dr. Ewell's premise within his paper suggests that the music education offerings that many students receive are exclusively delivered through a lens of western European, mostly Germanic, composers and theorists.²⁹ However, this research showcases the efforts made to provide global and "non-White" musical offerings to students via percussion education.³⁰ Often, there is concern amongst music educators that to teach indigenous or culturally authentic music may appear to exemplify cultural misappropriation. This is done with every attempt to teach these styles properly, with authenticity and respect, to avoid this issue.

The scholastic music offerings in the Appalachian territory are often inconsistent from district to district. Within the few pockets of economic affluence in the region, one may find an occasional instrumental or vocal program that exceeds the standard of the area. However, seldom seen is a large orchestra program or instrumental program that offers a wide array of ensemble choices. More often, the options for musical study are limited to the "standard" concert band, marching band, and choral ensemble opportunities. It is common for administrations in the region to feel as though these offerings are "good enough," and provide students with a baseline opportunity for musical exploration. Of course, these same administrations are often more concerned with community perception and engagement than actual music education.³¹ What is often overlooked is the opportunities that music education, specifically in-depth percussion education may provide to students, so that they may view a world beyond their immediate micro-system and influence their community.³²

²⁹ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 4.3.1.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 326.

³² Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

Research Question Three Summary

The findings from the study showcased that most students who participated were able to positively interact and experience music that was part of the larger global perspective (Appendix N). By interacting with music that extended beyond the traditional Western canon, and music styles with which they were all extremely familiar, they were able to gain valuable insight into the larger world around them. Specifically, the percussionists who participated in the survey were able to demonstrate superior knowledge and command of the music being discussed. This does provide some evidence to demonstrate Ewell's thoughts regarding how to dismantle the White racial frame within music education.³³ However, where Ewell suggests sweeping overhauls to course study and requirements at the university and conservatory level, this research demonstrates that exposure to global percussion music at the secondary level allows students to view music through a non-western lens.³⁴ This exposure to music that extends beyond what is commonly found within a small ethnographic region or culture may allow students the opportunity to see, study, and experiences cultures beyond their immediate microsystem.

The research showcased the disproportionate level in understanding of global music and rhythms between music students and non-music students (Appendix N). Rhythmic interpretation of many of the global music offerings are much more ambiguous than that of their western counterparts. Since many of these musical traditions are based around dance, the rhythmic interpretation centers around body movement, something that is difficult to conceptualize without prior knowledge or musical understanding.³⁵ The musical word "tactus," is often used to

³³ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.1.

³⁵ Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set*, 12.

refer to where a listener feels the beat within a given musical work.³⁶ Musical gestures used to indicate time or meter are often lost on the non-musical students who participated in the study, and thus they struggled to truly conceptualize the music that was being displayed. Though many enjoyed the music on a superficial level, for the most part, participants with no musical training failed to truly understand the provided examples of global music. For many non-musicians the music from other parts of the world was considered hectic or frantic, with many students being unaware of locating the important sections of time, beat, or tempo. In “Shumba” and “Alloy,” there are obvious meter and metric changes within the pieces, and those time changes were not willingly accepted by the non-music students. The percussion students surveyed tended to be more aware of and engaged with the rhythmic permutations and differences displayed in these global works.

The research was conducted at a variety of schools in the Appalachian region of southeastern Kentucky. Some of the programs that participated in the research placed a strict focus on their percussion programs, providing students with a variety of course offerings, lessons, and advanced percussion ensembles. Other schools focused more on traditional instrumental offerings such as symphonic band, marching band, and jazz band, but did not have a dedicated percussion educator teaching their students with a faculty course load. Furthermore, other schools focused primarily on competitive ensembles, and restricted the bulk of their percussion education to the marching activity in the fall and spring with marching band and indoor drumline respectively. Though all percussion students who participated in the study exhibited advanced understanding of the percussion concepts defined within the research

³⁶ Rogers and Ogas, *This is What it Sounds Like*, 144.

literature, it was the students who had a dedicated percussion presence within their instrumental curriculum that provided the most complete and in-depth analysis.

Chapter Summary

The research provided qualitative data and information regarding the provided research questions. The determination from the data acquired would prove that students in Appalachia who study percussion and have a working knowledge of percussion pedagogy have a better grasp and understanding of broader musical and cultural concepts than those who do not. Furthermore, this information may also provide data to connect the expansion of student opportunities beyond the microsystemic offerings of the Appalachian region. For there to be an advancement in this socio-economically challenged region of the United States, it will take progressive thoughts and cultural advancement. The artistic study of broad cultures through percussion education may be a step towards the progress of the region.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the findings of the research conducted, and how it may influence future methods of music education, specifically percussion education. The influence of percussion education on students from the Appalachian region of Eastern Kentucky may possibly lead to an expansion of educational practices in other music disciplines in poor and underserved areas of the country. It is not uncommon for economically disadvantaged institutions to view music education as triviality or an extra scholastic option. This short-sighted educational outlook fails to properly dignify music education as an important course of study for all students.¹ The findings as represented within this study provide insight into exactly how important music education, and specifically percussion education is to the broader scholastic offerings for students. Through the findings in this research, it is clear that percussion education provides students with a more decidedly clear view of the world around them and gives them tools to possibly extend beyond their microsystem.

Summary of Findings

This research provided qualitative evidence that students who received courses in music education and specifically percussion education were able to conceptualize modern and global musical themes at a very high level. Despite being from impoverished areas of the country and being enrolled at a traditionally underfunded school, these students displayed a reasonable level of academic proficiency when discussing and analyzing a curated list of provided works. This is especially true when it is compared to the data provided by their peers, who were not enrolled in

¹ Bowman and Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Music Education*, 49.

any kind of percussion education or music education courses. Research Question One sought to determine how percussion education can provide students in the Appalachian region of southeastern Kentucky with opportunities for musical study that go beyond the traditional Western canon. The data and findings within this research support the hypothesis that students who studied percussion music were able to grasp valuable and broad musical and social concepts thanks to their percussion training. Research question two sought to better understand how modern percussion literature is conceptualized by music students and the student community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky. The data found in this study supports the hypothesis that the broader Appalachian community is less likely to accept or understand musical and social interests within the music that extends beyond the traditional Western canon. The third research question attempted to uncover how pieces of percussion literature from underrepresented composers were received by music students and the community at large in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky. The hypothesis of this question was supported by the data within this study. Pieces of music selected from underrepresented composers, distant cultures, or advanced compositional techniques were not as well received by the general student population within this study. However, such music was well-reviewed by music students and especially by those who are percussion students.

Opportunities for Musical Study

Within the first research question, the data supported the concept of musical study opportunities that extend beyond the Western canon for percussion students. This data directly answers the concerns of Dr. Ewell in his paper, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame.”² In

² Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 5.

this paper, Ewell suggests that the methods of study of Western European composers and theory, which are common in many American systems of education, do a disservice to music students by excluding equally important contributions of other musical composers and styles.³ Ewell provides critical evidence to support his hypothesis by evaluating standard text used in Music Theory education. Specifically, he points out that over 98 percent of the music is within the leading standard theoretical textbooks by White authors.⁴ Ewell submits that this represents the long-standing history of a White racial frame within the academic study of music and must be cause for concern amongst music educators.⁵ Though Ewell's statistical data is likely accurate, and his intentions honorable, his paper views this "White racial frame" specifically through the lens of music theory or non-percussion instrumental study. What he fails to consider is the broad social scope of information that is provided by music education to students in traditionally socio-economically depressed areas. In a sense, Ewell has forgotten about the students living in what Vance called, "a hub of misery."⁶ Music education, and particularly percussion education as demonstrated in this research, may provide students with a first-hand social connection that reaches beyond their own microsystems and positively influences their broader macrosystemic spheres.⁷

Directly, the percussionists who participated in this study were typically able to identify the variety of global and non-western instruments being used within given examples. Some

³ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 1.1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.4.

⁶ Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy*, 8.

⁷ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

students were even able to recognize the variations and differences of specific membranous and keyboard instruments in these works. For example, “Shumba” requires the use of Zimbabwean marimbas. Students were able to identify and articulate the different aspects of construction and distinct features of these instruments as compared to their Western marimba counterparts. The different features of these instruments give the unique timbral sounds provided in the piece.⁸ Without a percussion education background, these students would unlikely be able to identify, conceptualize, and articulate these differences. This is one of many examples of how percussion education may help to dismantle the proposed white-racial frame of music.⁹

Acceptance of Outside Influence

The people of Appalachia are known for being skeptical of outsiders, especially when it comes to the field of education.¹⁰ Caudill writes, “The best teachers, those with the richest gifts of inspiration and experience, drifted away, and a vicious system of intellectual inbreeding was established which has never been broken.”¹¹ The data showcased within this research demonstrates the incredulity held by the participants with no musical training toward the pieces that represented and showcased different cultures. Cynicism toward such works made it difficult for students to take a critical inventory of the music being presented and discuss it with an open mind or willingness to learn. However, those included in the survey with scholastic musical training, and specifically those with percussion training, were much more inquisitive and open to

⁸ Hill, *Shumba*, 2018.

⁹ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 1.1.

¹⁰ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*, 136.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 137.

understanding the presented works. This desire to understand stems from what music psychologist Harold Fiske defines as perception.¹² Specifically, Fiske writes that perception of musical works allows the listener to understand through musical descriptors of cultural traditions. This helps the listener to determine musical language and musical meaning.¹³

By attempting to understand and decode these musical meanings, the listener begins to unravel the specific milieus of a particular culture. This, in turn shapes the character of the listener in question.¹⁴ The worldview that many in Appalachia currently hold may be changed over time to more of an artistic stance. Most people view the world either as industrialists, artists, or neither. Godin writes, “The industrialists ask, ‘how does this threaten me?’ or perhaps ‘How can I make gradual improvements in the systems I have?’ Most of all, he asks, ‘Is it safe?’ The artist wonders, ‘How can I break this?’ or ‘Where is there an opportunity for me to change everything and make an impact?’”¹⁵ The issues that tend to plague Appalachia and other socio-economically distressed areas of the country stem from long lasting employment subjugation.¹⁶ Often, the residents of such areas find themselves in a position of having to trade their internal desires and dreams for economic prosperity. According to Godin, this leads many to follow a variety of rules and orders that are long standing in the history of industrialism. “Don’t make trouble, follow the leader, fit in even when it hurts, teamwork is what we call it when you do what the boss says, settle down, teach your children to obey, the tall poppy gets cut down; the

¹² Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 312.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 266.

¹⁵ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 85.

¹⁶ Ibid., 76.

tallest nail gets hammered, trust the system to take care of you, don't fly too close to the sun."¹⁷

A central problem with this thinking is that it is soon transferred from the factory to the school, and the education system nurtures a legion of rule followers rather than an army of artists.

The problem that is often faced by many music educators within the confines of Appalachia is that those with the power to make sweeping academic changes are artistically ambivalent and choose not to find the value in music education or percussion education. The history of inconsistency in arts education within Appalachia has shown not to produce results that are congruent with a healthy and growing cultural experience for students.¹⁸

Over time, consistent exposure to the music of other cultures may provide global context to those in Appalachia, and thus allow for an expansion of artistic expression. If nothing else, perhaps the openness and embracing of meaningful listening and cultural understanding may be adopted.¹⁹

Understanding Performance

The opportunities afforded by percussion education may also lead to progression in the field of performance. Within the discussion portion of the study, students spoke not only of the compositional qualities of the pieces in question but also of the performance attributes they witnessed. This is consistent with the idea that it is through performance that an audience may truly understand what is being presented by the performer and composer.²⁰ All of the music

¹⁷ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 76.

¹⁸ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 326.

¹⁹ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 318.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 81.

students who were studied identified and understood the methods of performance and engagement being used by the artists in question much more than their non-musical peers. The accurate understanding of cultural atmospheres within the prescribed performances were part of the larger educational benefits for percussion students within this study.

To study percussion, one must study the concept of rule breaking. The very act of percussion as a solo or ensemble concept is revolutionary. According to Rubin, “much of the artistic process involves ignoring rules, letting go rules, and rooting out rules that we didn’t know we were following.”²¹ As students study the prescribed pieces that were curated for this research, they likely saw how many of the compositional boundaries in which they were accustomed were ignored. The structure and compositional makeup of these works seemed to offer a variety of options for the listener, and an endless number of tonal options. Working beyond the standard set of rules, is a central theme of percussion composition.²²

This can extend beyond musical and social understanding of just percussion. Fiske takes the philosophical position that the traditional methods of education within public schools in the United States severely undervalues the importance of music education on all students. He submits that this is due to the improper belief that students are unable to properly understand and comprehend music.²³ For this reason, Fiske points out that music education often turns into a series of performance-based programs designed to entertain the community and promote administrative support. Fiske writes, “This amaze[s] and impresses some but repulses others who question the economic sense and educational validity of supporting programs that seem to offer

²¹ Rubin, *The Creative Act*, 206.

²² Schick, *The Percussionist Art*, 6.

²³ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 307.

little more than short lived performance spectacles.”²⁴ The concern is that this promotes the concept and public misconception that large performance ensembles provide “significant evidence for student musical understanding and thus effective music teaching.”²⁵ Connecting musical understanding through overt musical aptitude so much so that it may be successful in a competitive setting, further alienates non-musicians and widens the gap between non-musicians and those who have studied music.²⁶ This study provides evidence to showcase that despite the fact that non-musicians were unable to identify and conceptualize advanced musical and cultural components of the prescribed pieces, they held the ability upon instruction to decode and identify these elements in the works. Fiske adds, “The goal of teaching is to *cause* a learning *effect*. Teaching takes place in an environment—formal or informal—that embraces the social-cultural character of the people who define that environment.”²⁷

Significance

This study is significant for music educators, and educational administrators. Being an ethnographic study, the findings may also be useful for researchers looking to expand the economic, social, and cultural opportunities in Appalachia. Most directly, the study is significant for current and future percussion educators, so they consider different pedagogical approaches and responsibilities within a given program.

²⁴ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 309.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid. 307.

²⁷ Ibid., 310.

The broader significance of this study may also be showcased in the context of epistemological colonialism within schools in Appalachia. Music researcher Helen Phelan states, “With a growing awareness of the diversity of music in the world, as well as a recognition that the enforced dominance of Western culture globally is not defensible, musicology faces a crisis of identity and purpose.”²⁸ Phelan’s words highlight the feelings of Ewell and his claim of a White racial frame within music education.²⁹ This study is significant in providing data to outline strategies as to the importance and practicality of exposing students in poor, rural areas of the country to diverse musical opportunities.

The implication of this study also associates the work of educational philosopher Chris Higgins in defining music education as the “impossible profession.”³⁰ In his writings, Higgins points out that there are four tensions found within a music classroom. “Liberal” versus “vocational” aims in education, “high” and “low” culture within art, a teacher’s inner “musical” versus “pedagogical” interests, and between “practices” and “institutions.”³¹ The research around these statements connects with the important findings within this research. Often, the more economically unstable the school or school system is, the more likely administration is to favor vocational courses as opposed to traditional liberal arts courses. It would be more appropriate for students to develop a connection between liberal learning and culture. According to Higgins, “Liberal learning becomes associated with leisure (not labor), freedom (not necessity), the

²⁸ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 71.

²⁹ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 3.2.

³⁰ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 213.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 215.

private (not the public), the intellectual (not the practical.)”³² Very clearly, the industrial tycoons that helped to settle and establish many of the small towns and schools systems that exist to this day in Appalachia were much more interested in the laborious vocational education than culturally rich and intellectually based liberal education.³³

Higgins goes on to point out the connection between high and low forms of art.³⁴ The discussion of what music should be programmed is to be considered based on a variety of merits, according to Higgins.³⁵ Within the percussion canon, the lines between “high” and “low” art are often quite blurred. The concept of primitivity in many global and even modern percussion works is one that theoretically would connect with the shared ethos of many in Appalachia. The idea of making the best of what you have.³⁶ The shared humanitarian link between global percussion traditions and the musical traditions of the mountains is one that should be made. If for no other reason, than the shared artistic lament of seemingly forgotten peoples. However, according to Higgins, the pursuits of music interest in underfunded schools are often regarded as little more than “teenage silliness.”³⁷ Chris Higgins writes, “Nor are these pursuits and activities trivial or inconsequential. In conditions of late modernization and the widespread crisis of culture values they can be crucial the creation and sustenance of individual and group identities, even to cultural survival of identity itself. There is work, even desperate work, in their play.”³⁸

³² Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 216.

³³ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*, 326.

³⁴ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 220.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 221.

³⁶ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*, 326.

³⁷ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 222.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

One of the things this research showcases is a lack of musical risk-taking within certain sub-categories and demographics of students from Appalachia. Students who lacked an adequate level of musical education failed to consider music that was outside of their comfort zone. This was clearly showcased in the research with the unpleasant and distasteful comments provided by several non-music students. According to Susan Rogers, this provides evidence to the need of a well-rounded music education early in a child's educational career. Rogers suggests that an "appetite for risk-taking," is developed in adolescence.³⁹ Rogers goes on to state that "Behavioral psychology asserts that if you are rewarded for experimenting with unconventional stimuli, you are apt to try unconventional stimuli again."⁴⁰ Within this research it can be rationally determined that students who participated in the study often shirked any type of musical risk taking. This statement was certainly reflected in the research study, with percussion students demonstrating a willingness to take musical risks with the selected literature. The lack of interest in bold artistic expression or musical expansion underscores a larger issue within the area of Appalachia featured in the study. Without risk, there can be no reward.

Furthermore, these findings highlight the larger fear of risk taking and progressive education theories in Appalachia as a direct relation to schools in mountain communities. From one school, the most unsettling finding in the research was the lack of passionate response to any of the selected pieces. The school in question lies in one of the poorest counties in America and has struggled in the last several years to gain traction for arts programs amid obstacles and administrative difficulties.⁴¹ The students who participated in the study seemed to not love or

³⁹ Rogers and Ogas, *This is What it Sounds Like*, 82.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴¹ County Economic Status in Appalachia, FY 2023," Appalachian Regional Commission, June 30, 2022.

hate anything and remained completely indifferent. Their lack of passionate reactions to any of the presented pieces showcased a much larger problem than just a lack of cultural awareness. The indifference displayed by these students sits at the heart of a larger part of education within this community and many more in Appalachia.

Within these small enclaves, the mountain schools and their administrators often fail to consider arts education and cultural education as significant offerings that expand the outlook of the whole child.⁴² The writings of Henry Caudill suggest that this practice is nothing new in these mountain communities. The dogmatic ramifications of administration and the school's place within the mountain community is difficult to overstate. It is common for school administrators in Appalachia to function more as political figures than educators.⁴³ This idea of principals and superintendents acting in a community role rather than in the best interest of the children is a far too common occurrence in rural schools. There is a long-standing practice amongst many school administrators to use the position to line their pockets, wield power, and obtain political favor. According to Caudill, this, too, is nothing new. "The people of such [school] districts elected a trustee, whose duty it was to select and employ the teachers. Once the teachers were appointed, an elective superintendent managed the schools and 'took care that the laws be faithfully executed.'"⁴⁴

The issues with this system are clear for those who have held positions in education. The people of the school districts in question were often coerced or manipulated into electing a candidate for trustee that was more interested in the advancement of the industrialist corporation

⁴² Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 132.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 326.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

in the county, rather than acting in the best interest of the students.⁴⁵ Caudill goes on to point out that over time, this political appointment of administrators tended to lead to a nepotistic system of hirings and position placement that would have a negative influence on the schools in the mountains for years to come. This was a particular indictment on underqualified teachers that were being hired for positions within these rural schools. Caudill writes, “Having drunk but shallow drafts from the Springs of Learning, [these teachers] could hardly inspire a thirst for knowledge in the minds of their pupils.”⁴⁶ This long-lasting lack of inspiration reduced education to the most basic of tasks and set in place the mindset that learning was perfunctory at best. Caudill goes on to say, “Nor did these teachers, principals, or superintendents bring inventiveness to their tasks. They found only the basic framework of the educational system and it does not appear to have occurred to them seriously to attempt and improve their schools.”⁴⁷ Over time, these poor educational systems found in the mountains produced new generations of under-prepared and under-inspired teachers and administrators, who were more than happy to maintain the status quo, and found their duties may be performed with little to no effort.⁴⁸ Caudill states that over many years, “the best teachers, those with the richest gifts of inspiration and experience, drifted away and a vicious system of intellectual inbreeding was established which has never been broken.”⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlandds*, 133.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

The findings within this research suggest that a robust music education, specifically in the percussion realm, could lead to a long-lasting paradigm shift within the culture of many Appalachian communities. Furthermore, the application of such measure within Appalachia may be duplicated in other low socio-economic areas across the country. This imbedding of important musical and cultural instruction would be key to not only the students understanding of broad artistic topics, but also to develop a passion for all parts of the human experience. The culture shift may in turn lead to a more open minded, artistic, and culturally aware school administration, and thus more cultural and artistic options for student within these economically distressed areas. The systemic issues of education and cultural ambivalence towards the arts through artistic education carries the possibility of large-scale changes within in a community. The cycle of “intellectual inbreeding,” as described by Caudill, may be broken.⁵⁰

Limitations

With all research studies, there are limitations and blind spots that are difficult to avoid. During the research, this became apparent. According to education researchers André Queirós, Daniel Faria, and Fernando Almeida, ethnographic studies focus on four key components: observe a phenomenon, understand the cultural contextualization, record participant beliefs and attitudes, and analyze and interpret the data received regarding the phenomenon.⁵¹ Despite successful qualitative research sessions which focused on these methods, there were several limitations that may influence data and samples. The most obvious of these within this study

⁵⁰ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 137.

⁵¹ André Queirós, Daniel Faria, and Fernando Almeida, “Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods,” *European Journal of Education Studies* 3, no. 9 (September 2017): 374, <http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v0i0.1017>.

were the inconsistencies between music programs at the schools in which research was conducted. The research was made somewhat difficult due to the discrepancy and irregularity between the programs being studied. As prescribed by Queirós, Faria, and Almeida, the ethnographic research was forced to rely on surveys and discussions among students. This method tends to yield a high representativeness of the chosen ethnographic population.⁵² However, the inconsistencies from school to school, in addition to the relatively small sample size of students, showcased that those with exceedingly proficient scholastic music programs, or those who took private lessons, were more equipped to provide contextual insight than those who did not. The inequity of course offerings and music options from school to school was very apparent at times during the research, and indicative of the inconsistencies that are often found in Appalachia.

Another limitation that was found within the research conducted was the obvious variations in academic rigor between the assessed schools. The non-music students who took part in the study were wildly inconsistent in their abilities from school to school. This was to be expected when drawing from a random assortment of student populations in Appalachian schools. There is a history of inconsistencies within the scholastic offerings of the schools in Eastern Kentucky.⁵³ Though this wide array of scholastic abilities provided a broad cross-section of the population within underfunded Appalachian schools, the discrepancy generated common qualitative disadvantages.

⁵² Queirós, Faria, and Almeida, *European Journal of Education Studies*, 381.

⁵³ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 136.

The brevity of the conducted research failed to allow students the ability to meditate on and consider the musical pieces being presented to them. Often a second or third listen is required to decode all composed musical nuance of a piece. As a result, the extracted data may not have adequately captured the feelings and attitudes of students over time.⁵⁴ The understanding of students' thoughts and opinions and how they may change over time is a key component in linking the findings of this research with the methodology of Bronfenbrenner.⁵⁵ To properly prove that macrosystemic and chronosystemic change as defined by Bronfenbrenner could be achieved over time would take a much larger study. However, given the data achieved within this research, it can be determined that microsystemic change may take place through percussion study and that this is the first step toward larger and more significant change for a student and community.

Additionally, the preconceived assumptions of the researcher regarding findings may persuade the optics of various answers to fit into one category of another. The participants in the study may unknowingly be directed into one style of answer or another based on the information as provided by the researcher. This limitation could also be seen in the open-ended discussion portion of the study. Participants may have felt swayed to answer in one manner or another based on the reactions of their peers. Confident individual acceptance of a piece may have been stifled by the larger communal voice regarding a specific work.

Finally, some music educators may be apprehensive regarding the concept of cultural education through the study of percussion. Misappropriation and fear of inadvertently

⁵⁴ Queriós, Faria, and Almeida, *European Journal of Education Studies*, 378.

⁵⁵ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 286.

misrepresenting global music and social traditions is a concern of many music educators in Appalachia and the rest of the country. The writings of many modern educational philosophers seem to discourage any lack of authenticity when teaching these styles and may lead to apprehension.⁵⁶ To study musical customs of many parts of the world, one must investigate their percussive traditions. To do so connects a new student group with ancient and distant parts of the world. Without in-depth study of these musical rituals, it is difficult for students from areas of the United States that lack diversity to properly understand and conceptualize the cultures of music that are being studied. Though some may have trepidation regarding how to best approach the authenticity of these musical pursuits, it is necessary for the cultural advancement and global musical understanding of all students, especially those in remote and economically depressed regions of the country. Educators should bravely seek to educate themselves on native, indigenous, global, or hyper-specific percussion traditions.

Recommendations

Given the information and data that was obtained through this study, a recommendation would be to study the effects of curated percussion literature over a long period of time within socio-economically disadvantaged schools across the country. The problems within this ethnographic study are unique but not exclusive to the same issues that economically disadvantaged students feel across the country. To support this recommendation, researchers may look to the studies of Bronfenbrenner's theory regarding the chronosystemic changes over

⁵⁶ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 482.

time.⁵⁷ The intercultural relationship between the composer and the listener, in this case, the students in Appalachia, can change how parties within that relationship see the world.

Researchers Luciana C. Silva, Kelly Campbell, and David Wright state that stakeholders in intercultural relationships often view the world in the same way as their parents.⁵⁸ However, through the relationships between music from a variety of cultures, the students in question may be able to change that perception into a more global worldview. However, to properly ascertain the accuracy of this hypothesis, a large-scale, multi-year study would need to be conducted.

In addition, there should be considerations made at the university and collegiate level to prepare future music educators for the responsibilities of working in low-income or socio-economically disadvantaged schools. The act of working with underfunded communities is often seen as a challenge. However, there have been examples from across the globe of music education practices and methods that create opportunities for students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. The most well-known of which is perhaps El Sistema, from Venezuela.⁵⁹ El Sistema is a nationwide system of music schools and music educators that cater to the most underserved sections of Venezuela. This series of schools and institutions have produced many fine orchestral musicians that occupy seats in symphony orchestras all across the world.⁶⁰ Perhaps most notably, Gustavo Dudamel of the New York Philharmonic is a product of this

⁵⁷ Luciana C Silva, Kelly Campbell, and David W. Wright, "Intercultural Relationships: Entry, Adjustment and Cultural Negotiations," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 43, no. 6 (2012): 863, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41756274>.

⁵⁸ Silva, Campbell, and Wright, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 863.

⁵⁹ Melissa Lesniak, "El Sistema and American Music Education," *Music Educators Journal* 99, no. 2 (2012): 63, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23364289>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

innovative music education system.⁶¹ At the university level, it may be wise to begin training future educators with the tools and resources needed to work in underfunded schools in disadvantaged areas of the country. Exposure of future music educators to the needs of communities like Appalachia is key. Programs that stress outreach and student engagement with local communities like CNAFME are great examples of options already set in place to better prepare future educators.⁶² The expansion of these resources is imperative to the continued development of connections with music educators and the underprivileged communities they serve.

Implications for Practice

There are many possible implications for the research conducted within this study beyond Appalachia. Underfunded and impoverished schools across the country have much to gain from the research within this study. Furthermore, the implications may also lead to the conclusions gathered by future researchers of just how other instrumental pursuits may positively influence students' understanding and conceptualization of cultures beyond their own microsystem.

In addition to the positive implications of practice within the field of education, the field of percussion composition may also be positively affected. The students who study percussion music at the scholastic level may in turn become composers themselves who draw inspiration from these same works and pieces of art. The connection point between underprivileged students and the larger world around them may in fact be a piece of percussion literature. Recognizing

⁶¹ Melissa Lesniak, "El Sistema and American Music Education," *Music Educators Journal* 99, no. 2 (2012): 63, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23364289>.

⁶² "Collegiate NAFME," NAFME, March 29, 2023, <https://nafme.org/membership/collegiate/chapter-materials/>.

that fact, these same influenced students may grow up to become composers, and thus create new works of inspirational percussion literature. Composition has always been a key component of the percussionist's art.⁶³ The very discipline itself is maturing in real-time with many important composers from around the globe still living, or only recently deceased. Schick writes:

Imagine a pianist who is older than the oldest piece in his or her repertoire. Or imagine what it was like to play the first performance of the Brahms Violin Concerto or a Bach Cello Suite. Imagine in Essence what it was like when the music we think of as classical—that is to say, established, revered, inalterable was still new and unformed. You do not have to imagine, this is the current state of solo percussion, an instrumental art form that was born and has matured within the span of the lifetimes of many of us.⁶⁴

Schick points out that the creativity displayed in all manner of percussion literature draws from a unique and complex history of global traditions.⁶⁵ By exposing students to these global traditions in conjunction with music from the Western classical canon, the music educator may extend the educational process far beyond the standard White racial frame.⁶⁶

Conclusion

The towns and communities within the Appalachian Mountains are a nation unto themselves. Lampooned as hillbillies, rednecks, or just for being backward, the struggles of this region are well known, but rarely addressed. Caudill writes:

A plethora of articles and feature stories have been written in national magazines and metropolitan newspapers about this paradox of medieval stagnation in the midst of twentieth-century prosperity and progress, but none of them has traced the long road over

⁶³ Schick, *The Percussionist's Art Same Bed, Different Dreams*, 178.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 178.

⁶⁶ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 3.5.

which the Southern mountaineer has traveled to the helplessness and hopelessness which so frequently marks him today.⁶⁷

Caudill's writings still hold as true today as they did in the early 1960s, showcasing little advancement regarding the concerns of the Appalachian people, and specifically Appalachian education. Just as it is imperative for musicians to understand the culture of the music in which they play, it is important for music researchers to understand the culture of communities like Appalachia. Percussion education may provide students in this region with the ability to extend beyond the microsystem and cease to be the "anchor dragging behind the rest of America."⁶⁸

This information is important for impoverished communities all over the country. Educator and social scientist Mathew Desmond discusses in his book, *Poverty, By America*, that in 2018, over one-million students within public schools in the United States were reported as homeless.⁶⁹ Furthermore, about one in fifty Americans received food from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, many of which were children.⁷⁰ These statistics showcase what Nobel laureate Angus Deaton reported, also in 2018, that over five million people in America were considered "Absolutely poor by global standards."⁷¹ This information at the surface level, though heartbreaking, is not necessarily of great importance to the overall themes of music education and percussion education. However, it does showcase the desire of scholastic institutions in poor communities to focus on remedying the systemic issues of poverty rather than

⁶⁷ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s, xii.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Matthew Desmond, *Poverty, by America* (London: Allen Lane, 2023), 18.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

concentrating on growing a robust arts program. What these schools would be wise to consider, however, is that through arts programs and the study of creativity, these children may be provided with the tools in which to break the system of poverty in which they find themselves.

Higgins points out the disconnection between administrative goals and artistic pursuits in the “impossible profession.”⁷² Higgins states:

It is a highly abstract conception of the school as an input-output machine whose activities are to be understood as transforming measurable input into measurable output. Schools are to be rewarded when the ration of output o input is high and the cost of production that ration is low. Schools are to be penalized when the ration is low, and the cost of production is high. The input consists of the raw material, the entering students. The output is in the test scores and examination results...It is the application of the input-output model to schools that makes it appropriate and revealing to rename the principal of a schools its “chief executive.”⁷³

This pedagogical format of education tends to lean on the idea of convention and results, and places administrators in the positions of executives, as opposed to educators.⁷⁴ Conversely, music and arts educators prize the concepts of nuance and innovation within their craft, seeking new ways to provide information and experience to their students.⁷⁵

Within the research conducted for this project, there is evidence to support the idea that through music education, and specifically percussion education, students in Appalachia may be provided opportunities to extend beyond the struggles of the mountains as described by Caudill and extend beyond the education machine as defined by Higgins. Furthermore, the broadening of musical and cultural horizons through percussion study may in turn establish a pathway to

⁷² Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 227.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

dismantling the proposed “White-racial frame” of music education.⁷⁶ Ewell’s argument regarding racial bias in music education may be subverted through percussion education. Percussion education may provide a philosophical understanding of culture as opposed to one that is just theoretical.⁷⁷ According to music philosopher Keith Swanick, “there is no way of acquiring dispositional knowledge of music except by repeated occurrent experiences of it.”⁷⁸ Providing students in Appalachia with repeated and consistent exposure to percussion music allows them to experience, interact, and learn from a wide variety of cultures and people.

Harvard University professor Howard Gardner points out that music courses do much more than just support other academic programs.⁷⁹ Instead, the emphasis of music educators must be placed on supporting the fact that music allows students the opportunity to experience the world and a unique form of human and cultural expression.⁸⁰ To create opportunities for student engagement, and to provide them with the most prospects despite a lack of socio-economic adequacy, the data within this research demonstrates that the student may be best served through opportunities in percussion education. Not only does this create education and performance opportunities for students from impoverished areas like Appalachia, but consistent study may lead to acceptance of broader cultural factors.⁸¹ These artistic/performance occasions

⁷⁶ Ewell, *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*, 1.

⁷⁷ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 328.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁷⁹ John L. Benham, *Music Advocacy: Moving from Survival to Vision* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2016), 58.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 312.

may positively influence not just their own microsystem but could also constructively change their local community.⁸²

Broadly, the research within this study signifies a potential path forward for students in Appalachia. The region is long known for a resistance to change, and a general trepidation toward social and cultural progress. The fear and trepidation felt by many in the mountains of Kentucky are equated with a desire to remain rooted in their own culture. The concern that one may exceed their social station harkens back to Godin's findings regarding Icarus. The central moral of the story of Icarus is one that many in Appalachia would take to heart. A young man, daring to achieve greatness, is tossed down violently due to his hubris and ambition. What is frequently forgotten in the myth is that Daedalus didn't just tell his son to be cautious of flying too high, but to also be cautious of flying too low, because the water would ruin the lift of his wings and weigh him down, impeding his ability to fly.⁸³ According to Godin, this part of the myth is intentionally omitted. "Society has altered the myth, encouraging us to forget the part about the sea, and created a culture where we constantly remind one another about the dangers of standing up, standing out, and making a ruckus. Industrialists have made hubris a cardinal sin but conveniently ignored a far more common failing: settling for too little."⁸⁴

The people of Appalachia are not strangers to making a ruckus and are not known to shy away from a fight.⁸⁵ The problems in Appalachia, however, stem from the systemic

⁸² Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 2.

⁸⁵ Gladwell, *Outliers*, 165.

shortcomings in education designed by the very same industrialist Godin mentions.⁸⁶ The public schools in many areas of Appalachia were founded and monitored by timber, rail, and coal companies.⁸⁷ The schools in these company towns of years ago were far more interested in a workforce that was just educated enough to do the job at hand efficiently and with minimal risk of injury. What they certainly did want were mines, fields, and factories of people who longed for more, and had a desire to change the world, and their community.⁸⁸

Since art and music from other parts of the world represent something that is distinctly un-Appalachian, they are therefore looked upon with concern and suspicion. When the coal companies finally loosened their grip on the communities in Appalachia, the schools that were left behind were slow to change and embrace progressive educational concepts.⁸⁹ What remained, however, was a pride of local community that has turned catastrophic over time, with many in the mountains viewing acceptance of outside influence as treason. The remaining spectacles over athletics and community events were common in these societies to further imbed the desire of the masses to remain complacent in their station, and ambition to succeed beyond the mountains was met with disapproval.⁹⁰ It became far more socially acceptable to remain within one's local community than dare be an Icarus, and search for greatness. There became only a few socially acceptable ways to escape poverty in Appalachia, and education was not one of them.

⁸⁶ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlandds*, 134.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 2.

⁸⁹ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlandds*, 131.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

This sentiment is shared with other traditionally impoverished communities as well. The words of rapper J. Cole reflect a similar situation within the African American community. In Cole's song "January 28th," he states, "What's the price for a black man's life? I check the toe tag and not one zero in sight. I turn on the TV, but not one hero is in sight. Unless he dribble or he fiddle with mics."⁹¹ Latino rapper Immortal Technique shares a similar perspective with the Hispanic community in his song *Third World*, stating, "It's amazing how they've trained them, to be racist against themselves in the place they was raised in."⁹² The industrialist concept of education that Godin describes is one that seems to purposefully place barriers to growth and development amongst people with lower socio-economic status.⁹³ In Appalachia, this obstruction of growth had a long-standing influence on not just the microsystem of students within these mountain schools, but also the entire culture itself.⁹⁴ Through generations, the mountains became more and more isolated, and the desire to understand the world outside of Appalachia evaporated and was replaced with fear and suspicion.

Deborah Bradley writes, "Some of life's most important lessons are learned not in schools, but through the process of living."⁹⁵ By providing percussion education opportunities to students from low socio-economic schools, an educator in turn provides them with a process of living that may prove significant in a child's educational career. The findings of music researchers and important educational theorists seem to agree that experience within a child's life

⁹¹ Jermian Cole et. al, *January 28th*, n.d.

⁹² Felipe Cornel, *Third World*, n.d.

⁹³ Godin, *The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly*, 2.

⁹⁴ Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 136.

⁹⁵ Bowman and Frega, *The Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education*, 412.

is just as important as lessons in classroom. What this research hopes to showcase for the people of Appalachia and other communities of low economic mobility is that Bronfenbrenner's findings can work in either direction. Meaning that just as ecological systems influence a child, the child may in turn influence those same systems and create changes over time.⁹⁶ With enough children eager and engaged in the learning process, and open to the concept of growth and cultural expansion, the very fabric of Appalachia and other poor communities may be changed for the better and the cycle of poverty may be broken. Educators may be wise to listen to the shifting priorities of the current educational landscape. Rubin states, "whenever an instinct toward movement and evolution arises, it's wise to listen to it. The alternative—being trapped by fear and losing ground—is a dead end."⁹⁷ The hope is that through music education, and more specifically percussion education, the students of Appalachia may be able to expand their own horizons and fearlessly seek to study and understand cultures that extend far beyond the Cumberlands. In so doing, they open the door for chronosystemic change that may break the cycle of poverty and positively influence generations to come.

⁹⁶ Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 13.

⁹⁷ Rubin, *The Creative Way*, 221.

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b.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Stained Glass

25th Anniversary Edition
STAINED GLASS

COMMISSIONED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
DOUGLAS WOLF, CONDUCTOR

DAVID R. GILLINGHAM
(ASCAP)

I. FOYERS

$\text{♩} = 96$

7

Percussion 1
Bells, Xylophone

Percussion 2
Crotales, Bells

Percussion 3
Chimes, Anvil

Percussion 4
Marimba (4-oct.)

Percussion 5
Marimba (4.3-oct.)

Percussion 6
Marimba (5-oct.)

Percussion 7
Vibraphone, Sus. Cym.,
2 Crystal Glasses

Percussion 8
Vibraphone, Crash Cyms.,
2 Crystal Glasses

Percussion 9
Bass Drum, Tam-Tam,
Temple Blocks (5)

Percussion 10
4 Low Concert Toms, Triangle,
5 Roto-Toms, F3 Crotales

Percussion 11
5 Timpani

Piano

David Gillingham

Stained Glass

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Appendix B: La Forza del Destino

Level: Med-Advanced
 Approximate playing time: 4'00"

La Forza del Destino

Giuseppe Verdi
 arr. Luke Aylsworth

♩ = 120 ♩ = 200 8

Glockenspiel
 Xylophone
 Vibraphone
 Marimba 1
 Marimba 2
 Marimba 3
 Chimes
 Synth/Crotales
 Timpani

Dead strokes

Bass Patch

Giuseppe Verde

Arr. Luke Aylsworth

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Appendix C: Firefly

CONDUCTOR'S SCORE

Commissioned by the Texas Christian University Percussion Orchestra, Brian A. West, Conductor

FIREFLY



NATHAN DAUGHTREY
(ASCAP)

$\text{♩} = 180$

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Nathan Daughtry

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Appendix D: Clapping Music

♩ = 160-184 Repeat each bar 12 times

1
clap 1

2
clap 2

f

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

12/72

The musical score consists of 13 numbered measures, each with two staves. The top staff of each measure contains a sequence of eighth notes and rests, while the bottom staff contains a sequence of quarter notes and rests. The notes in the top staff are primarily eighth notes, with some eighth rests. The notes in the bottom staff are primarily quarter notes, with some quarter rests. The measures are numbered 1 through 13. Measure 13 is followed by the number 12/72. The score is marked with a forte dynamic 'f' at the beginning of measure 1. Each measure is enclosed in a double bar line with repeat dots at both ends.

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Steve Reich

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Appendix E: Time is Relative

4 Time is Relative

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system covers measures 31 to 35, and the second system covers measures 36 to 40. The instruments are arranged as follows:

- EK (Euphonium/Kontrabaß):** Bass clef, playing sustained chords with long horizontal lines.
- ED (Euphonium/Drum):** Bass clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks above them.
- Mrb. 1 (Maracas 1):** Treble clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.
- Mrb. 2 (Maracas 2):** Treble clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.
- Mrb. 3 (Maracas 3):** Treble clef, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.
- V1 (Violin 1):** Treble clef, playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment.
- V2 (Violin 2):** Treble clef, playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment.
- V3 (Viola):** Treble clef, playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Measures 31-35: The EK part has four measures of sustained chords. The ED, Mrb., and V parts have five measures of rhythmic accompaniment.

Measures 36-40: The EK part has four measures of sustained chords. The ED, Mrb., and V parts have five measures of rhythmic accompaniment.

Ivan Trevino

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Appendix F: Res(pi)t

INNERLUDES
I. res(pi)t
for Elizabeth

dave hall
(ASCAP)

$\text{♩} = 60$

Solo Vibes

Bowed Vibes 1 (3 players)

Bowed Vibes 2 (3 players)

Melodica 1 (2 players)

Melodica 2 (2 players)

Dave Hall

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Appendix G: Repente

25 **F** 3

Vib.

Mar.

Mar.

Mar.

29 **G**

Vib.

Mar.

Mar.

Mar.

33 **H**

Vib.

Mar.

Mar.

Mar.

Anders Astrand

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Appendix H: Shumba

33

Full Score

Xyl.

Xyl.

Xyl.

Mar.

Mar.

Jembe

Shek.

Gogos

Bass

Dr.

Zimbabwean Traditional

Arr. Adam Hopper

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Appendix I: Baila

4.6 oct. Marimba + Voice
for middle voice
(one performer)

Baila

from Song Book, Vol. 2
Commissioning consortium led by Ben Pitt

words and music
by Ivan Trevino

83

E6sus4 Emaj E6sus4 Emaj E6sus4 Emaj E6sus4 Emaj

Voice

Marimba *mp*

5 Emaj E6sus4 Emaj C#m9

co-mo la flor en el vien-to, se mue-ve a-sí, a-sí, a-sí.

8 G#sus4 G#m Amaj(add9) F#m11

Un pa-si - to a-de-lan - te, un pa - si - to pa-ra a-tras. Ra -

Ivan Trevino

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Appendix J: Alloy

SCORE

ALLOY

FOR THE FOUNDRY STEEL PAN ENSEMBLE
Commissioned by & Written for the 2009 Bang On A Can MarathonWWW.
ANDY AKIHO
.COM

PRESTO $\text{♩} = 186$

UNISON (4 MALLETS)

TENOR PAN 1 (C4-E5)

ff [■ = foot, ◆ = rim, (●) = skirt]

UNISON (4 MALLETS)

TENOR PAN 2 (C4-E5)

ff [■ = foot, ◆ = rim, (●) = skirt]

UNISON (4 MALLETS)

DOUBLE 2ND (E3-A5)

ff [■ = foot, ◆ = rim, (●) = skirt]

DIVISI (B/rf & C/rf)

TRIPLE GUITARS (3 CELLOS)
QUADRAPHONICS (4 CELLOS)

ff [■ = foot, ◆ = rim, (●) = skirt]

(6 BASS: RVA LOWER SEMPRE)

TENOR BASS/
6 BASS PANS (RVA LOWER)

ff

[/ = LOUDEST UNISON POSSIBLE] [x = GRADUATED RESONANT METALS]
(PICK 2 METALS = KICK DRUM) [● = GRADUATED DRY METALS]

METALLIC DRUMSET

ff [■ = KICK DRUM]

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Andy Akiho

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Appendix K: Parental Opt. Out Form

Parental Opt-Out Form

Title of the Project: The Influence of Percussion Education on Underprivileged Schools in the Appalachian Region of Kentucky.

Principal Investigator: Timothy Adam Hopper, Doctoral Candidate, School of Music, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
--

Your child is invited to participate in a research study. To participate, he/she must be 13 to 18 years old, and an in-person enrolled student and a school from the Appalachian region in Eastern Kentucky. The student must be enrolled in a school that resides in a county that is labeled as economically disadvantaged or a Title I school. Students may be percussion students, non-percussion music students, or non-music students. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to allow your student to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of the study is to determine if percussion students from rural and economically disadvantaged areas in Appalachia can understand and conceptualize globally and compositionally advanced pieces of music through the study of percussion literature.

What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to allow your student to be in this study, I will ask them to do the following:

1. To listen, watch, and respond to media featuring modern pieces for percussion.
(30 minutes approximately)
2. To chart your thoughts and opinions of the showcased pieces on the provided Likert scale and provide additional comments as desired.
(20 minutes approximately)
3. To engage in discussion and dialogue at the discretion of the facilitator.
(20 minutes approximately)

How could participants or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include providing qualitative data to further advance the research of music and its influence on students from economically depressed areas.

What risks might participants experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and faculty sponsor will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other members of the focus group may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.
- Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After three years, information will be destroyed, and hard copies shredded.

Is the researcher in a position of authority over participants, or does the researcher have a financial conflict of interest?

The researcher serves as a teacher within the Pulaski County School District. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate or not participate in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should be done if a participant wishes to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw your child from the study or your child chooses to withdraw, please contact the researcher at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw him/her or should your child choose to withdraw, data collected from your child will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your child's contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Adam Hopper. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at aahopper1@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Thomas Goddard at tpgoddard@liberty.edu

Whom do you contact if you have questions about rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher[s], **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Opt-Out Option

If you would prefer that your child NOT PARTICIPATE in this study, please sign this document, and return it to your child's teacher/school office/etc.

Printed Child's/Student's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Appendix L: Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: The Influence of Percussion Education on Underprivileged Students in the Appalachian Region of Kentucky

Principal Investigator: Timothy Adam Hopper, Doctoral Candidate, School of Music, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
--

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a student, between 13-18 years of age, enrolled in a Title I school in the Appalachian region of Kentucky. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?
--

The purpose of my research is to determine how students from Appalachia conceptualize and understand percussion solo and ensemble literature.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Attend an in-person discussion. The discussion will involve listening to musical pieces and rating them on a worksheet, as well as providing any relevant comments. This discussion will take approximately 80 minutes to complete and will be conducted at school. If you choose to not participate, you will be asked to go to an alternate room for the duration of the discussion and will be given an alternate assignment.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include advancing the research of music and its influence on students from economically depressed areas.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
--

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and faculty sponsor will have access.

- Participant responses will be kept anonymous.
- Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. After three years, the data will be shredded.

Is the researcher in a position of authority over participants, or does the researcher have a financial conflict of interest?

The researcher serves as a teacher within the Pulaski County School District. To limit potential or perceived conflicts, the data collection will be anonymous. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate or not participate in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the worksheet without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation, and do not submit your study materials. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Adam Hopper. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at aahopper1@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Thomas Goddard, at tpgoddard@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

Appendix M: Likert Scale

I am a:

Percussionist ____.

Non-percussion Musician ____.

Non-Musician ____

Percussion Research Scale

Stained Glass by David Gillingham. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments _____

La Forza del Destino by Luke Ayres 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Firefly by Nathan Daughtrey. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Clapping Music by Steve Reich. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Time is Relative by Ivan Trevino. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Innerludes: res(pi)t by Dave Hall 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Tribus Coloribus by Anders Åstrand 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Alloy by Andy Akiho 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Magalhena by Sergio Mendes 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Shumba traditional Zimbabwean. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

Baila by Ivan Trevino 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10

Comments : _____

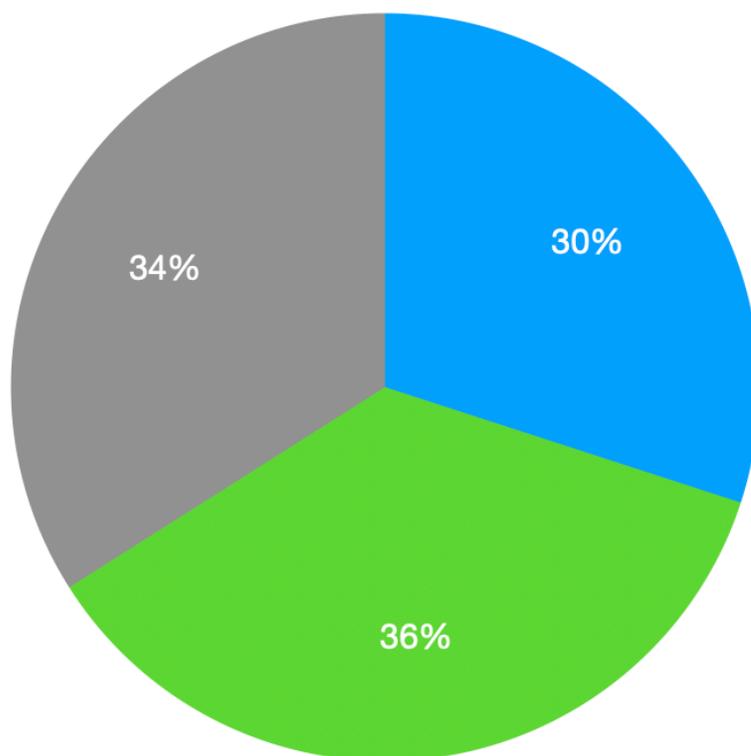
Overall or General Comments:

Appendix N: Data Graphs

Percussionists

Traditional	6.0
Modern	7.2
Global	6.8

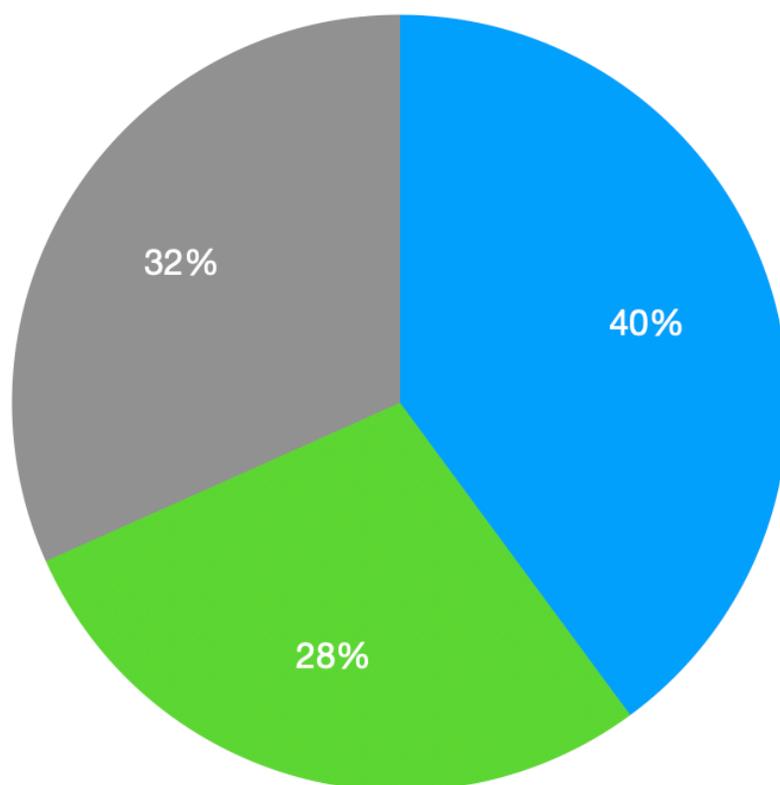
● Traditional ● Modern ● Global



Non-Percussionists

Traditional	7.3
Modern	5.2
Global	5.8

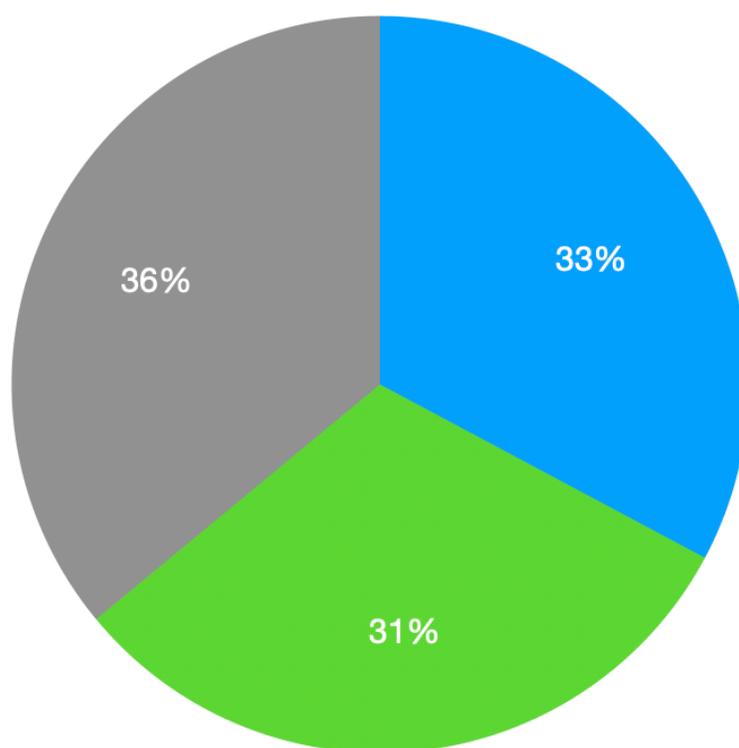
● Traditional ● Modern ● Global



Non-Musicians

Traditional	4.1
Modern	3.9
Global	4.5

● Traditional ● Modern ● Global



Appendix O: IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 11, 2023

Timothy Hopper
Tommy Goddard

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY22-23-868 The Influence of Percussion Education on Underprivileged Students in the Appalachian Region of Kentucky

Dear Timothy Hopper, Tommy Goddard,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: May 11, 2023. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,



Appendix P: Doctoral Thesis Defense Decision Form

Doctor of Worship Studies or Doctor of Music Education

Doctoral Thesis Defense Decision

The thesis Advisor and Reader have rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

Timothy Adam Hopper

on the Thesis

Groove Comes to the Cumberlands: The Importance of Percussion Education in Appalachia

as submitted on 10/25/23

Full approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.
The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.

Provisional approval pending cited revisions.
The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

Redirection of project.
The student is being redirected to take MUSC/WRSP 889 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

J. J. Du
[Redacted signature]

Thomas Boyd
[Redacted signature]