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The Thrill is Here:

An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience

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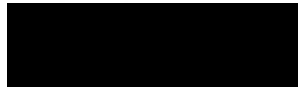
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and to my wife,

Whitney, whose love and support made this possible.

Acknowledgments

Abstract

This instrumental case study aimed to discover blues music education's pedagogy, content, and teaching strategies. This was accomplished by examining authentic blues teaching through the lenses of music learning theory, the Danielson framework for teaching, and the spiral curriculum. The study built on literature relating to the historical, musical, and extra-musical contexts of the blues, popular music, community music, and workshop settings. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience served as the single case for investigating authentic blues music education. Nine instructors, two students, two interns, and two board members participated. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, live observations, and video recordings. Themes were identified through applied thematic analysis, in which codes were deductively created from the research questions and inductively identified by studying the data. This study found eight themes and four other findings that describe the pedagogy, content, and teaching strategies of blues music education in an authentic setting. Immersion and Student-Centered describe the pedagogical approach. Simplicity and Standard Knowledge describe the content. Demonstration and Experimenting describe the teaching strategies. Feel and Improvisation provide an overview of blues music education. The other findings include classroom management and evaluation as formal considerations. Music as language and songwriting present other findings related to informal learning. Implications include practicing music in authentic settings, implementing popular music in the school curriculum, and including blues in the classroom. The conclusion includes recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Blues, music education, popular music, regional music, spiral curriculum, music learning theory, Danielson framework for teaching

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Dozens of students of all ages convene in Clarksdale, Mississippi, for a Robert Johnson-esque blues journey each year. Unlike Johnson, disappearing for an unknown time and making an alleged Faustian deal at the crossroads are unnecessary measures for modern students. As an alternative to a deal with the devil, the Pinetop Perkins Foundation offers an annual Workshop Experience that lasts four days and provides a high-quality blues music education in an authentic setting. The Workshop is named after the legendary blues pianist and GRAMMY winner, Joe Willie "Pinetop" Perkins. It occurs every June at the Shack Up Inn and Hopson Commissary in Clarksdale, MS. This study sought to discover the pedagogy, content, and teaching strategies of the master blues musicians who teach at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience.

Background

History and Society of the Blues

Blues history books usually begin with two stories. The first is of Charles Peabody, the white man from Boston who recognized the value of music in the southern black culture. Peabody was the first academic to write about blues music. In 1901, he traveled to Coahoma County, Mississippi, to conduct an archeological dig but found a new music within the southern African American culture.[1] Peabody published an article about the music of African Americans in the Mississippi Delta.[2] He writes about the style and even includes remembered lyrics, many

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[1] Roger Stolle, *Hidden History of the Mississippi Blues,* (Charleston: The History Press, 2013) 3-5.

[2] Charles Peadbody, "Notes on Negro Music," *The Journal of American Folklore* 16, no. 62 (Jul. – Sep. 1903).

still present in blues songs today. The music he describes is the beginning of blues music, even before William Christopher Handy had his own discovery story a few years later.[3]

W.C. Handy is the second story most historians tell of the blues. Originally from Alabama, Handy was a trained African-American musician. In 1903, he encountered a man at a train station who introduced him to a new kind of music. The music he describes in this train station experience is what a modern listener would identify as blues. A few years later, Handy's second experience comes through the tale of a lost gig. While performing with his dance band, the Knights of Pythias, a Cleveland, MS crowd requested the band play their "native" music, which Handy admits in his autobiography their inability to do so.[4] The descriptions he provides of the music are those of the blues, written from the perspective of a trained musician.[5]

These two stories are necessary for the foundation of the current research. Two threads emerge of significance regarding the blues. First, formally trained musicians struggled to perform in this genre of so-called untrained musicians from the beginning. Second, blues musicians tend to continue making music. Since formally trained musicians struggled to achieve in this genre, this study examined the differences between training in this form of popular music and formal training.

A Popular Genre

The first description of blues music is currently over 120 years old. In the intervening years, the blues became solidified as a popular genre: music was published, records were produced, radio shows were run, and the blues were present for every step. Stars who traveled

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[3] Stolle, *Hidden History of the Mississippi Blues,* 3-5.

[4] William Christopher Handy, *Father of the Blues: An Autobiography,* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944): 76.

[5] Francis Davis, *The History of the Blues,* (Cambridge: De Capo Press, 1995): 23-27.

and gained national and international popularity emerged from the genre. The blues remained an independent genre while also giving way to newer styles of music: the Rhythm and Blues (R&B) of the 1940s, the Rock and Roll of the 1950s, and several sub-genres following.[6] The blues was the first truly American form of music and influenced every other American genre since its inception. Muddy Waters discusses the struggle of coexisting as a blues musician during the emergence of Rock and Roll. He states a change in audience and a necessary altering of style to maintain listeners. This led Muddy to take his music across the pond, which accomplished a great deal for growing the blues internationally and even strengthening support in the United States.[7] This study examined the blues as both historical music and popular music.

<div style="text-align:center">Popular Music Pedagogy</div>

Popular music pedagogy is an essential topic in the realm of music education. Roger Mantie examines that American schools are often resistant to including popular music in the traditional track, often citing problems with curriculum and repertoire.[8] This resistance documents formal education's shortcomings regarding popular music training. Mantie does not specify the inclusion of blues pedagogy in this examination of discourses. Scholars have not identified a proper curriculum or repertoire of blues music in the literature.

David Rolandson identifies a difference in the motivation of secondary students who choose popular music courses and traditional ensembles. He finds that including popular music courses is likely to encourage new or different students to participate in music, as opposed to

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[6] Davis, *History,* 209, 227-230.

[7] Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues,* (New York: Penguin, 1981): 255-258.

[8] Roger Mantie, "A Comparison of 'Popular Music Pedagogy' Discourses," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 61, no. 3, (October 2013): 346-348.

programs that only offer traditional ensembles.[9] Rolandson does not identify the type of popular

music provided in these courses. Therefore, the case Rolandson examines does not include a

specification of blues music. The literature does not identify a popular music course in a

secondary school specific to blues.

<div align="center">Lifelong Music Making</div>

Several researchers examined the concept of lifelong music-making. In a trade journal,

Hannah Smeltz discusses the belief that positive practice techniques encourage students to

continue music-making after graduation.[10] Brian Weidner also determines practices from a

traditional ensemble, which he believes leads to continued music-making.[11] These practices gear

towards building musical independence through a social band environment, student-led

engagement, and teacher facilitation. Weidner's case study examines a non-auditioned,

traditional ensemble. Each example provides a framework for developing lifelong music makers

in a formal environment.

Janice Waldron and Kari Veblen examine community music through informal means.[12]

They conducted a case study on musicians involved with Celtic traditional music, in which the

musicians learned the style of music late into life and in informal sessions. The researchers

identify a focus on aural learning, the importance of improvisational ability, a connection, or lack

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[9] David Rolandson, ""Motivation in Music: A Comparison of Popular Music Course Students and Traditional Large Ensemble Participants in High School." *Contributions to Music Education* 45, (2020): 115-117.

[10] Hannah Smeltz, "Reframing Student Practice to Facilitate Lifelong Learning," *Music Educator's Journal* 99, no. 2, (December 2012): 54.

[11] Brian N. Weidner, "Developing Musical Independence in a High School Band," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 205, (Summer 2015): 77-83.

[12] Janice Waldron and Kari Veblen, "Learning in a Celtic Community: An Exploration of Informal Music Learning and Adult Amateur Musicians," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 180, (Spring 2009.

thereof, with formal education, and an attitude of "serious fun," which is imperative to each participant.[13] The current study compared Waldron and Veblen's Celtic community music to blues as community music, often trained informally and requiring similar focuses.

Roger Mantie identifies leisure as an essential concept for continued music-making. In his book on community and leisure music, he argues that music and leisure create a spirit that, in his words, "makes life worth living."[14] Music educators should consider part of the job as what has been called leisure-education, focusing more on creating amateur music makers rather than growing audiences.[15] This study examined blues musicians in professional circles and non-professional circles, including artists who consider blues as leisure.

Theoretical and Sociological Perspective

Framework for Teaching

Charlotte Danielson established a framework for teaching intended for use by professional and pre-service educators to improve practice.[16] She presents her framework as a matrix with four domains of teaching responsibility: Domain 1 is centered on planning and preparation; Domain 2 focuses on the classroom environment; Domain 3 practically explains the needs of instruction; and Domain 4 reflects on professional responsibilities.[17] She also provides academic terminology with working definitions for the practitioner and gives examples of each

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[13] Waldron and Veblen, "Learning in a Celtic Community," 68-72.

[14] Roger Mantie, *Music, Leisure, Education,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 242.

[15] Ibid., 229.

[16] Charlotte Danielson, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching,* 2nd edition, (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007):

[17] Danielson, *Enhancing Professional Practice,* 26-30.

domain and sub-domain in practice. A handbook incorporating the framework that provides models for observing the domains in practice accompanies the original text.[18] This study employed Danielson's framework to guide understanding teaching practices in a musical setting and uses the handbook to adequately observe those practices in context.

Spiral Curriculum

Jerome Bruner presents three themes for education relevant to education. First is "the process of intellectual development for children," second, "the act of learning," and third, "the notion of the 'spiral curriculum.'"[19] The processes of intellectual development refer to the stages in which children grow and are prepared for new levels and types of learning, because of which, Bruner states, every subject can be taught to a person at the correct time and in the appropriate context.[20] According to him, learning occurs from acquisition to transformation to evaluation.[21] This second discussion supports the concepts of scaffolding and depth of knowledge. Finally, Bruner proposes a "spiral curriculum" in which he states that "any subject can be taught to any child in some honest form," and therefore, later curricula present as "more complex versions of the same kind."[22] This study examined teaching and learning blues music through the lens of Bruner's theories.

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[18] Charlotte Danielson, *The Handbook for Enhancing Professional Practice: Using the Framework for Teaching in Your School,* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2008): 13-16.

[19] Jerome Bruner, *The Processes of Education,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960): 33.

[20] Ibid., 40.

[21] Ibid., 48.

[22] Ibid., 52-53.

Music Learning Theory

Edwin Gordon provides a music learning theory (MLT) examining how children learn music. His theory includes the components of audiation and learning sequences in music. Audiation is the process of sound becoming music when given internal meaning.[23] It is musical thought, like how a person can think words internally and give them meaning before speaking. Audiation is a process that progresses through stages and has various types, each of which is a distinct component necessary for MLT. Learning sequences are the progressions of the natural order in which children should learn music.[24] Bluestine summarizes MLT by examining what is called the "whole-part-whole" nature of music learning, in which a whole is presented then part of a whole is closely inspected before the whole is recapitulated.[25] This study examines blues music education in context through the lens of audiation and MLT.

Statement of the Problem

The blues is a popular genre of music that provides contemporary entertainment, knowledge of history, and insight into culture. Musicians who perform this music learn to play their instruments or sing, develop a style consistent with the blues genre, and build upon a repertoire over a century in the making. Scholars need to clarify when, where, why, and how these musicians learn to play or sing the blues. While popular music pedagogy is a growing trend in the United States, researchers must include blues pedagogy.[26] Those who include the blues in

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[23] Edwin E. Gordon, *Learning Sequences in Music,* (Chicago: GIA, 2012): 3.

[24] Ibid., 145.

[25] Eric Bluestine, *The Ways Children Learn Music: An Introduction and Practical Guide to Music Learning Theory*, (Chicago: GIA, 2000).

[26] Mantie, "A Comparison of Discourses;" Rolandson, "Motivation in Music."

their pedagogical discussion often leave music out of their discourse. Shirley McLoughlin thoroughly studies cultural aspects of the blues using situated themes, which she calls metaphors, to discuss non-musical blues concepts.[27]

Practical pedagogy is often omitted even when modern scholarship includes blues music. The blues is relegated to isolated exercises or studies without stylistic, historic, or otherwise authentic context in musical literature, such as method books. One example of this type of exercise is found in a guitar method book, which identifies a short piece of music as a blues song but does not provide a composer or lyricist, an explanation of style, or a tempo. It is not presented in a standard blues form.[28] Such representations do not present authentic or high-quality content or pedagogy of blues music.

Most historians acknowledge the Mississippi Delta as the birthplace of the blues.[29] Clarksdale, MS, is a historic and modern blues performance and education center. Contemporary blues musicians in Clarksdale need a voice in academic literature. Finally, researchers discuss formal and informal training but need to include the blues in these discussions. The problem is the literature has not fully addressed the teaching strategies, musical content, and standard pedagogy for the musical aspects of blues music from an authentic setting.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this case study is to discover the strategies, content, and pedagogy used by blues teachers in an authentic workshop setting. The study accomplished this purpose by examining blues music education through the lenses of music learning theory, the framework for

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[27] Shirley Wade McLoughlin, "A Pedagogy of the Blues: A Dissertation," PhD Diss., (Miami University: ProQuest, 2006).

[28] Will Schmid and Greg Koch, *Guitar Method Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2002): 16.

[29] Davis, *The History of the Blues*; Palmer, *Deep Blues*; Stolle, *Hidden History.*

teaching, and the spiral curriculum. Performance ability and pedagogical skill identify blues teachers. A blues teacher is any blues musician who purposefully, willingly, and authentically educates a student or students in the blues music genre. They may regularly teach as their primary source of income, irregularly for supplemental income, or occasionally for events such as masterclasses or workshops. The sample for this case study comes from the instructors, students, and board members of the 2023 Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation selects each instructor for their strong musical and pedagogical reputation.

This case study focused on discovering the workshop instructors' teaching strategies, musical content, and standard pedagogy. The first variable was teaching strategies. In this context, a teaching strategy is any action to instruct students. The researcher differentiates teaching strategy from pedagogy by defining pedagogy in theoretical and scientific terms, discussed as a method. Finally, the content is the body of knowledge communicated to the students by the instructors. Therefore, this study discovered the teaching strategies, content, and pedagogy used by the eleven instructors at the annual workshop.

Significance of the Study

This study sought to contribute to the current body of literature regarding music education and the blues genre. First, academic literature must include the study of blues music education. While researchers include other music traditions, such as traditional Celtic music, they often omit blues.[30] Historically, musicians and authors vindicate the blues as a genuine art form and a piece of American history. However, contemporary educational settings relegate the

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[30] Waldron and Veblen, "Celtic Community," 70.

blues to this limitation. This study sought to include authentic blues music education in contemporary academic literature.

Second, researchers broadly study formal and informal music education but omit the blues. Mantie and Rolandson observe that popular music pedagogy is widely discussed in formal and informal education.[31] This study aimed to include a musical pedagogy of the blues in the discussions of both formal and informal educational settings. A case study set in an authentic location with reputable blues music educators provides an empirical overview of the formal and informal significance of blues music training. This study sought to provide such an empirical overview.

Finally, an empirically written pedagogy of blues music will benefit music educators. First and most practically, blues musicians wishing to become teachers will be more equipped to refine their pedagogical effectiveness. Second, formal, non-blues music educators will be fitted to allow their students to learn the blues genre in formal and informal settings. Third, educators and researchers of other popular or regional music forms will have a pattern by which a pedagogy may be discovered in authentic, high-quality settings. Finally, the students will benefit from an expanded music education and the potential to become lifelong music-makers.

Research Question and Sub-Questions

- Central Research Question: What pedagogy is implemented in blues training institutions that influence students with an authentic experience and a high-quality music education?
  - Sub Research Question 1: What is the content knowledge of blues music?
  - Sub Research Question 2: What teaching strategies are implemented to engage students in learning?

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[31] Mantie, "A Comparison of Discourses;" Rolandson, "Motivation in Music."

- Hypothesis 1: The pedagogy implemented in blues training institutions includes methods consistent with informal music lessons, private studios, and masterclasses.

- Hypothesis 2: The content knowledge of the blues form is repertoire, artistic styles, and common idiomatic musical passages, including historical and cultural background knowledge.

- Hypothesis 3: The teaching strategies implemented by blues instructors include modeling, imitation, creating, and performing, consistent with current research and educational theory.

Definition of Terms

Blues: Both a popular art form and a cultural art form, "with blues notes and worrisome lyrics... the tradition of a particular people [African Americans] and culture [slavery and sharecropping]."[32] In this study, the term is used to describe the popular genre of music which the cultural art form has influenced.

Delta: A geographic region bordering the Mississippi River in Mississippi and Arkansas.[33] Historically, this region is considered to have a low socioeconomic status.

Juke Joint: An authentic venue for Blues music.[34]

Summary

This case study responded to the need for empirically provided blues music teaching strategies, standard pedagogies, and content knowledge. Blues music teachers work in formal

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[32] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 36.

[33] Ibid., 21-22.

[34] Ibid., 63-64.

and informal settings to carry on the tradition of this historic genre. The reputation, experience, and expertise of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience instructors place them as an ideal sample of high-quality, authentic blues music teachers. Discovering the strategies, content, and pedagogy used at the Pinetop Workshop provides insight for blues educators and music educators of many other kinds.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter examines various fields relevant to the study of blues music and establishes the theoretical framework for the current study. First, this chapter establishes the theoretical framework of this study, including three sub-sections on Charlotte Danielson's framework for teaching, Jerome Bruner's learning theory, and Edwin Gordon's music learning theory.[35] The second section examines the historical context of blues music. Next, the third section investigates formal blues study outside of the field of music. The fourth section reviews blues as a popular music, including a brief examination of the history of popular music studies in K-12 settings and the blues as a popular music form. The fifth section identifies blues as community music and examines other examples of music for community, leisure, or region. Finally, the sixth section briefly explores music education in a workshop setting. This chapter seeks to identify a gap in the literature using formal music education and education theories to examine blues music education.

Theoretical Framework

This study seeks to examine blues music education through a formal education lens. Three education theories allow a study of blues music to contribute to the contemporary music education discussion. First, Danielson's framework for teaching establishes educational terminology and provides the lens to begin thinking of blues music in formal education.[36] Second, Bruner's learning theory provides an overview of how students learn the blues and how

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[35] Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); Charlotte Danielson, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, 2nd edition, (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007); Edwin Gordon, *Learning Sequences in Music,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2012).

[36] Danielson, *Framework.*

instructors teach the blues.[37] Bruner's theory includes three modes of learning within a spiral curriculum. Finally, Gordon's music learning theory places a study of blues music in the conversation of formal music education. Gordon's theory includes a discussion on aptitude, the types and stages of audiation, and sequences for tonal and rhythmic learning.[38]

<center>Danielson's Framework for Teaching</center>

Danielson's framework provides a system of evaluation and support for professional teachers. This study employs the framework to establish terminology used in formal education and apply that terminology to blues music education. Danielson divides the framework into four domains and twenty-two components. This study employs the first domain: planning and preparation.[39] Battersby discusses the use of Danielson's framework in a music education context and implores music teachers to seriously consider building professional communities, as required in domain four, to establish a positive and thriving music program culture.[40]

Content

Danielson defines content as the information, skills, and issues about a particular subject.[41] Teachers require mastery of content knowledge to convey accurate information, applicable skills, and appropriate questions to the students. They also need awareness of both

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[37] Bruner, *The Process of Education*.

[38] Gordon, *Learning Sequences.*

[39] Danielson, *Framework,* 3-4.

[40] Sharyn L. Battersby, "Reimagining Music Teacher Collaboration: The Culture of Professional Learning Communities as Professional Development Within Schools and Districts," *General Music Today* 33, iss. 1 (October 2019): 16.

[41] Danielson, *Framework,* 44.

traditional knowledge in their field and newly found developments and knowledge.[42] Therefore, mastery of content knowledge means the instructor is aware of common factual knowledge and continues to develop and add to their knowledge.

Danielson also requires teachers to remain knowledgeable of resources. She defines resources as anything that aids the teacher's instruction in the classroom, including curriculum books, outside experts, or even external sources of knowledge used outside the classroom. Resources may aid academic development or assist students with needs beyond the classroom.[43] Therefore, instructors must also employ resources of all types to ensure student success in and out of the classroom.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy includes the techniques and practices related to conveying information to students so that the knowledge becomes their own. Loughran laments that pedagogy and teaching are terms often used interchangeably. Instead, pedagogy should refer to the "teaching and learning relationship."[44] Considering pedagogy in this way allows the teacher to base specific strategies, resources, and content on the learning needs of the students. Therefore, content, resources, and pedagogy knowledge will vary based on the teaching and learning relationship context.[45] Teaching is problematic because there is no one way to teach successfully; therefore, teacher preparation should focus on pragmatic application to various situations.[46]

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[42] Danielson, *Framework,* 44-45.

[43] Ibid., 53-55.

[44] John Loughran, "Pedagogy: Making Sense of the Complex Relationship Between Teaching and Learning," *Curriculum Inquiry* 43, no. 1 (January 2013): 135.

[45] Loughran, "Pedagogy," 135; Danielson, *Framework,* 45.

Consequently, it is imperative to learn the variety of content, resources, and pedagogical practices found in an authentic setting of blues instruction.

Bruner's Learning Theory

Jerome Bruner's learning theory involves learners moving between three modes of representation through a spiral curriculum. Music educators employ his theory as an approach to music teaching, which requires understanding the learner's needs at a particular time and making pedagogical or curricular decisions based on those needs. Bruner also examines education from a cultural perspective, providing modern educators with a description of how culture influences education. Bruner's theory helps to establish the framework for the current study in three ways. First, the culture surrounding blues music and of the blues shapes the way instructors approach teaching the blues. Second, this study seeks to identify how blues learners move through the modes of representational learning. Finally, this study aims to discover the characteristics of a spiral curriculum within authentic blues instruction.

Culture of Education

Bruner establishes a constructivist philosophical perspective in his writings, identifying that meaning is a culturally constructed symbol passed through generations.[47] Education is a piece of the culture constructed through common beliefs, standard practices, and a general understanding of how educators believe children learn.[48] Individual ideas about pedagogy are formed through cultural norms and personally lived experiences.[49] Bruner calls this "folk

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[46] Loughran, "Pedagogy," 135.

[47] Jerome Bruner, *The Culture of Education,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990): 3.

[48] Ibid., 11.

[49] Ibid., 14.

pedagogy," or the fact that people guide children by their ideas of what a child's mind is like.[50]

Therefore, blues instructors teach learners in ways that relate to the blues culture and in response

to their personal experiences regarding blues education.

Teaching, then, is based on the learner's mind rather than the teacher's mind.[51]

Instructors begin with assumptions of children's minds and then act on those assumptions. For

example, if an instructor believes the child will learn best by seeing an action, he will use

demonstration and imitation, or if he believes the child will learn best by being told, he will use a

didactic approach.[52] Identifying the strategies employed by blues instructors provides a glimpse

of the thought process behind how they believe the learner will best learn the blues.

Modes of Representation in Music

Bruner theorized that children move between three modes of representation. The stages

are enactive, iconic, and symbolic. Enactive learning involves experiencing music, iconic

learning adds images to the experience, and symbolic learning adds reason to the images and

experience.[53] Employing icons allows students to move between the stages of representation and

will enable them to make meaning of their musical experiences, such as listening to music.[54]

Bruner also examines an "episode" in which learning occurs in three stages: acquisition,

transformation, and evaluation. He summarizes the stages by stating that an episode involves

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[50] Bruner, *Culture*, 45.

[51] Ibid., 46.

[52] Ibid., 51-52.

[53] Shelly Cooper and Laura Dunbar, "The Magic of Manipulatives in the General Music Classroom," *Kodaly Envoy* 43, no. 1 (Fall 2016): 4-9.

[54] Audrey Berger Cardany, "Sound Stories for General Music," *General Music Today* 26, no. 3 (April 2016): 42; Cooper and Dunbar, "Manipulatives," 6.

"getting facts, manipulating them, and checking one's ideas."[55] This study seeks to identify ways blues instructors employ the representation sequence during blues training and examine learning episodes in a blues setting.

Spiral Curriculum

The premise of Bruner's spiral curriculum is that students may be taught any subject at any level with honesty.[56] Teaching with honesty means that every aspect of a curriculum should be valuable for an adult.[57] Nelson found that private piano teachers tend to follow a method book's sequence of content, most of which do not follow Bruner's sequences.[58] This study seeks to discover whether the learning sequence of blues music follows Bruner's line.

Parker finds use in Bruner's theory for learning a language. He finds the learning process is not linear but recursive and, as he puts it, "revisited in different ways," building on previous reactions and knowledge.[59] The spiral curriculum describes how a subject may be honestly taught to any student at any level to build on prior knowledge and skills. This study seeks to discover the characteristics of a spiral curriculum in authentic blues instruction.

Gordon's Music Learning Theory

Edwin Gordon, like Bruner, establishes his learning theory based on how children learn rather than focusing on how to teach.[60] Gordon focuses instructional practices on the child's

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[55] Bruner, *Process of Education,* 48-50.

[56] Ibid., 33.

[57] Ibid., 52.

[58] Patty K. Nelson, "Piano Curriculum," *MTNA e-Journal* 6, iss. 4 (April 2015): 13-31.

[59] Jerry L. Parker, "Curriculum Design Research as a Learning Experience and Teachable Moment," *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue* 24, no. 1/2 (2022): 266; Bruner, *Process of Education,* 53.

[60] Gordon, *Learning Sequences*.

mind. He seeks to change assumptions about how students think so that teachers may base pedagogical and curricular decisions on the needs of children. Much of Gordon's theory compares music learning to language acquisition. Music learning theory (MLT) begins with a child's aptitude for performance, defines the musical concept of audiation, establishes learning sequences specific to music, and supports a whole-part-whole approach to instruction.

First, MLT is a theory rather than a methodology or system. Gordon argues the differences between approaches, methods, and systems regarding pedagogy. Approaches are general considerations, methods are specific strategies, and systems are the tools employed by a method.[61] MLT is a theory more closely aligned with an approach and does not seek to be a method or a system. The purpose of MLT is to inform pedagogical decisions for music education. Gordon claims that pedagogy may refer to system determinations, such as shape notes or solfege and sequence.[62] He further claims that pedagogy should account for differences among students and that the purpose of learning is for students to develop self-learning through the ability to generalize and infer.[63]

Aptitude

Gordon developed a music aptitude test to determine a child's potential for music performance. His theory on aptitude coincides with how MLT coincides with language acquisition, in that children learn their primary language "intuitively" and, after early childhood, must become more intentional about learning a new language.[64] Gordon only intended for

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[61] Edwin Gordon, *Corybantic Conversations,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2008): 31-32; Eric Bluestine, *The Ways Children Learn Music,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2000): 8.

[62] Gordon, *Corybantic Conversations,* 62.

[63] Ibid., 147.

aptitude to predict performance ability, which Hanson finds is the only accurate use of the

aptitude test.[65] The setting for the current study includes learners of all ages, which may inform

the practices of the instructors regarding music acquisition depending on aptitude.

Audiation

  The central theme of MLT is the concept of audiation. Gordon defines this concept in his

seminal work by stating, "Sound itself is not music. Sound becomes music through audiation

when, as with language, we translate sounds in our mind and give them meaning."[66] Audiation is

the process of giving meaning to sound through musical thought. Audiation is also felt through

space, which refers to internalizing music components to provide meaning, which applies

separately to rhythm, melody, harmony, improvisation, creativity, and expression and

interpretation.[67]

  Gordon explains that eight types of audiation occur in six stages. The stages of audiation

are sequential, but the types are not necessarily sequential.[68] The types of audiation involve

listening to, reading, writing, recalling and performing, recalling and writing,

creating/improvising, reading and creating/improvising, and writing and creating/improvising.[69]

The stages of audiation include short retention, imitation, establishing tonality and meter,

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[64] Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 248.

[65] Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 248; Josef Hanson, "Meta-Analytic Evidence of the Criterion Validity of Gordon's Music Aptitude Tests in Published Music Education Research," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 67, iss. 2 (2019): 205.

[66] Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 3.

[67] Edwin Gordon, *Space Audiation,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2015): 26-27.

[68] Gordon, *Learning Sequences*, 13.

[69] Ibid.

retention, recollection, and then anticipation.[70] Audiation provides meaning to sound through these eight types and six stages. This study examines the types and stages of audiation implemented in blues music instruction.

Learning Sequences

Two components of MLT provide essential understanding for practical applications in a teaching and learning setting. First, there are four types of learning sequences: skill, tonal, rhythm, and pattern.[71] The learning sequences describe the natural sequential way students develop musical skill. For example, Gordon describes the order in which students learn the different rhythmic meters most naturally. Second, patterns are an integral component of the practical application of MLT. Teaching the sequences of skill, tone, and rhythm occurs through the instruction of patterns. Bluestine describes the general sequence of MLT as "sound before sight before theory."[72] This sequence directly relates to Bruner's modes of representation. First, students must experience as an enactive experience. Second, students then relate the sounds to an icon by sight. Finally, students learn the theory of music through symbols. This study seeks to discover the sequences of blues instructions.

Whole-Part-Whole

Bluestine argues that employing a "whole-part-whole" approach to teaching is integral to applying MLT. He summarizes that the first "whole" is an introduction to the concept, the "part" is an application of a specific concept or pattern, and then the concept is reinforced in the second

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[70] Gordon, *Learning Sequences*, 18.

[71] Ibid., 93.

[72] Bluestine, *The Ways Children Learn Music,* 35.

"whole."[73] This study analyzes instances of whole-part-whole instruction as employed in blues music education.

<center>Summary</center>

This study employs three theories to examine blues music education. First, Danielson's framework for teaching provides a framework for understanding content, pedagogy, and subject knowledge.[74] Second, Bruner's learning theory supports a cultural understanding of education, provides insight into the modes of representation, and introduces a spiral curriculum.[75] Finally, Gordon's music learning theory establishes the concept of audiation, provides learning sequences for music, and discusses the importance of music aptitude.[76] Each theory is a lens by which this study seeks to examine blues music education in an authentic setting.

Review of the Literature

The academic study of the blues ranges from historical storytelling of the genre and its development to artistically examining the music and lyrics and from social discussing the people from which the blues comes to identifying modern-day representations of the music. Adam Gussow explains that scholars examine the blues from many perspectives: historical, musical, ethnomusicological, sociological, biographical, racial legacy, as literature, and practically as a musician.[77] To adequately examine the blues taught in a modern-day educational workshop, one

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[73] Bluestine, *The Ways Children Learn Music,* 18; Cooper and Dunbar, "The Magic of Manipulatives," 6-7.

[74] Danielson, *Framework.*

[75] Bruner, *Process of Education.*

[76] Gordon, *Learning Sequences.*

[77] Adam Gussow, *Whose Blues?: Facing up to Race and the Future of the Music,* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020): 13-14.

must understand the context of blues, emphasizing how the blues was taught historically. Modern blues educators also draw from contemporary understandings of popular and community music.

One of the earliest academic studies published about blues music is Charles Peabody's *Notes on Negro Music,* circa 1903.[78] Peabody wrote this article after working on excavating an "Indian Mound" in Coahoma County, Mississippi, during which time he experienced the music of southern African Americans.[79] The Harvard professor never uses the word blues but clearly describes music a modern audience would recognize as blues music.[80] Peabody describes the music's improvisational and syncopated nature and discusses the content of the songs, including troubled times, romance, and nostalgia.[81]

Roger Stolle, a Clarksdale local blues expert, identifies that there are at least two critical definitions for the blues. First, blues is a popular style of music. Contemporary musicians may perform a blues song just as they may perform in a country, rock, or rap style. Second, blues is a "cultural art form." The blues developed through the African American's experience of slavery and sharecropping as a specific style of music coming from a "common people of uncommon origins."[82] Therefore, the modern scholar and musician must understand blues as both a genre of music and a historical, cultural art form.

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[78] Charles Peadbody, "Notes on Negro Music," *The Journal of American Folklore* 16, no. 62 (Jul. – Sep. 1903): 148-152.

[79] Peabody, "Notes," 148; Roger Stolle, *Hidden History of the Mississippi Blues*, (Charleston: The History Press, 2011): 21; Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues,* (New York: Penguin, 1981): 23.

[80] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 22; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 23.

[81] Peabody, "Notes," 149.

[82] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 36.

Historical Context of the Blues

The experience of sharecropping was a unique situation that created a way of life in which the blues was more than just a musical style. Davis claims, "The blues wasn't just an approach to music, but a state of mind."[83] It is a collision of cultures uniquely created from the juxtaposition of African and European mindsets during slavery and sharecropping in the American South.[84] The harshness of post-slavery sharecropping led African-American musicians to find an escape through music. The present historical context seeks to understand the state of mind created by the collision of cultures, particularly emphasizing the teaching and learning of blues music.

Brief History

Modern historians struggle to identify when the blues received its name. Ma Rainey first heard the blues in a small town in Missouri around 1902, while William Christopher (W.C.) Handy first heard the blues in the Delta in 1903.[85] Handy may have heard blues music as early as 1892 but certainly only called it by that name almost two decades later.[86] The first songs published with blues in the name were Wand's *Dallas Blues* and Handy's *Memphis Blues,* both published in 1911.[87] This leaves the critical and still unanswered question of when the music of post-slavery African Americans became the blues.

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[83] Francis Davis, *The History of the Blues*, (Cambridge: De Capo Press, 1995): 93.

[84] Winslow Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica for Dummies,* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2020): 9; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 26.

[85] Davis, *History,* 26; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 44-45; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 24.

[86] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 45.

[87] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 25.

Origins

The roots of blues music may be traced to Western Africa. The slave trade took humans from their cultures and moved them worldwide, taking rich cultures with them. Some scholars are reluctant to attribute too much weight to the West African influence on blues music, but others identify musical characteristics that would have come from somewhere other than Europe.[88] The difficulty in tracing culture lies in the plurality of cultures of owned humans before they were sold from Africa. The musical characteristics of Senegambia, Congo-Angola, and other important locations for the slave trade differed significantly from one another.[89] Before West African cultures mixed with European cultures in the American South, they mixed with one another. Some argue that the blues originated from the "field hollers and work songs" of enslaved African Americans.[90] Whether or not the blues is directly linked to West African music through spirituals and field hollers, the music certainly draws on, as one author put it, the "same traditions and material."[91]

The blues developed as a unique genre during post-slavery reconstruction and sharecropping. The life of an African-American sharecropper was only a little better than slavery. A primary difference was the ability to find greener pastures or a more friendly work environment at a different plantation. The "modern-day feudalism," that was sharecropping, led to many African Americans living in "virtual serfdom."[92] The blues, then, was not just created by

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[88] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 26-27; Davis, *History,* 33; James Cobb, *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identify,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992): 279.

[89] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 27.

[90] Davis, *History,* 2.

[91] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 179.

[92] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 9, 17.

African Americans post-slavery, but, as one author put it, "by the poorest, most marginal black people."[93] The music became a way for the poor workforce to escape, if only for a song or two.

Setting

The Mississippi Delta claims the blues as its invention. This region is where Peabody discovered the music and from where a host of blues legends hail. Other areas claim the birth of the blues, including places in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, and Eastern Mississippi.[94] Modern audiences tend to prefer the delta style of the blues and other styles that originated from delta musicians, such as the Chicago blues. It is difficult to identify whether the delta is the legitimate birthplace or if it is one of the places where this style of music began to appear near the turn of the twentieth century.[95]

The prevalence of musicians, audiences, and scholars who claim the importance of the Delta region far outweighs any critics. The rich topsoil, fed by the Mississippi River on one side and the Yazoo River on the other, is ideal for farming. Choctaw still lived in the area when Mississippi became a state in 1817. Swamps and forests filled the land until it was drained and removed just before the Civil War.[96] The delta seemed to be a "promised land for black farmers" who sought opportunities with their new freedom.[97] This creates an argument for the Delta as the birthplace of the blues. Newly freed African Americans filled the land with hope, only to be let down again, mixing their regional cultures and perspectives in the process.

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[93] Palmer, *Deep Blues*, 17.

[94] Davis, *History,* 28.

[95] Davis, *History*, 29-30.

[96] Davis, *History,* 20; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 27.

[97] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 280.

Clarksdale. Clarksdale became incorporated in 1882 during reconstruction.[98] Soon after, Stovall and Dockery established their plantations near Clarksdale that would house several would-be blues legends.[99] The importance of cotton farming to the community and region is found in Clarksdale's old nickname as the "golden buckle on the Cotton Belt."[100] While Stovall's family owned the land since the 1840s, the patriarch, Howard, did not arrive until after World War One.[101] Muddy Waters famously lived and worked on Stovall's plantation.[102] Will Dockery established his plantation in 1895. Boarding houses provided a place for the sharecroppers to live on the farm. Would-be famous blues musicians, such as Henry Sloan and Charley Patton, spent time at Dockery.[103]

Juke Joints. The boarding houses, or shacks, provided a place for music to occur on Saturday nights, where the blues became not just a mindset but entertainment.[104] Red Paden, the owner of Red's Lounge juke joint in Clarksdale, compares a juke joint to a pressure valve, which allows patrons and performers to, in their words, "blow off steam."[105] Juke joints served as the only authentic avenue for delta blues. The term juke originates from a word related to evil in Bambara, an African language. In America, the term means to dance, and a juke house was a

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[98] Davis, *History,* 20.

[99] Roger Stolle, email communication with author, May 23, 2023.

[100] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 28.

[101] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 100.

[102] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 99; Davis, *History,* 177.

[103] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 56.

[104] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 56; Davis, *History,* 47.

[105] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 63.

place where one could, as was said by one author, "drink, gamble, wreak havoc, and dance to the blues."[106]

Red's is the archetype of a juke joint. What his place lacks in sophistication, he makes up for with authenticity. He keeps low lights, beer in a cooler, and authentic blues musicians on the set. Red says the purpose is not to make money but to have a place to juke. His speaking of his venue echoes how Robert Kimbrough speaks of his being "more like a home."[107] Juke joints hold importance both historically, for their role in developing the music, and today, for hosting authentic representations of real blues.

Key Musicians

Since the blues is as much a state of mind as a genre of music, history is often best told through the stories of musicians. Robert Johnson's story is the story most re-told and well-known. The legend claims he embarrassed himself in public a few times, leading him to disappear into the delta where he made an alleged deal with the devil at an unknown crossroads, selling his soul in return for supernatural guitar-playing ability.[108] The story of his Faust-like deal often overshadows the importance of his music, but his music also plays a vital role in developing the genre during his lifetime.[109]

W.C. Handy's early blues stories glimpse the turn of the twentieth century and its reception of this new folk art. He was a trained musician from Florence, Alabama, who first

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[106] Davis, *History,* 47-48.

[107] Roger Stolle, *Juke Joint Confidential: House Parties, Hustlers, and the Blues Life,* (Charleston: The History Press, 2019): 41, 48, 53, 94.

[108] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 289; Alan Pell Crawford, "The Devil, The Delta, and The City," *Modern Age* (Summer 2022); Davis, *History,* 127-129; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 113; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 55.

[109] Davis, *History,* 129.

heard the blues at a train station in Tutwiler, Mississippi.[110] While waiting for a delayed train, Handy listened to a man performing a repetitive song using a knife pressed against the guitar strings, giving him the first impression of a country bluesman.[111] Handy also recalls giving up the stage in Cleveland to a band that played music he relates to field hollers and made more money in tips than he did for the paid performance.[112] Handy's experiences led him to help popularize and grow this new genre by publishing sheet music, performing blues songs with his band, and helping to found a label for black performers.[113]

Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith were the two most essential recording blues artists of the 1920s. The women began performing in vaudeville shows and were known for their various performing abilities. They performed the blues authentically and made it available to white and black audiences, furthering the genre during their performance career.[114]

McKinley "Muddy Waters" Morganfield was first discovered on Stovall's farm by researchers searching for Robert Johnson.[115] He would move to Chicago in 1943 during the "great migration," when "50,000 black people left Mississippi for the north."[116] With the migration, the Delta Blues traveled along the Mississippi River and to the rest of the world.

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[110] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 277; Davis, *History,* 25; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 45; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 23.

[111] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 277; Davis, *History,* 25; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 45; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 23.

[112] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 277; Davis, *History,* 25; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 45; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 24.

[113] Davis, *History,* 80.

[114] Ibid., 77-80.

[115] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 4.

[116] Ibid., 7.

When Muddy found success in England, it also furthered the popularity of the blues in America.[117]

Since Muddy first moved to Chicago in 1943, the blues has been a popular music form for not only African Americans living in the delta but for all people around the country and world. GRAMMY winners, such as Riley "B.B." King and Joe Willie "Pinetop" Perkins, played their role in progressing the art form.[118]

Oral Tradition or Aural Learning?

Tracing the teaching and learning of any folk-art form is complex. The blues is no exception. Some compare delta bluesmen to West African griots, the storytellers who conveyed history and culture orally through the arts.[119] This idea is often expanded, referring to bluesmen as preachers, signaling both an American and a spiritual mindset to the storytelling.[120] Relating bluesmen to griots or preachers helps to identify the significance of an oral tradition to the teaching and learning aspect of the art form. Red Paden confirms this mindset, stating that his juke joint creates an avenue for teachers to help the next generation remember the past.[121] This section traces the oral and aural tradition of blues teaching and learning to provide insight into the authentic transmission of the art form.

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[117] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 258.

[118] Ibid.*,* 131.

[119] Davis, *History,* 111-112; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 27.

[120] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 287.

[121] Stolle, *Juke Joint,* 56.

Oral Tradition

An oral tradition refers to the process of teaching by rote or repetition through spoken means and various media.[122] The African Americans living in the delta did not have formal education, much less formal music training.[123] Therefore, musicians relied on their families or communities to teach them. This reliance on learning by rote highlights the importance of boarding houses, juke joints, and Saturday evening parties. Henry Sloan helped teach Charley Patton how to play while they lived on Dockery farms, despite the wishes of Patton's father for him to avoid music.[124] In turn, Patton certainly influenced Son House.[125] Chester "Howlin' Wolf" Burnett also claimed that Patton taught him.[126] Patton and his playing partner Willie Brown also taught Tommy Johnson.[127] The Dockery plantation, along with other small towns and plantations in the delta, held a reputation as being the place where one could learn the blues.[128] In contrast to Patton, some musicians learned from their families, such as Lonnie Johnson, who learned by playing in his father's band.[129]

Roger Stolle interviewed several musicians, showing where and how they learned to play the blues. Mark "Muleman" Massey's family played, but he did not learn until he joined the Parchman prison band while serving at the Mississippi State Penitentiary. Jimmy "Duck"

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[122] Florence Akumu Juma, "Recapturing the Oral Tradition of Storytelling in Spiritual Conversations with Older Aduls: An Afro-Indegenous Approach," *Religions* 13, iss. 6 (June 2022): 1-2.

[123] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 26.

[124] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 280; Davis, *History,* 101; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 51.

[125] Davis, *History,* 107; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 79; Stolle, email with author, May 23, 2023.

[126] Stolle, email with author, May 23, 2023.

[127] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 59.

[128] Ibid., 57.

[129] Davis, *History,* 144.

Holmes grew up around juke joints and was taught to play by Jack Owens, who was bent on passing down the Bentonia style of playing tradition. The Mississippi Marvel learned to play a cigar box guitar from his uncle and "another guy, named Harris." He was influenced by Sonny Boy Williamson II, whom he heard on the radio. He then used his talents to play in a church.[130] L.C. Ulmer came from a family and a settlement who all played the blues from whom he learned to play. Finally, Ellis "CeDell" Davis was first exposed to the blues in Tunica, Mississippi, juke joints, but learned in Helena, Arkansas, before playing with Robert Nighthawk, Houston Stackhouse, and James Curtis on KFFA.[131] These glimpses of learning from Stolle's interviews provide a foundation and confirmation of the oral tradition found in blues music learning.

Aural Learning

Several blues musicians demonstrate an aural component to blues education. Terry "Harmonica" Bean says to learn the blues, "use your ears."[132] His father and grandfather played the blues, and he learned from them by listening.[133] Robert "Wolfman" Belfour learned similarly by watching his father and through trial and error.[134] Learning by listening is the tradition of blues music education. Davis says, "[Robert] Johnson used [Charley Patton's] recordings as kind of a source book."[135]

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[130] Stolle, email with author, May 23, 2023.

[131] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 90-110.

[132] Ted Reed, *Harmonica Bean* (documentary), directed by Ted Reed, shot and edited by Nolan Dean, Ted Reed Productions, (Clarksdale Film & Music Festivals, 2023): 18:00.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 81-82.

[135] Davis, *History,* 99.

Muddy also learned by ear, listening to Son House, Charley Patton, and any other delta bluesman who came near Stovall.[136] He did not limit his learning to live performances; a lady who lived at Stovall allowed him to use her phonograph to listen to popular blues records of several recording artists.[137] Muddy claims that learning by ear helped him develop what he called the Delta sound that other musicians failed to achieve because they learned differently.[138] He passed this sound on to the musicians who played in his band, which Davis states became "sort of a blues graduate school."[139]

KFFA in Helena hosted the King Biscuit Time radio show that played an important role in the oral tradition of blues music. On the one hand, King Biscuit Time allowed those within radio frequency to take a fifteen-minute break and listen to the blues every day at noon.[140] On the other hand, the show provided a steady gig and opportunities to advertise nightly live blues music to the same listeners.[141]

Thoughts on Race

Roger Stolle laments, "As a longtime blues fan, there is something distinctly uncomfortable about enjoying an art form born of such hard times."[142] If the blues is a state of mind, separating the music from its origins is impossible. Its origins include the atrocities of the slave trade, slavery in the American South, and sharecropping. The music comes explicitly from

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[136] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 102.

[137] Palmer, *Deep Blues*, 104.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Davis, *History,* 196.

[140] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 49-50.

[141] Davis, *History,* 191; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 173-174; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 48-49.

[142] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 35.

the African American community, in which, as one author states, "the musical representation of a time and place that was thrust upon a common people of uncommon origins."[143]

A modern patron at a blues festival may need to be made aware of the origins of this music. It is now white audiences who broadly financially support the blues, both at festivals and in clubs and juke joints.[144] White musicians also now perform the blues and, as a large percentage of the blues audience, help shape the music's contemporary meaning.[145] This is where the conflict begins. Gussow outlines the two sides of the blues race debate. One extreme argues that the "blues is black" and opposes white influence and whites profiting from the blues.[146] The other side is "blues universalism," which claims, "No black. No white. Just blues."[147] He identifies two pitfalls for modern blues study. First, "the blues is nothing but African American social history," and second, "race no longer matters when we're talking about the blues."[148] This study examines the blues with truth and authenticity while avoiding pitfalls inherent in either extreme.

Musical Studies of the Blues

The scholarship includes topics on the practical application of blues study, repertoire, and improvisation. Method books also provide insight into how the blues form is taught in contemporary classrooms or private lessons. Few studies provide a framework for teaching and

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[143] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 36.

[144] Davis, *History,* 237.

[145] Ibid., 6.

[146] Gussow, *Whose Blues,* 19-22.

[147] Ibid., 22.

[148] Ibid., 39.

learning following the historical precedent of blues legends. The setting and contexts that encourage such informal learning seldom find representation in contemporary academic literature. This section examines musical studies focused on the blues, outlining the need for more authentic representations of the informal learning process.

Teaching the Blues

Fernando Jones draws on blues performance experience to provide teaching tips in a trade journal. He begins by stating the importance of identifying with students and connecting with them as a bridge to introducing the blues.[149] Then, he provides six approaches for establishing a positive classroom culture: establish a routine, choose age-appropriate repertoire, make historical connections, connect extra-musical skills, prepare students for performing, and share lessons with peers for feedback.[150] Enacting these approaches requires the teacher to maintain knowledge of content, resources, and students.

Leila Heil vies to use the blues to teach improvisation. Improvisation is an essential skill for musicians to develop their creativity and is a requirement under the national music standards. Heil provides a sequence for teaching improvisation, which begins with teaching the melody, encourages students to recognize harmony, complicates the rhythm patterns, places the melody in a recognizable form, and continues modification for further improvisation.[151] The melody she provides for the study is a song in a modified twelve-bar blues form.[152] She claims that twelve-

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[149] Fernando Jones, "Teaching the Blues Effectively," *Journal of Popular Music Studies (Wiley-Blackwell)* 21, iss 1 (April 2009): 109.

[150] Jones, "Teaching the Blues," 110-112.

[151] Leila Heil, "Teaching Improvisation through Melody and Blues-based Harmony: A Comprehensive and Sequential Approach," *Music Educators Journal* 104, no. 1 (Sept. 2017): 42-45.

[152] Ibid.

bar blues begins with two repetitions of the melody, followed by an improvisation section, and closes with two final repetitions of the melody.[153] The twelve-bar form she provides includes a sub-dominant chord in the second bar, a sub-mediant chord in the ninth bar, and a dominant chord in the tenth bar. This strays from the traditional twelve-bar form, which does not include a sub-mediant chord and typically features a dominant chord in the ninth bar followed by a sub-dominant chord in the tenth bar. A sub-dominant chord in the second bar is common but generally omitted from novice instruction.[154]

Yerxa explains two crucial steps for the beginning blues musician: listening to blues music and learning the history of the blues.[155] Listening to music builds the repertoire so the performer may, in his words, "play actual blues songs" rather than continually develop skill with exercises or etudes. He continues explaining the importance of trial and error when a performer attempts to mimic a recording.[156] This approach builds on the historical precedent set by blues legends.

Methods Books and Blues

Method books hold weight in the blues discussion for two reasons. First, blues-specific method books often provide novice musicians with their first educational experience. Gussow discusses the helpfulness of a method book, stating, "*Blues Harp* couldn't take me all the way.

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[153]Heil, "Teaching Improvisation," 45.

[154] Steve Cohen, *Blues Harmonica: Bending & Beyond,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2019): 8; Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 98.

[155] Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 13.

[156] Ibid., 275-276.

But it was a start."[157] Second, some general method books include etudes with blues in the title or style. These etudes may serve as a student's only exposure to playing blues music.

Hal Leonard produces several method books for almost every instrument. The general harmonica method book provides authentic representations of the twelve-bar blues forms, teaches the blues scale, sets examples of blues licks, and introduces legitimate blues repertoire.[158] The blues-specific harmonica method book begins more advanced than the general method. This method book provides several etudes for practicing blues-specific techniques but does not introduce the student to standard repertoire. It includes an introduction to the twelve-bar blues form and provides instructions on bending notes and overblowing properly.[159] The Hal Leonard guitar and bass guitar method books introduce the twelve-bar blues and include a few blues-centric etudes.[160]

Winslow Yerxa's *Blues Harmonica for Dummies* functions less like a method book and more as a written tutor. He covers topics ranging from learning blues history to choosing an appropriate harmonica to play. One section minimally introduces music theory so the learner will understand written music. Yerxa discusses basic, intermediate, and advanced techniques while providing pictures, etudes, and diagrams to assist learning. Even though the scope of the text is quite broad, he advocates for the learner to find a teacher.[161]

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[157] Gussow, *Whose Blues,* 237.

[158] Marc "Lil' Rev" Revenson, *Harmonica Method: Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2022): 19, 29, 31, 34-35, 41, 43.

[159] Cohen, *Blues Harmonica,* 8-9, 39.

[160] Ed Friedland, *Bass Method: Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1996): 22, 45, 50; Will Schmid and Greg Koch, *Guitar Method: Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2002): 10, 16, 19, 22, 40.

[161] Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 14, 36-48, 57, 85, 163.

Extra-Musical Blues Studies

Extra-musical fields comprise much of the academic study on blues and blues education. Historical contexts often consider the importance of blues. However, most extra-musical blues studies focus on the literary components of the folk-art form. Blues lyrics contribute to the literary side of the folk-art form. The content of blues songs discusses positive and negative biographical experiences, including positions on faith, life, and death.[162]

Blues in Literature

McLoughlin identifies a blues metaphor rooted in traditional blues music and spread through other genres and art forms. This blues metaphor includes musical characteristics of blues music but also carries the connotations, feelings, and content that accompany the music. She identifies five components of the blues metaphor relevant to literary study. The blues is truthful, painful, critical, hopeful, and autobiographical. Truth in blues is explicit or implied, meaning that some songs relay specific personal information, but others share truths of life, even through created tales. Pain presents itself in the prevalence of lyrics of unpleasant content. The blues addresses critical issues by openly discussing significant matters. Hope bleeds through blues music as an acknowledgment of the possibility for the better. Finally, playfulness brings joy to the music, performers, and audiences.[163]

Gussow builds on the blues metaphor by way of the blues ethos. He clearly defines the blues ethos as "the philosophy of life that sustains blues musicians and other blues people,

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[162] Cobb, *Most Southern Place,* 277; Davis, *History,* 45.

[163] Shirley Wade McLoughlin, "A Pedagogy of the Blues: A Dissertation," (PhD diss., Miami University, 2006), 113-116, ProQuest (10817933).

prefers to acknowledge pain in order to evade suffering, whenever possible."[164] This philosophy

pervades the blues metaphor using similar themes. Gussow identifies four themes involved in the

blues ethos. First is "victory over bad things," which identifies the strength of the blues musician

to overcome obstacles. The second is "signifying, subterfuge, and sexuality," which refers to the

openness found in blues lyrics. Third is "a brutally honest recognition of reality," which uses

openness to face the obstacles head-on. Finally, the ethos closes with "you'll live through it,"

which examines the blues musician's grit, using brutal honesty and openness to find victory and

move on, regardless of the outcome.[165]

The blues metaphor and ethos also find themselves outside of blues music. Gussow

identifies the importance of poetry in advancing the blues, especially through the 1920s.[166]

Langston Hughes employed the blues ethos to bring life and realism to his poetry. Gussow

explains that the blues is a form of "black folk expression." Therefore, the literature and poetry

encapsulating the blues ethos are examples of blues folk art. Hughes' poetry demonstrates the

blues both by content and by name. He published several poems with blues in the title, including

"The Weary Blues," "Minnie Sings Her Blues," "Listen Here Blues," "Fortune Teller Blues,"

"Homesick Blues," and others.[167]

Hughes' poetry also presents components of the blues ethos. For example, "Bound No'th

Blues" discusses victory by traveling north.[168] Likewise, "The Young Prostitute" emphasizes

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[164] Adam Gussow, "Blues Expressiveness and the Blues Ethos," *Study of the South* (January 24, 2018): 1.

[165] Gussow, "Blues Ethos," 1.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Langston Hughes, *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes,* edited by Arnold Rampersad and David Roessel, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2004): 50, 68-70.

[168] Ibid., 76.

sexuality by comparing a girl's face to "a withered flower."[169] With brutal honesty, Hughes

recognizes the deceit of some Christians in the poem "To Certain 'Brothers.'"[170] Finally, he

epitomizes living through suffering by claiming that he, the "darker brother," will sing, sit at the

table, and embody America in "I, too."[171]

      The blues metaphor and ethos provide insight into the pedagogy of blues music. Lyrics

inform the performer and audience of the meaning behind different songs. Blues musicians who

understand the ethos will be more equipped to provide authentic and meaningful performances.

<div align="center">Blues as a Popular Music</div>

      The blues serves modern popular music as an early ancestor. Muddy clearly states that

rock and roll is the blues' child, claiming that it produced rock and all its descendants.[172] Elvis

introduced large audiences to the blues through his rock adaptations of important blues songs.

Modern folklorists often refer to the blues as "roots" music, especially considering rural southern

blues in this conversation.[173] Davis explains that the blues also produced soul and funk.[174] The

blues is an important popular genre that stands alone today; other genres often pay homage by

using techniques and forms original to the blues, indicating that the blues influenced each genre

throughout the twentieth century.[175]

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[169] Hughes, *Poems*, 33.

[170] Ibid., 55.

[171] Ibid., 46.

[172] Davis, *History,* 209.

[173] Ibid., 212.

[174] Ibid., 227-230.

[175] David Lee Fish, *Jazz: Then & Now,* (White Plains: In Tune Partners, 2011), 13.

Academic Study of Popular Music

Larson addresses the study of popular music in secondary and higher education by comparing contemporary popular music to jazz in the past. Jazz, he claims, worked its way into the formal education curriculum with reluctance at first and now as an equal partner. He continues to state that popular music will work similarly in education. Excluding popular music from the high school curriculum fails to prepare all students who may wish to pursue a music career.[176]

Mantie examines contemporary discourse on popular music. He finds differences between American and international authors in vocabulary, practice, and fundamental motivations.[177] American discourse centers on maintaining quality through tradition and establishing a curriculum that ensures such preservation. For example, popular music is omitted from the *Teaching Music through Performance* series. In American secondary schools, the music curriculum focuses almost solely on traditional repertoire and the quality thereof.[178] Mantie admits that including popular music in the curriculum will not solve every problem, reminding his audience that there is value in teaching music outside of the student's perspective.[179] Therefore, there is clear value in teaching both traditional music and popular music. Including blues music in the curriculum will serve both purposes by including a popular music form often outside students' perspective.

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[176] Robert Larson, "Popular Music in Higher Education: Finding the Balance," *College Music Symposium* 59, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 2, 8.

[177] Roger Mantie, "A Comparison of 'Popular Music Pedagogy' Discourses," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 61, no. 3 (October 2013): 344.

[178] Ibid., 345.

[179] Mantie, "Comparison," 348.

Approaches to Popular Music Education

Student perception is crucial for understanding popular music education's role. Recent literature suggests that student perception regarding music education differs depending on grade levels and course offerings.[180] Students appear to desire courses with content that allows them to participate in music-making by their chosen methods, both as students and in the future.[181] Importantly, scholars also identify self-concept as a motivational factor for students, finding that students desire courses in which they will likely succeed or that students in non-sequential classes did not see self-concept as a motivation.[182] Therefore, student perception of popular music courses will likely increase as it becomes more embedded in the sequential curriculum of contemporary music education. Kelly and Veronee found that forty-one percent of the students in their study expressed interest in enrolling in a blues ensemble, falling closely behind a world music ensemble and a guitar ensemble but ahead of electronic, commercial, and religious ensembles.[183] This speaks to the potential for blues to play a vital role in including popular music in the regular secondary curriculum. The breadth of blues within other genres establishes it as a critical thread that may enable the contemporary music teacher to introduce several popular music styles to students in one setting.

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[180] Steven Nelson Kelly and Kenna Veronee, "High School Students Perceptions of Nontraditional Music Classes," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 219 (Winter 2019): 84; David Rolandson, "Motivation in Music: A Comparison of Popular Music Course Students and Traditional Large Ensemble Participants in High School," *Contributions to Music Education* 45, (2020): 120; Virginia W. Davis, "The Meaning of Music Education to Middle School General Music Students," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 179 (Winter 2009): 73.

[181] Kelly and Veronee, "Perceptions of Nontraditional Music Classes," 85; Rolandson, "Motivation in Music," 119; Davis, "Meaning of Music," 73.

[182] Kelly and Veronee, "Perceptions of Nontraditional Music Classes," 86; Rolandson, "Motivation in Music," 118.

[183] Kelly and Veronee, "Perceptions of Nontraditional Music Classes," 84.

Kladder provides a model for a constructivist approach to popular music education.[184] The four tenets of constructivism include learning music and socially creating meaning through interaction. He argues that the activity of songwriting provides students with a prime opportunity to employ such an approach.[185] Kladder closes his argument with six considerations for employing a constructivist approach in the music classroom. First, constructed meaning should be learner-directed. Second, collaboration allows the students to hold a teaching role. Third, building on student interest gives them ownership over learning. Fourth, constructivist learning occurs through musicking and discovery. Fifth, the final product is an essential component. Sixth, employing constructivist principles requires flexibility.[186] Therefore, a constructivist approach provides a viable model for including popular music education in the regular curriculum. The principles Kladder establishes for songwriting may apply to other popular music contexts if implemented appropriately.

Popular Music Learning

Contemporary discourse on popular music education often omits how popular musicians learn. Green remedies this ailment with a detailed analysis of how popular musicians claim to learn and its implications for music education.[187] Music learning naturally occurs through "enculturation," or immersion, into a music context and culture.[188] This means musicians

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[184] Jonathan Kladder, "Songwriting in Modern Band?: Considering Constructivism as an Approach for Teaching Popular Music," *College Music Symposium* 60, no. 2 (Fall 2020): 8.

[185] Kladder, "Songwriting," 9-10.

[186] Ibid., 15-16.

[187] Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education,* (New York: Routledge, 2016): 3; Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy,* (New York: Routledge, 2016): 1.

[188] Ibid., 22; Green, *New Classroom Pedagogy,* 3.

passively learn popular music through their natural, everyday interactions with music. When a person determines to develop a musical identity, "listening and copying" becomes the primary pedagogical tool for solitary learning.[189] This remains consistent with how Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson learned the blues. Green contributes that "playing popular music is inseparable from various activities including memorizing, copying, jamming, embellishing, improvising, arranging, and composing."[190] These seven components of music learning in popular music also provide a foundation for how students learn the blues.

<center>Blues as a Community Music</center>

Three key elements comprise the discussion of community music. First, the concept of community music refers to the process of music-making as a group of people.[191] Davis finds that the community served as the primary audience for country blues.[192] Second, regional distinctions provide significant cultural meaning for people living in a particular place.[193] Pickard establishes a model for teaching regional music in her thesis on Appalachian music. She examines the need to implement music of a student's culture and the lack thereof in the Appalachian region despite a rich musical history.[194] There is a need for future examination of the prevalence of blues music education within the Delta region. The author's experience suggests a need for improvement in

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[189] Green, *How Popular Musicians,* 60-61; Green, *New Classroom Pedagogy,* 6.

[190] Green, *How Popular Musicians,* 41.

[191] Gillian Howell, Lee Higgins, and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, "Community Music Practice: Intervention through Facilitation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 601-618, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 602.

[192] Davis, *History,* 139.

[193] Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet, "Community Music Practice," 602.

[194] Valeria E. Pickard, "The Importance of Regional Music to Music Education: The 1927 Bristol Sessions," (Master's thesis, Liberty University, 2022): 7-8.

this area. Third, community music serves "as an active intervention" through facilitation.[195]

Modern community music is "informed by a history of social action."[196] The blues, which served

as an escape from life through folk music, comprise part of this history.

Stolle discusses two reasons for the importance of Clarksdale as the central community

for blues music. First, Clarksdale served as a geographical center that drew patrons from

neighboring towns. Second, the plentitude of musicians living in the Clarksdale area allowed for

consistent musical entertainment. Musicians, such as Pinetop Perkins and Muddy Waters, would

drive a tractor for a day job and spend the evenings and weekends entertaining crowds at house

parties and juke joints.[197]

The blues began as a music with several regional dialects. Several distinctions remain

through both historical homage and current practice. Davis identifies three unique blues styles of

great importance: the "symbiotic" relationship between the guitar and voice in Mississippi delta

blues, the clear singing of Texas blues, and the fingerpicking of East Coast blues.[198] The three of

these styles serve as the bedrock for modern blues. Muddy, influenced primarily by his

surroundings in the Delta, took his style to Chicago.[199] The meeting of different blues styles in

urban centers created the blues as we know it today. Terry "Harmonica" Bean discusses the

difference between the slow Delta blues and the more upbeat hill country blues. Whether the

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[195] Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet, "Community Music Practice," 602.

[196] Ibid., 605.

[197] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 72.

[198] Davis, *History,* 115-116; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 43-44.

[199] Davis, *History,* 116.

distinction is important to an international blues audience, the passion with which he speaks about the different styles indicates it certainly matters to the performers.[200]

Yerxa explains the differences between regional styles in harmonica playing. Recording companies served regional styles by producing local artists. For example, Sonny Boy William II recorded in Jackson, MS, Howlin' Wolf in Memphis, TN, and Jimmy Reed in Chicago, IL.[201] Each company naturally produced different regional styles because of the performers they drew to their studios.

Finally, the blues also serves as an essential form of American music. Laughlin advocates for the inclusion of American composers in the contemporary piano curriculum. He argues that American composers provide works of pedagogical significance and that there is a need to explore new musical alternatives.[202] While Laughlin argues for including the works of American classical composers, one of the compositions he suggests, *Set of Five for Piano* by Appledorn, includes movements entitled "Blues" and "Improvisation."[203] If classical music influenced by the blues has a place in the modern piano repertoire, then so does the source music. Pinetop Perkins should find his place in the piano curriculum alongside Appledorn and Debussy.

Music as Leisure

Music serves as both a form of monetary entertainment and personal enjoyment. Music as leisure seems obvious to those without formal training, while those with formal music training

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[200] Reed and Dean, *Harmonica Bean,* 16:00.

[201] Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 327.

[202] Mark Laughlin, "America's Music: Teaching the Works of American Composers." *American Music Teacher* 62, no. 4 (February/March 2013): 29-30.

[203] Laughlin, "America's Music," 32.

often overlook the possibility of casual enjoyment.[204] Considering music as leisure leaves a

potential for happiness through music, although not all leisure is considered "good."[205] Music as

leisure implies that people will participate in music making or listen actively during times

without obligation.

Identity

Developing a musical identity serves as a central purpose of music as leisure.[206] Young

people aspiring to build musical skills often focus on "becoming a musician," especially through

becoming a professional or acting professionally.[207] Identity formation serves as a fundamental

act of humanity. For this reason, classroom teachers must investigate students' interests because

students draw on experiences outside of school.[208] Teaching students through popular music

often requires finding new approaches. When teaching popular music with authenticity, the

teacher must often yield "pedagogic authority to the informal learning process."[209]

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[204] Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, "Grasping the Jellyfish of Music Making and Leisure," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 3-10, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 4.

[205] Mantie and Smith, "Grasping the Jellyfish," 5.

[206] Abigale D'Amore and Gareth Dylan Smith, "Aspiring to Music Making as Leisure through the Musical Futures Classroom," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 61-80, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 63; Zack Moir, "Popular Music Making and Young People: Leisure, Education, and Industry," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 223-240, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 226; Gareth Dylan Smith, "(Un)popular Music Making and Eudaimonism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 151-168, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 151.

[207] D'Amore and Smith, "Music Futures," 66; Moir, "Leisure, Education, and Industry," 233.

[208] D'Amore and Smith, "Musical Futures," 63, 67.

[209] Ibid., 70.

Participation

Active participation in music provides the foundation for music as leisure. Mantie explains that participation may come through listening, especially live music, but most often through music making.[210] Young people make music education leisure when they choose to learn popular music without obligation; they usually do so with the desire to participate actively in music-making.[211] Students often consider professionalism and musical identity as exemplified by well-known artists. It is worth considering that far more "unpopular" musicians participate in music-making than well-known musicians.[212] Providing opportunities for active music listening and music making contributes to community music participation.

Eudaimonism

Leisure often provides opportunities for fulfillment and happiness. As a form of leisure, music contributes to humanity in this manner. Music making carries the potential for time spent both positively and negatively. Participation in music-making yields potential for eudaimonism.[213] This means there is an opportunity for living for the true self, fulfillment beyond just fun or enjoyment, and furthering the common good.[214] When music as leisure contributes to the common good through self-realization, it provides a eudaimonic meaning. While much of the blues discusses matters related to hedonic happiness, especially with the

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[210] Roger Mantie, *Music, Leisure, Education: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022): 202.

[211] Moir, "Leisure, Education, and Industry," 229.

[212] Smith, "Eudaimonism," 153.

[213] Mantie, *Leisure,* 202-203; Smith, "Eudaimonism," 154.

[214] Mantie, *Leisure,* 203; Smith, "Eudaimonism," 155, 166.

prevalence of sexually explicit discussion, the ethos of "you'll live through it" provides a eudaimonic potential for the music.

Other Examples of Community Music

Community music provides opportunities for individuals to participate in music-making alone or as a social activity. The recreational group music-making phenomenon is well-documented and prevalent in many communities and cultures. Examples of community music in contemporary settings include participation in community bands, collegiate music ensembles, and cultural music-making.

Community Bands

Community bands provide opportunities for traditional music-making.[215] The benefits of participating in a community band include reaching social and music goals, independent musical satisfaction, and continued learning.[216] The community band structure establishes a culture of volunteerism in which the organizations flourish with normally collective governance and non-obligatory participation.[217] Community band research focuses on adult participation, including pedagogical and repertoire decision-making for adults and the implication of lifelong music-making.[218] Rohwer emphasizes the usefulness of aural learning to adult learners in a community

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[215] Roger Mantie, "A Study of Community Band Participants: Implications for Music Education," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 191 (Winter 2012): 21; Roger Mantie and Leonard Tan, "A Cross-Cultural Examination of Lifelong Participation in Community Wind Bands Through the Lens of Organizational Theory," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 67, no. 1 (April 2019): 106; Debbie Rohwer, "Research on Community Bands: Past, Present, Future," *Contributions to Music Education* 41 (2016): 15.

[216] Mantie, "Community Band Participants," 34; Mantie and Tan, "Lifelong Participation," 120; and Rohwer, "Community Bands," 16.

[217] Mantie and Tan, "Lifelong Participation," 120.

[218] Mantie and Tan, "Lifelong Participation," 120; Rohwer, "Community Bands," 18.

band context.[219] Contemporary researchers reinforce lifelong music-making as a goal of the community band, suggesting that school music approaches may need adjustment to bridge the gap between school music and adult participation.[220]

Collegiate Ensembles

Collegiate ensembles provide one possible bridge to the gap between school music and adult participation. Snyder focuses on the recreational nature of music making and suggests that music faculty create musical opportunities appealing to those seeking career fields outside of music.[221] Mantie and Dorfman investigate the motivational factors behind non-music majors' decisions to participate or not in collegiate ensembles. Reasons to participate center on the "participatory aspects of music engagement," while reasons not to participate include poor music self-concept, lack of materials or education, and ignorance of opportunities.[222] Snyder adds that participation can increase through more variety in on-campus offerings.[223] Providing opportunities for students to participate in collegiate ensembles will help bridge the gap between school music and lifelong participation and may increase lifelong participation even in students who did not participate in music before college.[224]

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[219] Rohwer, "Community Bands," 19.

[220] Mantie, "Community Band Participants," 39; Mantie and Tan, "Lifelong Participation," 121; and Rohwer, "Community Bands," 21.

[221] Lynne M. Snyder, "Non-Music Major Participation in College and University Ensembles," *College Music Symposium* 61, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2021): 49.

[222] Roger Mantie and Jay Dorfman, "Music Participation and Nonparticipation of Nonmajors on College Campuses," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 200 (Spring 2014): 54-56.

[223] Snyder, "Non-Music Major Participation," 49.

[224] Mante and Dorfman, "Nonmajors," 54; Snyder, "Non-Music Major Participation," 43.

Cultural Music

Waldron and Veblen investigate Canadian music-making in the Celtic tradition. They found that participants decided to begin Celtic music participation after aural exposure to the music or at the suggestion of someone in their circle. Participants emphasized the social aspect of making music in a communal setting. Each participant also discusses the importance of aural learning to the folk music tradition. Participation in this folk music categorizes as leisure, but participants emphasize the seriousness of their involvement.[225] The way Waldron and Veblen discuss the amateur musicians who choose to participate in Celtic music mirrors the participation of students choosing popular music education and, in many ways, the Delta blues musicians.

<div align="center">Music in a Workshop Setting</div>

Workshops and community music go hand in hand as workshops often serve as the environment for community musicians.[226] Workshops suit informal music learning because aural skills, rather than music literacy, dominate workshop settings.[227] Music literacy often acts as a barrier for the recreational or beginning musician. Emphasis on aural skills removes this barrier to allow more participants. Social and personal growth often precedes musical achievement, making hospitality essential for workshops.[228]

Waldron and Veblen also identify workshops as central to Celtic traditional music. Participants who enter the tradition as outsiders, in this case, Canadians, found summer schools

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[225] Janice Waldron and Kari Veblen, "Learning in a Celtic Community: An Exploration of Informal Music Learning and Adult Amateur Musicians," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 180 (Spring 2009): 64-65.

[226] Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet, "Community Music Practice," 606.

[227] Ibid., 610.

[228] Ibid.

helpful. The summer schools were like workshops presenting opportunities for social

engagement and communal music making.[229] Therefore, workshops or summer schools offer a

vital opportunity for outsiders to a tradition to begin authentic music making.

Filsinger employs a workshop setting to educate novice music teachers on musical

improvisation. The workshop setting allowed the facilitator to teach the students about

improvisational techniques adequately. His research also requested feedback from participants.

They suggested that social interactions were central to the workshop's success and individual

learning.[230]

Charles Mingus famously established the Jazz Workshop, in which he served as the

bandleader and teacher.[231] He led the band in a controlling manner that was, to quote one author,

"disciplined and liberating."[232] Mingus' workshop juxtaposed individual freedom and communal

experience, an event that allowed such freedom through active participation.[233] Friday night gigs

served as the setting for the workshops at which Mingus mentored musicians in an oral tradition

rather than by written parts; in this way, his workshop and band worked like an actors studio.[234]

Mingus' relationships with his musicians served as a central component of the workshop,

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[229] Waldron and Veblen, "Celtic Community," 65.

[230] Mark H. Filsinger, "Novice Music Teachers Learning to Improvise in an Improvisation Professional Development Workshop," (PhD diss., University of Rochester, 2012), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (3555020).

[231] Jennifer Griffith, "Mingus in the Workshop: Leading the Improvisation from New Orleans to Pentacostal Trance," *Black Music Research Journal* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 73; Scott Saul, "Outrageous Freedom: Charles Mingus and the Invention of the Jazz Workshop," *American Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (Sep. 2001): 387.

[232] Griffith, "Mingus in the Workshop," 78; Saul, "Outrageous Freedom," 388.

[233] Griffith, "Mingus in the Workshop," 73; Saul, "Outrageous Freedom," 388.

[234] Griffith, "Mingus in the Workshop," 73; Saul, "Outrageous Freedom," 389-390.

especially during the gigs when the collaborative environment was the highest.[235] Therefore, Charles Mingus' Jazz Workshop is a potential archetype for the contemporary music workshop setting.

Summary

Charles Peabody and W.C. Handy set the tone for the academic study of the blues. The stories they tell from the turn of the twentieth century genuinely introduce the Delta blues tradition in authentic settings. The blues, both as a genre of music and a cultural folk art, help tell the story of a people group and shape modern popular music. A historical overview of the blues provides context for studying contemporary blues education. The origins of the music trace to West Africa, moving to the American South through the heinous slave trade, where West African cultures combined with Anglo-American perspective to influence the music of African Americans during slavery and in post-slavery sharecropping. The Mississippi Delta served as the breeding ground for the development of blues music throughout the twentieth century, centered at Clarksdale, MS, and occurring in house parties and venues called juke joints. Key musicians, such as Charley Patton, Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, and Pinetop Perkins, tell the story of the blues with their lives and music. Understanding the oral tradition by which these musicians and others learned to play and sing the blues provides a foundation for contemporary education. This study seeks to examine the music rooted in African American history with truth and authenticity without falling into the pitfalls of either the blues exclusivity or blues universalism extreme. Current musical studies of the blues include practical lessons on teaching and examination of the content found in method books and other learning supplements. Extra-musical studies of the blues focus on literary components and identifying the blues ethos, or a pedagogy of the blues,

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[235] Griffith, "Mingus in the Workshop," 93; Saul, "Outrageous Freedom," 393.

which permeates blues literature, including music lyrics. The insights from current music and extra-musical studies provide understanding for authentic and meaningful performances and study but lack glimpses into the genuine oral tradition that permeates blues history and modern blues education.

The blues is a popular music and influences all other contemporary popular music. Therefore, examining the current discourse on popular music education provides insight into blues music education's perception, perspectives, and outlook. The discourse includes the academic study of popular music, approaches to teaching popular music, and writing concerning how popular musicians learn. The blues is also community music storied as the music of a particular culture, developed in specific regions, and intended for a communal experience. The blues' potential for entertainment and collective experience establishes the potential for examining blues as a leisure activity, providing genuine fulfillment during a musician's unobligated time. Workshop settings offer an ideal context for learning popular or community music, including blues music.

This chapter sought to identify a gap in the literature of formal educational theories' examination into contemporary blues music education. Using a three-fold theoretical framework of Danielson's framework for teaching, Bruner's learning theory, and Gordon's music learning theory will help to fill this gap by applying three formal educational theories to blues music. This study seeks to use this framework to understand contemporary blues music education and to add a formal study of blues to the music education academic literature.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Understanding blues pedagogy must originate from an authentic instructional setting in the blues genre. One such setting is the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience. This chapter discusses the research design for inquiry into an authentic setting. This design contains variables concerning blues instructors' content, pedagogy, and teaching strategies. Each variable responds to a research question designed to understand better the methods through which musicians teach the blues in an authentic setting.

Design

This study was a qualitative, instrumental, descriptive, single, embedded case study. A qualitative method allowed for inquiry through interview and observation, which was integral for addressing the research questions. A case study allowed for a "detailed and intensive analysis of a particular event, situation, organization, or social unit."[236] In this case, the analysis is of a particular event and an organization. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation is the organization that conducts the annual event of a masterclass workshop. An instrumental case study seeks to "better understand a theoretical question or problem."[237] In this case, the theoretical question regarded the pedagogy of the blues music genre. Therefore, the purpose of this case study was to better understand the pedagogy of the blues through the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience.

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[236] Kurt Schoch, "Case Study Research," in *Research Design and Methods,* edited by Gary J. Burkholder, et al, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2020): 245.

[237] Dawson Hancock, Bob Algozzine, and Jae Hoon Lim, *Doing Case Study Research,* 4th edition, (New York: Teachers College Press, 2021): 43.

A descriptive nature allowed the researcher to "illustrate or explain the key features of a phenomenon within its context."[238] Here, the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience is an authentic context in which the phenomenon of blues learning and teaching occurs. Finally, this study analyzed and observed an embedded, single case. A single case is appropriate when it meets one or more specific rationales, "that is, having a *critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal* case."[239] The Pinetop Perkins Foundation workshop experience features blues teachers from various backgrounds and regions with vast experience as performers and pedagogues. Therefore, the diversity and expertise of this group are critical in that they can "represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory."[240] A case study is embedded when "attention is also given to a subunit or subunits."[241] In this case, the single case is the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience. The subunits included the individual blues teachers working autonomously as masterclass instructors, students, volunteers, and board members.

Sullivan employed an instrumental, single case study to examine a theory of ethics in the context of a secondary music program. He found that there were "unjust barriers" in the music program but that some conditions were necessary for creating the identity of a "home;" therefore, the theory he tested identified a need for "hospitality pedagogy" within the school music program.[242] Kuebel conducted an instrumental, single case study to examine the development of

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[238] Hancock, et al, *Doing Case Study Research,* 44.

[239] Robert Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications,* 6th edition, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2018): 49.

[240] Ibid.

[241] Ibid, 51.

[242] Brian M. Sullivan, "Exploring a Theory and Ethic of Hospitality through an Instrumental Case Study of a Middle School Band Room"*,* (PhD dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champagne, 2017): 153, 166, ProQuest (10832047).

pre-service music teachers. She reported three themes in her findings, including "development

understanding and expectations of elementary general music; increased self-efficacy through

four modes of development; and growth and goal setting as a music educator."[243] Sorenson

employed an instrumental case study to explore expertise theory within experienced music

educators. She found that becoming an expert, grit, defining success, and innovation were

themes in each educator's expertise.[244]

Therefore, a qualitative method allowed the best examination of the blues pedagogy

phenomenon. A case study was the most appropriate design because it examined blues pedagogy

within a real-life context.[245] The instrumental nature allowed the study to address blues pedagogy

within the case. A descriptive study explained essential components of blues pedagogy. An

embedded single-case approach was appropriate because of the critical nature of the workshop

and the employment of autonomous teachers as masterclass instructors.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

One limitation of a single case study is that the rationale for choosing a single case "may

later turn out not to be the case it was thought to be at the outset."[246] The current study employs

the single case because it meets multiple rationales for a critical and unusual case. A second

weakness of the single case study involves generalization. Single-case studies are "generalizable

to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes."[247] Therefore, the findings of a

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[243] Christa Kuebel, "'I Became a Better Teacher,'" *Contributions to Music Education* 46, (2021): 97.

[244] Rachel Sorenson, "'How Can I Get Better,'" *Contributions to Music Education* 46, (2021): 232-237.

[245] Schoch, "Case Study Research," 245.

[246] Yin, *Case Study,* 51.

[247] Ibid., 20.

single case study may inform the theory but may not directly apply to another context outside of the bounded case.

<div style="text-align: center;">Variables</div>

Three primary qualitative variables appear within the research questions. The first variable was pedagogy. Loughran argues that pedagogy is a "complex" term about the "teaching-learning relationship," with student development as the goal.[248] For this study, the pedagogy variable encompassed any component of the teaching-learning relationship observed or stated within the workshop.

The second variable was content knowledge. Hewitt and Koner describe the concept of content in their study of music teacher education. They discuss the "knowledge, skills, and dispositions" required of preservice teachers and the "importance given to the coursework and curricular topics" of instrumental methods courses.[249] Therefore, the content of a music course includes knowledge about the subject, skills within a subject, and dispositions toward a discipline, as engaged by coursework and curricular topics. This study considered the importance of the blues genre's knowledge, skills, and dispositions, as observed through the coursework and curricular topics addressed during the case study.

The third variable was teaching strategies. Teaching strategies constitute a significant component of pedagogy. This study focused on teaching strategies because of the varied use of strategy within single methodologies, theories, and genres. The qualitative nature of this study

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[248] John Loughran, "Pedagogy: Making Sense of the Complex Relationship Between Teaching and Learning," *Curriculum Inquiry* 43, no. 1, (January 2013): 135.

[249] Michael Hewitt and Karen Koner, "A Comparison of Instrumental Music Methods Course Content at NASM-Accredited Institutions," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 197, (Summer 2013): 46.

necessitates the emergence of variables as data are gathered. Therefore, additional variables became apparent as the data collection occurred throughout the workshop.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

- Central Research Question: What pedagogy is implemented in Blues training institutions that influence students with an authentic experience and a high-quality music education?

    o Sub Research Question 1: What is the content knowledge of Blues music?

    o Sub Research Question 2: What teaching strategies are implemented by Blues music instructors?

- Hypothesis 1: The pedagogy implemented in Blues training institutions includes methods consistent with informal music lessons, private studios, and masterclasses.

- Hypothesis 2: The content knowledge of the Blues is repertoire, artistic styles, and common idiomatic musical passages.

- Hypothesis 3: The teaching strategies implemented by Blues instructors include modeling, imitation, creating, and performing, which are consistent with current research and educational theory.

Participants and Setting

This section discusses the setting and the rationale for studying within this setting. The setting is the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience. This section includes a description of the population within the Pinetop Perkins Foundation and a description of the participants recruited for this study.

Setting

The Pinetop Perkins Foundation is an organization dedicated to "provide encouragement and support for youth and young people at the beginning of their musical career; and help provide care and safety for elderly musicians at the twilight of their career."[250] A board of directors runs the foundation. Fourteen board members include two co-presidents, a vice president, and a musical director. These board members plan, prepare, and run an annual workshop for blues music education.

The setting of this instrumental case study was the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience. This workshop occurs each June in Clarksdale, MS, at the Shack Up Inn and Hopson Commissary. The workshop recruits world-class blues musicians to serve as instructors who teach a specific instrument. The expertise and experience of each instructor make this a critical case. The week-long nature of this workshop makes it a unique case. Therefore, studying this setting as a single case is appropriate because of its unique and critical nature.

Clarksdale, MS, is an essential location for the blues. It is in Coahoma County that Charles Peabody first encountered the music that would become the blues, here that William Christopher Handy would further advance the genre, and here that numerous Blues musicians would call home, from the legendary Muddy Waters to recent GRAMMY winner Christone "Kingfish" Ingram. The tradition and culture of the blues in Clarksdale make it the center of the Delta blues and home to several important festivals, including the famous Juke Joint Festival. Therefore, studying a workshop in Clarksdale confirms the authenticity of the musicianship disseminated.

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[250] Mission Statement, https://www.pinetopperkinsfoundation.org/.

Population

Blues musicians participate in the music-making of the blues genre and idiom. For this study, a blues teacher trains another in the genre and idiom of the blues. The broader population of this study is the blues teachers who dedicate part of their professional goals to training other blues musicians. It is this group who, through their instruction, disseminate the blues genre through their pedagogical approaches, curriculum, and teaching strategies. The population of this case study is the instructors, learners, volunteers, and board members of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience in 2023.

There were eleven instructors. One teaches full-time as his primary source of income, ten perform the blues full-time as their primary source of income, and none work in a different vocation as their primary source of income. The average age is 58, ranging from 26 to 93. The demographics of this group include nine males and two females. Four instructors are black or African American, and seven are white. Two reside in the greater Clarksdale area, one is 50-200 miles away, and eight are from over 200 miles away.

There are thirty-nine learners. The average age is 28, ranging from 13 to 17. The demographics of this group include thirty-three males and six females. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation does not gather the ethnic demographics of their students. Two reside in the greater Clarksdale area, three from 50-200 miles away, thirty-two from more than 200 miles away, and two from outside the United States.

There were three interns. The average age is 23, ranging from 19 to 26. The demographics of this group include two males and one female. One is black or African American, and two are white. None reside in the greater Clarksdale area; one resides 50-200 miles away, and two reside further than 200 miles away.

There are fourteen board members. The average age is 64, ranging from 40 to 75. The demographics of this group include eight males and six females. One is black or African American, and thirteen are white. All 14 reside further than 200 miles away.

Participants

The sample size is one case with fifteen participants.[251] The researcher selected this case because of its critical and unique nature. Participants were chosen through purposeful sampling. Each Pinetop instructor was recruited to participate. There were eleven instructors, each with adequate credentials as performers and teachers of the blues genre. The instructors who chose to participate were participants in the first group. Any participant can join the workshop as a learner, although it is designed for a younger audience. Two instrument tracks require prior technical skill on an instrument: piano and acoustic guitar. Therefore, learner participants from these two tracks were recruited as participants in the second group.

Groups

There were two groups to study in this case. The first group comprised the instructors at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation workshop. This group was larger than the second, as the study focused on teaching. The second group consisted of those participating in the workshop as learners, interns, and board members. Including this second group allowed the study to investigate the quality of education, content disseminated, and pedagogical approaches from the learners' perspective. Including the second group also allowed the study to investigate the perspective of other observers and those who helped plan the event. One participant served as

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[251] Schoch, "Case Study Research," 248.

both an instructor and a board member, but, for this study, participated as a board member in group two.

There were nine instructors in group one. The average age was 54, ranging from 26 to 93. The demographics of this group included seven males and two females. Of the performers, three were black or African American, and six were white. Two reside in the greater Clarksdale area, one resides 50-200 miles away, and six from further than 200 miles away.

There are six people in group two. Two participants were learners, two were interns, and two were board members. The average age is 37, ranging from 19 to 74. The demographics of this group included five males and one female. In group two, one was black or African American, and five were white. None reside in the greater Clarksdale area or from 50-200 miles away, as all six were from more than 200 miles away.

Researcher Positionality

The motivation for this study is grounded personal interest in blues music education. Blues is a vital folk art form that can only survive if young people can adequately and authentically learn the art form. This research study observed, examined, and analyzed a workshop in which the blues was taught adequately, authentically, and geared toward young people. First, teaching music at a public school in the Delta region provides the researcher with insight into how young people perceive the music of their region and the need for authentic teaching. Second, performing in a blues music ensemble provides the researcher insight into the benefits of teaching non-traditional music content and learning through non-traditional pedagogy. The results of this research project provide insight into the education of a critical popular art form and directly apply to the researcher's educational contexts. The researcher

developed the research questions with pertinent academic terminology to transfer practical applications within secondary music education.

Interpretive Framework

This study employed a constructivist worldview to shape the perspective of the results. The central assumptions of social constructivism state "that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" and "develop the subjective meaning of their experiences."[252] Webster argues that constructivism is not a pedagogical theory but is about learning.[253] He states that in a constructivist teacher's classroom, "learning is constructed by students."[254] Therefore, this study focused on the participants' experiences, their connections with the phenomenon, and their interactions with one another. Participants constructed the knowledge, or learning, which the researcher observed through data collection and interpreted as the knowledge exists in the participants' lives as they presented it.

Philosophical Assumptions

Burkholder and Burbank discuss philosophical assumptions as perspectives on how being and knowledge exist and develop. The philosophical assumptions outlined here direct the interpretive framework and the selected research design. Understanding the philosophy of this study provides a means to understand the results of this study.

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[252] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed-Methods Approaches,* 5th edition, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2018): 8.

[253] Peter R. Webster, "Constructivism and Music Learning," *in MENC Handbook of Research on Music Learning, Vol. 1,* edited by Colwell and Webster, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009): 38.

[254] Ibid., 39.

Ontology

This study applied that reality is relative and subjective based on a person's lived experiences. Meaning is constructed personally through social interactions.[255] As every person undergoes introspection and social interaction, meaning further develops and changes. Therefore, perception of reality is relative to each person and even within a person's context at a given time. The researcher assumes that the perspective of each participant is different before, during, and after the study.

Epistemology

This study focused on what knowledge is acquired and how the knowledge is taught within a specific context. An underlying foundation, then, must include an understanding of how individuals learn. The study assumed that knowledge is relative and subjective. Therefore, individuals acquire knowledge through what one author called "experiences and interactions with the environment."[256] This study aimed to examine the learner participants' lived experiences and social interactions of the learner participants to understand the phenomenon of blues music education.

Rhetorical

This study employed rhetoric intended to share reality as found through the eyes of the participants. Sharing the participants' reality allows the study to interpret blues music education authentically. It is appropriate for the author to employ a formal, academic third-person voice rather than a personal, first-person voice. However, including literary components, music

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[255] Webster, "Constructivism," 40.

[256] Ibid., 41.

terminology, and slang is also appropriate, as the participants shared and the researcher observed during data collection.[257] The theoretical framework and participants work together to define and establish terminology in this study. The results of this study seek to present conclusive statements with, to quote one source, "as much precision… as the nature of the subject allows" and within the realm of the researcher's knowledge at the time of writing.[258]

Biblical

Finally, the researcher maintains a biblical worldview. This naturally influences the study in three ways. First, the author assumes music is a gift from God and, therefore, inherently good and helpful for expressing the human experience. Second, mankind is made in the image of God. This means every person involved in the workshop or the study deserves to be treated with love and respect. Third, and most practically, this means the researcher presents the data, results, and conclusions in a manner that authentically represents the participants and the subject matter while maintaining language appropriate for Christian discussion.

Researcher's Role

Considering the qualitative nature of this study, the researcher served as the principal instrument for collecting data through observations, interviews, and document analysis.[259] The researcher served as a participant-observer for this instrumental case study. This role expected the researcher to "share actively with the study participants but also step back from the activities

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[257] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Approaches,* 2nd edition, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc., 2007): 18-19.

[258] Aristotle, *The Philosophy of Aristotle,* translated by J.L. Creed and A.E. Wardman, (New York: Signet Classics, 2011): 135.

[259] Linda M. Crawford, "Qualitative Research Designs," in *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner,* edited by Burkholder, et al, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2020): 94.

to be an observer... [and] might join the group and participate in some activities."[260] The Pinetop

Perkins Foundation workshop employs three participatory roles: learner, instructor, and

volunteer. The researcher participated as a volunteer but spent most of his time as an observer.

The benefit of serving as a participant-observer is the combination of a "deep understanding of

how the participants experience the study's phenomenon of focus and the development of

trusting relationships," along with the opportunity to record data during the observation and in

the research setting.[261]

Researcher's Bias

I hold biases that potentially affect this study's interpretation and role. I am a practicing

music teacher, a performing blues student, a resident within 50 miles of Clarksdale, and I hold

personal relationships with members of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation. Serving as a music

teacher provides me with expertise in music content and pedagogy, however, this creates the bias

of knowing the terminology and methodological approaches, which may lead to early

conclusions. As a blues musician, I am both a student and a performer. Studying and performing

with other blues teachers before this study creates the bias of exposure to the genre and

methodological approaches outside the bounded case. Residing in the region near Clarksdale

places me in an immediate community of blues musicians, which provides the bias and benefit of

knowing the geographical, political, and social characteristics of the area before the study.

Finally, personal relationships with members of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation create

bias. Each relationship began because of and through blues music education. The Foundation's

co-president, David Berntson, regularly visits my professional setting through a program called

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[260] Crawford, "Qualitative Research Designs," 95.

[261] Ibid., 94-95.

Blues in the Schools through The Blues Foundation. I formed relationships with other foundation members, including board members and volunteers, through the Blues in the Schools, at Pinetop Perkins Foundation events, and during other music events in the Delta. I formed relationships with instructors and learners through my study and performance of the blues, where I met members of the Foundation at authentic venues of blues music performance. Previously developed personal and professional relationships with members of the Foundation create the bias of familiarity.

Procedures

The following section explains the procedures for this research process. This process includes receiving permission from the Pinetop Perkins Foundation, the selection and recruitment of participants, and data collection. Permission was granted by Liberty University IRB (Appendix A).

Permissions

A board of directors, including two co-presidents, governs The Pinetop Perkins Foundation. One of the co-presidents verbally agreed for the annual workshop to be identified as a research site. Upon this verbal agreement, a formal letter of request was sent to the co-president (Appendix B). The board of directors approved this request by sending a letter of permission (Appendix C). This letter was included in the IRB proposal.

Recruitment Plan

The researcher selected the Pinetop Perkins Foundation workshop as a single-case study because of its critical and unusual nature. This study applied purposive sampling to select participants. There are two primary components of employing purposive sampling: "establishing

criteria" and creating a method for ensuring participants meet these criteria.[262] The Foundation

pre-determined the criteria for whether a participant could serve as an instructor, learner,

volunteer, or board member. Therefore, the method for ensuring the criteria were met was to

select participants from within the bounded case of the workshop. It is usual for case study

sample sizes to remain relatively small; therefore, limiting the study to three or four participants

per group is appropriate.[263] All eleven instructors were recruited to participate in the study before

the workshop through a formal letter of request sent to the board president and distributed to

each instructor (Appendix D). Ten instructors responded positively. Guardians of minor

participants were asked to complete a parental consent form (Appendix G). This parental consent

form included the study's purpose, the nature of participation, data protection, confidentiality,

and information on how to end participation. Board members, interns, volunteers, and learners

were recruited for participation during the workshop (Appendix D). Participants in this second

group were selected based on their musical improvement, enthusiasm, or willingness to share.

Data Collection Overview

Instructor participants were individually interviewed before the workshop in person, over

the phone, or via Zoom as chosen by the participant. After this initial interview, the participants

were provided with clean transcriptions of their interviews for member checking. During the

workshop, the researcher observed participating instructors teaching masterclass sessions.

Observations were recorded in a field journal based on an observation form. Secondary

participants were also observed and interviewed during the workshop. Interviews for secondary

participants occurred briefly and as convenient for each participant. Video recording devices

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[262] Crawford, "Qualitative Research Designs," 88

[263] Schoch, "Case Study Research," 249.

were used during masterclass sessions to procure video data of the workshop instruction. The videos were viewed and observed using the same observation form as the live observations. The instructor participants were interviewed again via their chosen method after the workshop. Following this final interview, the participants were provided with transcriptions of their interviews for member checking. The video recording device was a Sony camera, and the audio recording device was a Sony digital voice recorder.

Data Collection Plan

This study employed qualitative interviewing, observation, and video recording to collect data. Qualitative interviews allow the researcher to discover what people think, how they feel, and why they act in a certain way.[264] Qualitative interviews are beneficial if participants need to, in the words of one author, "explain their answers or give examples or describe their experiences."[265] This study employed qualitative interviewing to understand better what and how inquiries surrounding blues music education. Observations complement the data gathered through interviews or "add new dimensions" to understanding the phenomenon.[266] In this study, the researcher acted as an observer-participant, in which the participants knew the researcher's role. This was useful in obtaining a firsthand experience and exploring concepts that participants were uncomfortable discussing or unable to articulate.[267] Finally, video recordings allowed the researcher to further corroborate the findings of the interviews and observations. A recording is

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[264] Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing (2nd ed.): The Art of Hearing Data,* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2005): 2-3.

[265] Ibid.

[266] Yin, *Case Study Research,* 122

[267] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,* 5th ed., (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018): 188.

helpful to collect data without hindering the participants.[268] This study used recordings to gather data from events that occurred simultaneously.

Focused, responsive interviews allowed for open-ended responses within a single topic. This interview technique was used for three separate data collection events. Main questions begin the conversation on a specific topic to "ensure that the overall subject is covered."[269] Probes and follow-up questions are ways to "ask for more depth and detail" or "expand on what" has been discussed.[270]

<div align="center">Pre-Workshop Interviews</div>

Interview questions were developed to address the central research question, sub-questions, and theoretical foundation. These questions served as the main questions of the focused, responsive interviews. Questions were developed for the participants to discuss their pedagogical approaches, the content they wished to cover, and the teaching strategies they planned to implement. The pre-workshop interviews were conducted before the workshop to learn what and how each instructor planned to teach. These first interviews also served as a method for building rapport with the participants. Each participant was interviewed in person, via Zoom, or over the phone based on their preference and availability.

Pre-Workshop Interview Questions

Rapport

1. How and why were you selected as an instructor for the Pinetop?

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[268] Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design,* 189.

[269] Rubin, *Interviewing,* 13.

[270] Ibid.

Question one sought to build rapport with the participants and learn their qualifications as musicians and educators. Failure to build rapport, to use one author's words, "can limit responses."[271] This question also helped contextualize the participant as a member of the bounded case.

Pedagogy and Theory

2. What is your approach to teaching blues music? CRQ, SQ2

3. How do you plan for a masterclass setting? CRQ

4. In what ways is music like a language? CRQ

5. How do you teach students of different ability levels at the same time? CRQ, SQ2

Question two was open-ended to maintain an early, broad scope, allowing the participant to discuss blues music education freely. Rubin and Rubin suggest asking broad questions about different components of known facts.[272] Question three addressed curriculum design and lesson planning, two central pedagogical knowledge components.[273] Question four referred to Gordon's Music Learning Theory.[274] Question five addressed differentiated instruction and Bruner's "spiral curriculum."[275]

Content and Curriculum

6. What must a person learn to play blues music? SQ2

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[271] Linda M. Crawford and Laura Knight Lynn, "Interviewing Essentials for New Researchers," in *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner,* edited by Gary J. Burkholder, Kimberley A. Cox, Linda M. Crawford, and John H. Hitchcock, 147-159, (Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications, Inc., 2020): 155.

[272] Rubin, *Interviewing,* 155.

[273] Jon Saphier, Mary Ann Haley-Speca, and Robert Gower, *The Skillful Teacher: Building Your Teaching Skills,* (Acton, MA: Research for Better Teaching, Inc., 2008): 207.

[274] Edwin E. Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 4-5.

[275] Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education,* 13.

    a.   Follow-up topics: Topics to be taught, big ideas, learning expectations, and criteria for proficiency.

7. Are there elements of musical technique that are unique to blues music? SQ2

Question six was a broad question to begin focusing on content and curriculum. Rubin and Rubin discuss the straightforward nature of asking main questions "when you know what information you need."[276] The research questions sought to understand what content knowledge is required for blues music. This question also allowed follow-up questions or probes concerning specific musical elements. The follow-up topics for question six reminded the researcher of possible curricular issues to address that are based on *Research for Better Teaching.*[277] Question seven prepared for comparisons between general music education and blues music education.

Teaching Strategies

8. How do you motivate students during the masterclass? CRQ, SQ2

9. What activities, materials, and examples do you plan on using? SQ2

    a.   Follow-up: How do you involve students in learning?

10. How do you determine when a student "gets it?" SQ2

Question eight addressed "cognitive and emotional engagement," which is a necessary component of the principles of learning.[278] Question nine inquired about specific instructional strategies, including "activities, materials, and examples."[279] If the participant does not discuss the engagement or involvement of students in the learning, the follow-up question will address

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[276] Rubin, *Interviewing,* 153.

[277] Saphier et al., *The Skillful Teacher,* 359.

[278] Ibid., 206.

[279] Ibid., 367.

this crucial aspect of learning and teaching.[280] Finally, question ten addressed the assessment of student learning.[281]

Masterclass Observations

Observing masterclasses yielded essential data for this study. Participant observation provides a "perspective [that] is invaluable in producing an accurate portrayal of a case study phenomenon."[282] In this study, the researcher served the workshop as a volunteer to gain access to the live masterclass sessions. The masterclass sessions were the primary teaching component of the workshop. Each instructor presented eight masterclasses to the students of an instrument track. The researcher observed and took field notes on one masterclass for each participant.

Masterclass Observation Form Development

Developing an observation guide allowed the researcher to organize the data collection process.[283] Guidance is also essential for maintaining focus on the phenomenon under examination. The observations in this study focused on the instructors' words and actions. The observation form (Appendix I) included sections for taking notes specific to each research question. The sections were labeled Pedagogy and Theory (CRQ), Content and Curriculum (SQ1), and Teaching Strategies (SQ2). Notes were taken for the following reasons: when the instructor explicitly spoke about the research questions, to track every learning activity or

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[280] Saphier et al., *The Skillful Teacher, 367*.

[281] Ibid., 359.

[282] Yin, *Case Study,* 124.

[283] Barbara Kawulich, "Collecting Data Through Observation," in *Doing Social Research: A Global Context,* edited by C. Wagner, B. Kawulich, and M. Garner, 150-160, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012): 155.

teaching strategy within the masterclass, and to identify the materials and repertoire used during the masterclass.

Video Recordings

Video recordings are a method for collecting evidence without obstructing the setting. For this study, one masterclass was recorded for each participant. The videos were viewed following the workshop to corroborate findings with the interviews and observations. Each video was analyzed via the same form as the observation form (Appendix J).

Non-Instructor Interviews

This study examined the practices of the music instructors at the workshop. The researcher sought to understand the perspective of the learners, volunteers, and board members on the blues instruction. It was appropriate to conduct four to six interviews with non-instructor participants to determine their perspectives and corroborate the findings of the instructor interviews, observations, and video recordings. Six non-instructor participants were identified for their enthusiasm, musical development, and willingness to talk. These six participants were interviewed during the workshop, in between masterclass sessions.

Non-Instructor Interview Questions

Rapport

1. Why did you decide to come to / volunteer at this workshop?

Question one built rapport and began discussing music with the participant.

Pedagogy/Content/Teaching Strategies

2. What new concepts have you learned from the instructor(s) at this workshop? CRQ, SQ1

3. What has an instructor done in class that helped you the most? CRQ, SQ2

4. How is this workshop making you a better blues player? CRQ, SQ1, SQ2

Question two addressed the content taught by the instructors. Question three addressed the pedagogy and teaching strategies of the instructors. Question four was broad to address the content, pedagogy, and teaching strategies. Following question four, probing or follow-up questions were necessary to gain further insight into the participant's perspective of the instructor's teaching.

Post-Workshop Interviews

Finally, the instructor participants were interviewed within one week following the workshop. The post-workshop interview was necessary a) to corroborate data from previous interviews, observations, and video recordings, b) for addressing changes to the instructors' plans regarding content and teaching strategies, c) to provide an opportunity for clarifying, adding to, and changing previous remarks, and d) to re-visit the prompts with the workshop in close memory. The prescribed main questions were adapted from the pre-workshop questions. Some questions were developed between the end of the workshop and the post-workshop interview for each instructor. Each participant was interviewed in person, via Zoom, or over the phone, depending on their availability and preference.

Post-Workshop Interview Questions

Rapport

1. What were the successes of the workshop for you and your students?

2. How was the class session I observed or videotaped different from a normal masterclass?

Pedagogy and Teaching Strategies

3. What is your approach to teaching blues music? CRQ, SQ2

4. How well did your plan go for the masterclass workshop? CRQ

5. How were you able to address students of different ability levels? CRQ, SQ2

6. How were you able to motivate students during the masterclass? CRQ, SQ2

7. What activities, materials, and examples were the most successful? SQ2

8. How did you know when a student "got it?" SQ2

Content and Curriculum

9. What topics and big ideas did you cover? SQ1

10. Are there elements of musical technique that are unique to blues music? SQ1

Each question was adapted from the first set and changed appropriately for tense and context. Additional questions specific to each instructor or in response to occurrences during the workshop were placed at the end of the interview.

Saturation

Appropriate research requires data saturation to ensure enough data has been collected to describe the phenomenon adequately. Crawford states the two criteria for having reached data saturation are "(1) Continued analysis yields no new information and (2) there are no unexplained phenomena."[284] Guest et al. found that six to seven interviews are typically required to reach eighty percent saturation, and eleven to twelve interviews are required for ninety-five percent saturation.[285] This study comprised eleven instructor participants, each providing one interview, two observations, and one video recording. In addition, six non-instructor participants were also interviewed. These data collections provide ample evidence of data saturation.

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[284] Linda M. Crawford, "Qualitative Research Designs," 90.

[285] Greg Guest, Emily Namey, and Mario Chen, "A Simple Method to Assess and Report Thematic Saturation in Qualitative Research," *PLoS ONE* 15, no. 5 (May 2020): 13-14.

Data Analysis

This study applied thematic analysis to ensure the findings remained consistent with the data.[286] Each interview was transcribed using Otter.ai. The transcriptions were then examined for accuracy and adjusted where required. Cleaned transcripts were provided to each participant to ensure accuracy. Once accuracy was confirmed, the transcriptions were uploaded to Delve Tool for coding. Field notes from the observation forms were also uploaded to the Delve Tool. Delve Tool generated and managed the codebook for the data.

First, the data were coded by organizing text from the transcripts and observation forms, selecting "chunks," and choosing "a word representing a category" for the chunks.[287] Next, a description of the data was created to define the setting of the bounded case.[288] Then, "a small number of themes" were generated by identifying relationships between the codes.[289] This process was repeated until themes were developed representing all relevant data.

The first round of coding employed both deductive and inductive techniques. Deductive codes were created from the theoretical foundations, relevant literature, and research questions. This allowed the "conceptual framework" to "[drive] the inquiry."[290] Deductive codes ensured the data yielded a response to the research questions. Inductive codes were created to identify "surfacing topics" and codes that were "unanticipated in data."[291] This allowed the participants in

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[286] Greg Guest, Kathleen M. MacQueen, and Emily E. Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis,* ebook, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012): 15

[287] Creswell, *Research Design,* 193.

[288] Ibid., 194.

[289] Ibid.

[290] Paul Mihas, "Qualitative Analysis," in *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner,* edited by Gary J. Burkholder, Kimberley A. Cox, Linda M. Crawford, and John H. Hitchcock, 99-112, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2020): 100

[291] Ibid., 101.

the case to contribute to the inquiry. Inductive codes ensured the findings were relevant and authentic to the population the participants represented. Codes were automatically added to the codebook via the Delve Tool.

After the texts were coded, themes were developed from the codes. Themes were developed based on potential responses to the research questions found within the codes. This allowed the "analytical objectives" to drive the analysis.[292] The data and codes were continually examined for repetition, "local terms," metaphors, similarities and differences, connectors and transitions, and missing data.[293]

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness assures confidence in the sources and means by which the sources were gathered, including all data collection methods and analysis techniques.[294] Hancock et al. identify four components of evaluating the trustworthiness of a case study research design: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This section addresses the components of trustworthiness and discusses ethical considerations.

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research refers to internal validity: "the findings should be the true and accurate representation of the phenomenon of interest."[295] Credibility was established

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[292] Guest, et al., *Applied Thematic Analysis,* 65.

[293] Ibid., 66.

[294] Molly S. Stewart and John H. Hitchcock, "Quality Considerations," in *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner,* edited by Gary J. Burkholder, Kimberley A. Cox, Linda M. Crawford, and John H. Hitchcock, 175-198, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2020): 189.

[295] Carol A. Bailey, *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research,* 3rd edition, ebook, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018): 144.

through expert review, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, and member checking.

Expert review was achieved by sharing the literature review with one of the leading authors of blues history, Roger Stolle. The author sent a completed literature review to Stolle via email, who, in turn, confirmed the accuracy of most of the review and offered suggestions for improving a few points. Edits to the literature review were based on these suggestions.

Prolonged engagement required the researcher to spend "sufficient time in data collection."[296] This was achieved by maintaining a presence throughout the workshop. The researcher volunteered daily, including attendance at the meet and greet, field trips, jam sessions, masterclasses, and the final concert.

Persistent observation involves "concentrating on relevant aspects of the phenomenon."[297] Throughout this study, the researcher focused data collection on the pedagogy and content of blues music. This was achieved by using an observation form that only allowed for relevant data to be recorded.

Triangulation of data was achieved by using various methods of data collection.[298] Data were gathered via interviews with multiple participants, observations, and video recordings. The convergence of evidence within a single study allows each data collection method to contribute to the findings.[299]

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[296] Cheryl Tatano Beck, *Introduction to Phenomenology: Focus on Methodology,* ebook, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2021): 120.

[297] Ibid.

[298] Ibid.

[299] Yin, *Case Study,* 129.

Finally, member checking required the researcher to allow participants opportunities to "review and comment" on findings.[300] Cleaned transcripts of each interview were provided to the participants to enable them to review the authenticity of each transcript. The transcripts were coded after participant member checking.

Transferability

Transferability examines the ability to apply qualitative research findings to another scenario.[301] This was achieved by discussing the case with "sufficient clarity and detail."[302] The description of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation and its annual workshop and the detailed reports used in the coding process ensured an adequate case description was presented. Sufficient information regarding the background of blues music and detailed research procedures also contributed to transferability.

Dependability

Dependability is the "stability of the findings over time and conditions."[303] This was first achieved through "careful documentation" of all components of the research procedure.[304] Data triangulation also contributed to the dependability of this study, including the use of member checking. Dependability is achieved when the "findings seem logical" based on how the research was conducted.[305]

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[300] Beck, *Phenomenology,* 120.

[301] Stewart and Hitchcock, "Quality Considerations," 192.

[302] Ibid.

[303] Beck, *Phenomenology,* 118.

[304] Ibid., 120.

[305] Bailey, *Qualitative Field Research,* 146.

Confirmability

Confirmability demonstrates that the findings correlate with the data.[306] This has been achieved through data triangulation and openly discussing bias. Data triangulation ensures that little bias affects the findings by examining the phenomenon through several collection methods. The researcher has addressed the biases brought to the setting. The careful documentation of research procedures, data collection, and data analysis also assisted with confirmability.[307]

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted per strict ethical considerations. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation provided a letter of support to use their workshop experience as a research site and granted the researcher permission to recruit participants upon IRB approval. Then, IRB approved the research proposal [Appendix A]. Upon approval, participants were recruited, and consent forms were disseminated. Trust was built between the researcher and participants. The researcher served the site by serving as a volunteer during the workshop. All results were included by reporting multiple perspectives and contrary findings.[308] Confidentiality was maintained by employing pseudonyms for the participants. The data is stored on a password-protected hard drive, which is stored in a locked container along with storage devices containing the video recordings. These data will be destroyed three years after this study's end.

Summary

This instrumental case study aimed to examine blues music education in an authentic setting through the lens of three major educational theories. The researcher gathered data through

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[306] Bailey, *Qualitative Field Research,*, 148.

[307] Beck, *Phenomenology,* 120.

[308] Creswell, *Research Design,* 90.

three sets of interviews, live observations, and video recordings. This study employed applied thematic analysis to identify codes and themes. The themes that arose during this analysis are the subject of the following chapters.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

This instrumental case study sought to examine pedagogical elements of teaching and learning at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience. Danielson's framework for teaching, Bruner's spiral curriculum, and Gordon's music learning theory comprise the theoretical framework of this study. The researcher immersed himself in every facet and the total duration of the Pinetop Workshop experience. Informal conversations and observations before and during the beginning of the workshop led to alterations in this study's procedures. It became clear that the two prescribed interviews with each instructor would not yield new information. Therefore, the researcher added a second observation in lieu of the second interview.

Participants

Nine instructors, two interns, two students, and two board members participated in this study. These fifteen individuals created an image of the purpose of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's workshop. They demonstrated how the Pinetop Perkins Foundation accomplishes its goal through high-quality teaching and community experience. The interviews, observations, and video recordings with and of these participants yielded the data that created the results of this study.

Instructor Participants (Group One)

Bill, bass instructor

Bill is an experienced blues bass guitarist from Chicago. He recorded solo and collaborative albums and won awards for his performance during an extended career. His experience playing with several other blues legends positions him to teach blues bass

authentically. He serves the workshop as a special guest teacher. Bill participated in this study through observations and video recordings.

Trevor, bass instructor

Trevor grew up in a musical family with whom he regularly performed, including service to their local church. He started playing bass guitar at age twelve, taking after his father. He began performing blues as the bassist behind several award-winning artists, who provided him with vast experience in several styles of blues and other music genres. Trevor participated in this study through a semi-structured interview, observations, and video recordings.

Haley, bass instructor

Haley is a Clarksdale local who regularly performs and teaches bass guitar. Her experience includes teaching, performing, and recording as a bassist and bandleader. Haley participated in this study through a semi-structured interview, observations, and video recordings.

David, guitar instructor

David is an acoustic guitar player from Memphis. His playing experience includes performing and recording internationally. His teaching experience includes masterclasses at major blues and guitar events and well-renowned instructional videos. His awards include four Blues Music Awards. David participated in this study through a semi-structured interview, observations, and video recordings.

Jeff, guitar instructor

Jeff is a Chicago blues guitarist. His experience includes international touring, recording, performing with his band in Chicago, and teaching blues guitar workshops. He toured with blues

legends before forming his own band. Jeff participated in this study through a semi-structured interview, observations, and video recordings.

Lucas, drum instructor

Lucas is a drummer from Clarksdale. His performance experience includes backing up blues legends including B.B King and Pinetop Perkins, opening for Z.Z. Top, and performing with several local blues artists and bands. He is well-known as a local expert in blues drumming. His first experience with the Pinetop Workshop was serving as the house drummer for jams and the final showcase before the Workshop added a drum track for their students. Lucas participated in this study through observations and video recordings.

Isaac, drum instructor

Isaac is a drummer and schoolteacher from Wisconsin. Originally from Kentucky, his experience includes consistent live performances and private teaching in various styles. He first came to the workshop as a student and began serving as an instructor when Pinetop added a drum track for their students. Isaac participated in this study through a semi-structured interview, observations, and video recordings.

Vance, piano instructor

Vance is a pianist from Georgia. He has won two Pinetop Perkins Piano Player of the Year awards from the Blues Music Foundation and tours regularly with his blues/roots band. Vance participated in this study through a semi-structured interview and observations.

Lynn, voice instructor

Lynn is a vocalist from Ohio. She is an artist who recorded ten albums in the blues genre. Her teaching experience includes formal training in theatre education and teaching theater and

musical productions to young people. She serves the Workshop by providing private voice lessons to any student and presenting workshops in vocal performance. Lynn participated in this study through a semi-structured interview, observations, and video recordings.

Student, Intern, and Board Member Participants (Group Two)

Ben, board member and musical director

Ben is a board member and the musical director for the Pinetop Perkins Foundation. His vast musical experience includes performing and recording with famous blues legends of the Delta and Chicago blues, including Muddy Waters and Pinetop Perkins. During the workshop, he served by meeting privately with students and aiding the instructors for each class. Ben participated in this study through a semi-structured interview and observations.

Jason, board member

Jason is a board member of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation. His first exposure to the workshop came through a friend who also serves on the board. He attended the workshop as a student and, shortly thereafter, was invited to join the board. Jason participated in this study through a semi-structured interview.

Gabby, intern

Gabby is a guitar player from Colorado. Her experience includes performing and recording in the blues genre. She first attended the Pinetop Workshop as a student. Her volunteer involvement in a previous year's workshop naturally led to an internship position. Gabby participated in this study through a semi-structured interview and observations.

Jacob, intern

Jacob is a guitar player and music teacher from Texas. He first visited Clarksdale at a young age while examining famous blues sights and trails in the Mississippi Delta. His travels led him to the Shack Up Inn, where he first learned of the Pinetop Workshop. He attended the workshop as a student for several years before he was invited to return as an intern. Jacob participated in this study through a semi-structured interview and observations.

Matthew, student

Matthew is a multi-instrumentalist from Colorado, where he studies music in college, focusing on songwriting and recording arts. He heard about the Pinetop Workshop by meeting board members during the International Blues Challenge (IBC) in Memphis. His advanced skill level allowed him to participate in the acoustic guitar class with a small group of students. Matthew participated in this study through a semi-structured interview and observation.

Austin, student

Austin is a multi-instrumentalist from Colorado. He is a veteran student of the Pinetop Workshop. His vast performance experience led him to seek further training in harmonica performance at this year's workshop. Austin participated in this study through a semi-structured interview.

Findings Overview

The researcher transcribed each interview and organized notes from each observation and video recording. Inductive coding served as the primary analysis tool, in which the interview transcriptions and observation notes (Appendix N) elicited most of the results. The researcher employed deductive coding to examine theoretical evidence in the data. The remainder of this

chapter will reveal the findings relative to the research questions and hypotheses, while the next chapter will relate those findings to the theoretical framework, literature, and practice.

Several themes emerged from the data that provide further insight into blues music education. This chapter presents the themes by relevance to the study's research question. Two themes emerged that were relevant to multiple research questions and, therefore, are presented as general findings. Additionally, four minor topics emerged from the data that lacked the significance and consistency among participants to constitute themes but remain relevant to the research questions and framework.

Findings for the CRQ

Central Research Question: What pedagogy is implemented in blues training institutions that influence students with an authentic experience and a high-quality music education?

Hypothesis 1: The pedagogy implemented in blues training institutions includes methods consistent with informal music lessons, private studios, and masterclasses.

This study defined pedagogy as the relationship between teaching and learning. Two pedagogical themes represent comprehensive concepts that motivate the purposes of the Pinetop Workshop. The first theme is Immersion, which includes the importance of the location, the history of the blues, and the community of the Pinetop Foundation. The second theme is Student-Centered, which consists of the needs and wants of the students and the future outcomes for Pinetop Alumni.

Theme 1: Immersion

Immersion contains two primary elements that provide essential insight into the learning of the Pinetop Workshop. First, the workshop's location is critical to its success and authenticity. The Pinetop Workshop's location also connects music learning to blues history. Second, the

community of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation is a cornerstone for the students and staff to build

a future for blues music. A primary element, however, is the camp-like nature of the workshop

experience. Staff, students, and their families spend four days together focused on blues music.

Location

The Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience occurs in Clarksdale, Mississippi,

specifically at the Shack Up Inn on the Hopson Plantation. A historical marker outside of the

Hopson Commissary conveys the story of Pinetop Perkins' involvement with the plantation. In

the 1940s, Pinetop worked on this plantation as a tractor driver, in conjunction with his

performance career in local Juke Joints and on the *King Biscuit Time* radio show in Helena,

AR.[309] Therefore, the Hopson Plantation serves as the ideal location for a workshop bearing the

blues legend's name. The Hopson Commissary (Figure 1) served as the central location for full

workshop gatherings, including registration, evening jams, and meals.

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[309] Mississippi Blues Trail Marker, *Pinetop Perkins & Hopson Planting Co,* Hopson Plantation, Clarksdale, MS.

Figure 1. *Hopson Commissary.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

A board member cooked gumbo for the camp's dinner on Thursday of the Workshop. This dish provides the non-Southern workshop participants with a literal taste of Southern cuisine. Sitting around the stew pot provided stark imagery for one participant regarding the importance of the workshop's location. Jason related this experience to learning blues music:

> It's like cooking, you know? You gotta [sic] have context… What style of cooking are you going to play? And what kind of pot are you going to cook it in?... The pot is Clarksdale… it's like we're creating a blues stew here… You've got all the seasoning around here, and you've got all of these kids that are sponges, and they're just here to soak up the flavor, and that's the immersion… and you couldn't have what we have here in Nashville or any other place. It's right here. This is where it happened.

Ben confirms the importance of the location, stating, "Actual blues came out in the Delta Blues in Mississippi, where [we are] right now; it's a deep thing to be doing right in the land

where the music came from." The "thing" is learning authentic blues in an authentic setting.

Haley agrees, saying, "I do not think that this workshop would be as important or special if you

tried to have it somewhere else." Therefore, the workshop's location is an essential element for

immersive learning.

Shack Up Inn

The Shack Up Inn is located on the old Hopson Plantation on the outskirts of Clarksdale.

During the rest of the year, anyone over the age of twenty-five can book a room to experience

the Delta. However, the Pinetop Perkins Foundation reserves the whole Inn for workshop staff,

participants, and volunteers during the workshop. Jason believes the Shack Up Inn is ideal for

the workshop because of its connection with history, location in the Mississippi Delta, and

unique character:

> And I mentioned earlier about the blues ghosts. I swear that's real. You can't be a musician and walk down that road and seeing that Memphis Delta, that flat land with the sun coming down, hitting that corrugated sheet metal and reflecting… you can't be untouched by that.

The road (Figure 2) Jason discussed is an old farm road that runs parallel to a railroad

track through the Hopson Plantation. The Shacks are spread across both sides of this road;

therefore, most participants spend some time walking on its pavement either to class or their

shacks. The presence of a railroad track (Figure 3) aids the immersion of blues history and

culture, considering the longstanding prevalence of railroad subject matter in blues music and

literature.

Figure 2. *East Tallahatchie Street, Northwest.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Figure 3. *Hopson Railroad.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

The Shack Up Inn serves as the perfect location not only for its historic background but also for the convenient lodging in novel shacks and rooms. The shacks (Figures 4-11) convey a strong character that allows patrons to feel the immersion of living in the Delta. Each shack or room has a unique personality that helps provide an individual experience for each participant. The shacks and commissary also offer plenty of room for the masterclass sessions, with several large common areas and two performance stages.

Figure 4. *Shack Up Lobby.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

The Shack Up Lobby (Figure 4) served as the location for the bass masterclasses. "The Gin" bar area provided ample room for each bassist to play their own instrument with their own amplifier, including one student's upright acoustic string double bass. Different bar areas, including a central area, two areas separated by walls, and a stage, also provided the bass

instructors with the opportunity for uninterrupted private lessons with each student. This building

also functioned regularly as the lobby for the hotel, serving each Workshop guest.

Figure 5. *The Gin Stage.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Inside the Shack Up Lobby features The Gin Bar's stage (Figure 5). The bass class did

not regularly access this stage for teaching; however, the bass and drums classes did employ this

area for a joint masterclass. This stage allowed the rhythm section to practice in a realistic

setting, as the Shack Up Inn regularly books blues musicians to perform. Therefore, the Shack

Up Inn serves the Workshop as a historic, immersive location and provides rehearsal

opportunities in a realistic contemporary Juke Joint-esque setting.

Figure 6. *Silo Shacks.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Figure 7. *Rich House.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

The Silo Shacks (Figure 6) housed five Workshop participants in a unique setting and served as an ideal location for private voice lessons. Lynn taught vocal lessons from Shack B (center silo), providing plenty of room for each student to sing and perform on their instrument. The Rich House (Figure 7) served as the classroom for the acoustic guitar track. The acoustic guitar track added a new option for advanced guitar students at this year's Workshop. The Hopson Loft (Figure 8) served as the classroom for the drum track. The remaining shacks (Figures 9-11) housed Workshop participants.

Figure 8. *Hopson Loft.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Figure 9. *Shack.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Figure 10. *Shack 2.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Figure 11. *Shacks 3 & 4.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023

Clarksdale

Matthew stated, "there's no better place to learn about the history of the blues than here

in Clarksdale." Haley, a Clarksdale local, discussed the importance of the town:

> I know it's real because I have 32 years [of] experience of being in this town…And I
> know that when I first came here, and the first time I saw a blues fest here in Clarksdale,
> Mississippi, I felt something that I never felt before… it's just something about being in a
> place where those magical things happen… and not only do I have my own story, but I
> have a million other stories of different people, fans, tourists, [and] friends.

The Hopson bartender, a local blues historian, led the Workshop participants on a

walking tour of Clarksdale. He began at the Delta Blues Museum, Mississippi's oldest music

museum. He led them past Ground Zero Blues Club and to Red's juke joint (Figure 12). Red was

kind enough to let the students view the club's interior. The Hopson bartender then led the

students around downtown Clarksdale, where there were several historical juke joints, locations

where blues legends lived, and other historically significant landmarks unrelated to blues music.

Figure 12. *Red's Exterior.* Photograph by Nolan Dean, (Appendix O).

History

Each instructor spoke about the history of the blues, especially relative to the location. Haley calls Clarksdale the "sacred grounds… church, or whatever you want to call it." Isaac echoes the sacred theme by referring to Clarksdale as the "blues Mecca." He goes on to say, "If you have an appreciation for the culture and the history and the people that made [the blues], then you have to come [to the Delta] at some point," especially considering the importance of the "[Hopson] Plantation, that Pinetop has so much of a history" concerning the "workshop in particular when you're describing things like the feeling of the blues, you have to be here." David adds the importance of the location for the educational side of blues music, stating, "You're out here on this plantation outside of Clarksdale, Mississippi, where this music came from, one of the places, how can that not teach you as a young musician that wants to learn?" Therefore, the Pinetop instructors fully believe in the importance of an immersive experience to teach the history of the blues.

Jeff discussed the South as the origin of blues music. He stated, "I mean, I teach the blues anywhere, but this is Mississippi [where] everything… has to do with the history of American music." In class, he also discussed the southern origin of blues. He stated that taking time to change chords, not in a hurry, is "the southern thing," plainly stating that "the music would have been different if developed in a city."

The instructors also discussed blues music as the historical music of African Americans. This discussion contained either specific teachings in their masterclasses about the history of blues music or responses to interview questions highlighting the importance of blues history. Ben stated that "it's absolutely essential to recognize that this is not just like a course of study or art for art's sake, that blues music came out of the suffering of African American people from

having been freed from slavery and still kept down by institutional racism." In his class, David referred to the blues as "slave music, [which is] truly American." Lynn continued this theme in her workshop by teaching an African-American spiritual to the students, mainly discussing the song's history relative to blues music.

Post slavery, however, blues was the music of African Americans in the sharecropping south. Jeff showed his students several recordings of authentic blues artists from this era, one artist in particular who "has a lot of songs about what it's like to be black in the south" during that time. Isaac discusses the lifestyle that accompanied these blues musicians.

> The music really grew from people doing ungodly awful work and ungodly awful conditions in a place that hated them… I am framing blues as being black music because it is. It's just the history of it. And I think there's something beautiful about that. Because if you don't [play music], you go insane.

The "ungodly awful work" to which he refers is sharecropping. This makes it even more fitting that the workshop occurs at Hopson, which still serves as farmland, growing the crop most well-known to sharecropping and slavery: cotton (Figure 13).

Figure 13. *Cotton in Mid-June.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Each instructor discussed and agreed on the importance of connecting blues music to its history. However, they varied methods for ensuring the students learned blues history during the workshop. One instructor stated, "It's hard to get them connected to [the history] if they aren't already connected to it." This means the connection to blues history is personal and must happen naturally. Other instructors argued that this natural connection is the importance of an immersive experience. Another instructor claimed, "I didn't really go into the history… I just tried to, like, showcase real blues players." In showcasing "real blues players," this instructor organically demonstrated blues history through the music of essential blues figures.

Community

Every person involved with the Foundation spoke highly of the community of musicians and blues fans that the Pinetop Workshop creates. The community is created through a hospitable environment, a common interest, and a far-reaching organization. The hospitable environment, Jacob says, "goes back to Mr. Pinetop Perkins himself." Every person who spoke about Pinetop Perkins expressed a similar sentiment, discussing his love for others, especially young people. During her first voice lesson of the week, Lynn welcomed Matthew into her shack, learned his name, and built rapport by asking about his life, interests, and music performances. Each instructor similarly contributed to this hospitable environment. Ben described the Pinetop community as "people being kind to each other, it's very welcoming of everybody, while keeping in touch, being mindful of the history of the music, and then trying to play it well."

Everyone involved with the foundation shares a common interest in blues music. Ben says this makes the Workshop "a real vacation for the spirit, too, because it feels so good to do this with nice people with music that we love, and I'm hearing your music everywhere I go… it's

a sweet thing." Jacob says the Workshop is unique because "this [is] the only time where I can kind of lay back, relax, and just play music that I love with people that I know have my back, respect me, love me, and just expect the same." Gabby claimed the importance of "camaraderie of being with your peers and getting to hang out and play music together… and you get to hang out with other blues musicians." She continued by sharing the importance of such a community for young people by stating,

> that's the fun part of… being a young musician is [that] in the community that you grew up in, you're not necessarily going to find the people that you play with [who] have the same interests as you. But really, Pinetop is the one that has pulled me through most of my musical career, and it's a really wonderful community.

Jason shared a similar sentiment regarding the importance of community for young musicians.

> What we see happen at these workshops and other fundraisers is bringing those kids together and making connections with each other. Because if you're a kid that loves the blues, nine out of ten of your peers are not going to be big fans of the blues. And so, making that connection with others across the country, making those connections and seeing parents light up at seeing their kids make connections with people all over the world… there's not a better feeling.

As Jason states, the connections create a far-reaching community of blues musicians of all ages across the United States.

> Finally, Jeff states the importance of learning in a community.

> I mean, it's that kind of [book] knowledge is out there, but this kind of experience is not, and I guess certainly from their peers, you got to step aside and let [the students] learn from their peers.

The experience of which Jeff speaks is the opportunity for students to learn in a community. Isaac explains that he "tries to ensure that my students are explaining what specifically they are doing if they managed to 'get' something before other students do" because they may explain it better. Community experience and peer mentoring create two important pedagogical pillars for blues education at the Pinetop Workshop.

Theme 1 Summary

Immersion is an integral component of the pedagogical approach for the Pinetop

Workshop. The first element of Immersion is conducting a workshop in an authentic setting. The

members of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation firmly believe that hosting the Workshop at the

Hopson Plantation and Shack Up Inn on the outskirts of Clarksdale, Mississippi, provides the

best opportunity for the students to learn blues music and history authentically. The second

element of Immersion is building a community. The members of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation

clearly stated the importance of establishing a hospitable organization centered on the common

interest of blues music that reaches as far as its membership.

Theme 2: Student-Centered

Every instructor, intern, and board member stated the importance of the Workshop's

student-centered and young person-focused approach. When asked why they were selected to

teach, each instructor discussed their enthusiasm for working with children and their experience

in the blues genre. Trevor stated that he was selected as an instructor because "I really love the

blues… and of course, I definitely love kids when it comes to music. It brings so much joy to me

to see them out there [playing blues]." Likewise, David believes that "helping younger people

learn to play music, especially this music, is a valuable commodity." Considering there were

eight students over sixty, Jason specifies that "we've also included those young at heart to further

the blues genre."

Needs and Wants

The instructors believe that the first step for a student-centered approach is to learn the

needs and wants of each student and then help them to achieve those goals. Several instructors

communicated the need to begin instruction at the students' current skill levels. David clearly

articulated this point.

> The most important thing is to try to find out what they want, where they are, how far they've come along with music, and try to get that and try to get it to them. So that they, when they're done with this, they have some things that they didn't have before.

David carried this pedagogical belief into the first day of class, telling his students, "I have to

know you musically [to get] an idea of what you're doing and see what I can teach you." Lynn

agreed with this concept, saying, "I just, am open to whatever they bring me… whatever arrives,

however, they're singing, I'm going to take them to their next level, I'm going to give them some

tips to get better." Isaac echoed the importance of "adapting to the students" to meet the

students' needs better. Finally, Gabby confirmed this sentiment, stating, "depending on what

levels of students are here [at a given Workshop], if all of the students are higher level, [the

instructors] will teach based on that."

> Focusing on students also means that the instructors teach the material the students want

to learn. Gabby focused on this component of teaching and learning.

> If somebody is like, specifically, well, I want to learn more solo techniques, or I want to learn more about music theory, or I want to learn more about interesting turnarounds to do, then you can kind of split up and go more deeply into those topics than just on a surface level… In years past, we've done 'here's four topics we're going to talk about, which one are you most interesting in learning about?'… but if there are lower level students, then [the instructors] will start with that '101,' some progressions, how to play with a band, leading a band, and that sort of thing.

Therefore, the instructors focus on topics, skills, and material that interest and help the students.

However, Haley is clear that the Workshop is blues-focused, and instruction centers on the blues

genre.

> Especially with this blues program and having young people wanting to kind of go beyond blues… I always say that this is just a foundation, and if you do your research, like I have, or study the history, you'll see that if you take this that we just taught you in this blues context [you can apply it to other genres].

Employment

Several instructors spoke about providing the students with employable skills. One instructor stated, "We are also trying to train our musicians to be hired later in life." Isaac spoke about the importance of technical ability for employment.

> We have to work on playing [drum patterns] to a specific tempo, consistently over and over… because if you don't do that, then you will never have a job anywhere. Doing a really cool shuffle off-time will never get [a musician] hired anywhere.

Trevor confirms this perspective: "Discipline is very, very important when you play with a group. You have to have that, or you'll be sitting at home playing in your garage." However, Lynn also believes that part of the Workshop's responsibility is to reveal the untapped potential of the students, which also helps with employability. She focuses part of her private voice lessons on finding each student's "money note," or the part of their voice that she believes sounds the best. This money-note, Lynn claims, is the "thing that sells CDs." Therefore, training musicians to become employable involves technical training and identifying strengths.

Leisure

Some of the instructors, however, believe that employment is outside the Workshop's primary goal. One instructor plainly expressed this belief.

> It's a leisure activity for the kids. Some won't be musicians, even if they're very good, and [they] shouldn't, and why should they be? You know? Only very few people become musicians, even though there's plenty of people who are good enough to become musicians. But if they choose a more sensible lifestyle, I wouldn't want to stand in the way of that.

Trevor echoed this thought, fondly remembering his childhood. Every member of his family performed in the family band, playing at various events, especially church services. Of his

siblings, he claimed, "I'm the only one that took it professionally." Music, for his other siblings, was and is a leisure activity.

Character

Several instructors also spoke about the importance of building character for young musicians. The instructors expressed hope that the Workshop prepares its students to function as well-rounded musicians. This holistic approach to blues education focuses on authenticity and humility.

Authenticity

Authenticity is both a pedagogical foundation and a core subject for the Pinetop Workshop. One instructor claims this characteristic sets the Pinetop Workshop apart from other music camps they have taught, stating, "this [workshop] is just genuine." David noted that personal authenticity is a pre-requisite to teaching it to others, "I would imagine that if you want to teach honesty, you got to be honest."

David taught his students to carry this authenticity into each performance, stating, "It doesn't go 'something like this,' it goes the way you play it that night." He continued by imploring his students to respect their audiences in genuinely presenting the music they perform. He said, "I think everybody can relate to everybody. We feel like you've been talked to in an honest way, or let's say even loved in an honest way, and [we] feel really good about it. That's part of the human condition." David added that authenticity in music is not unique to blues but that "you listen to good country music and you go back to the original guys, my goodness gracious the feeling, and that is amazing. Why is it? Because they're being honest. They're talking about honest emotions that you can relate to."

Humility

Several instructors also discussed the importance of humility in finding success as a musician. David spoke about humility as a central component of musicianship, "Leave your ego, play the music, love the people… the most important things are the music and the people." Haley agreed by asking, "How can you have an ego in music?" She continued, "You can always be humble enough to learn something new." Jeff also spoke about humility, claiming, "you got to step aside and let them learn from their peers." This means the instructors must remain sufficiently humble to allow peer mentoring, but also that the students must demonstrate humility in learning from their peers.

Theme 2 Summary

The Student-Centered approach is central to the Pinetop Workshop's success. First, each instructor focuses on the students' needs and wants. They cater instruction and learning activities to the students' goals. Second, the instructors ensure that the students gain the tools necessary for their own musical goals, whether that is to find employment as a musician or continue music-making for leisure. Finally, the instructors teach holistically by demonstrating and instructing high character qualities, such as authenticity and humility.

Findings for SRQ 1

Sub Research Question 1: What is the content knowledge of blues music?

Hypothesis 2: The content knowledge of the blues form is repertoire, artistic styles, and common idiomatic musical passages, including historical and cultural background knowledge.

This study also sought to discover the content knowledge of blues music education. The instructors, students, and interns revealed significant learning concepts for blues music. Three primary themes encompass most of the blues-specific concepts the Pinetop Workshop instructors

taught. First, the instructors taught their students the importance of Simplicity in blues music.

Second, the instructors shared a wealth of Standard Knowledge, including important tools, key

concepts, and blues fundamentals. Finally, the instructors also shared advanced techniques for

further developing ability within the blues genre. Each instructor specified that he or she sought

to teach the blues. Although some of the concepts may be applied elsewhere, the purpose of the

Pinetop Workshop is to prepare students for blues music performance. Jeff even stated, "This is

kind of a purist camp, starting with [Ben], and [Bill] for that matter. I mean, you don't see him

slapping notes and jumping around and playing a five-string bass. He's playing blues, you know,

the blues. I feel the same way about it."

Theme 3: Simplicity

Every instructor discussed the need for simplicity in playing blues music at some point.

The instructors discussed different categories of Simplicity, depending on context and purpose.

First, the instructors discussed the importance of Simplicity to make the music enjoyable to

audiences. Second, the instructors discussed the importance of Simplicity to play successfully as

a band. Finally, the instructors discussed the practicality of Simplicity to allow the musician to

perform authentic blues music.

Enjoyable Music

Jeff taught his students to play "classy" and to "make everything count, and everything

says something in a nice way" that's "kind of elegant." Most instructors taught this concept

while the students practiced soloing. Vance told his students to "give yourself room to build,

remember to breathe, and let the audience have room to think about it." Ben added that when

trading solos, the students do not have to match each other but can also offset the other player if

they "play something that adds instead of subtracts." Jeff claims this concept makes the

performance "attractive music" for an audience. Bill adds that refraining from overplaying

makes the music more meaningful, stating, "Play it soulful, so the notes mean something." David

continually reminded his students about this concept with two memorable phrases. First, he

constantly said, "taste and space," and second, "When in doubt, leave it out." These

colloquialisms helped the students understand the importance of Simplicity in enjoyable music.

Jeff also taught the importance of Simplicity while discussing more sophisticated

concepts. He argued for Simplicity in improvising solos to increase focus on each chord in the

progression. To challenge his students, Jeff asked, "If they took away the whole band, could they

tell what chord you're on?" This helped the students focus on solos that felt each chord

independently.

Play Successfully

Jeff also discussed Simplicity as a means of playing well as a group. He stated simplicity

is "like etiquette, fairness when people are playing together, there's some etiquette there."

However, he acknowledges that playing "classy" is not always easy, especially for young people.

> You know, I mean, if you gave them a car, they would just press the accelerator as far
> down as it would go for as long as they could, naturally, they would. And that's the same
> thing with how they play guitar. So, I'm trying to show… blues showcases with all the
> real *basic* musical values.

Playing successfully as a group is a significant element of that basic musical value. One

instructor shared their experience with a talented student.

> I was tell one [student]… you got to settle down, [the student said] 'I just get so bored,' I
> was like, but I promise you if you settle down and play that part you supposed to play,
> you stop playing for yourself, and you play that part. Then when everything 'click' right
> there in order, [it will] feel so much better than you on the stage practicing, while
> everybody's trying to play.

Another instructor complimented this student's performance while lamenting his overplaying.

> [He was] a hard student, I think because [he was] like playing a lot, real fidgety, but [he] started to understand that if you're gonna play [this instrument], you may not get hired much if you [overplay].

Trevor echoed this point with personal stories about his family band.

> I was always taught that. Man, my mom would make me stop. In the middle of the song, we had a church choir, and I would get beside myself and start doing too much. She'd look over there at me like this [*miming an angry face*], and that means stop, in the middle of the song, don't play no more. 'I'll play the bass on the pedals on the organ.' And she was serious… she installed that discipline in us.

Haley also claims that her commitment to simplistic playing allowed her to "end up replacing a lot of bass players that [had] been playing for about twenty years because I would just hold down the group."

Playing with Simplicity also helped students who struggled with learning new concepts. During a combined masterclass, one student group struggled to play the prescribed exercise, so the instructors reminded them to "don't play any extra stuff," which helped the students play the exercise successfully.

Authentic Blues

Finally, the instructors spoke about Simplicity as a method for ensuring an authentic blues sound. David conveyed this message: "If it sounds good, it's right; if it sounds bad, it's not." This refers to the practice of aural training so prevalent in blues musicianship. Jeff confirmed this concept when discussing simplistic soloing, admonishing his students to play solos as "simple as possible" because "it's just about aggression and groove." The "it" in this context is authentic Delta blues.

Theme 3 Summary

Every instructor with the Pinetop Workshop taught Simplicity as part of blues music education. They first teach this concept because it makes the music more enjoyable for

audiences. Playing enjoyable music aids the success of each musician, whether they seek to perform for employment or leisure. Second, they teach Simplicity to ensure their students' success. Simplifying the musical tools helps the students follow chord changes, perform melodies, and solo more effectively. Finally, they teach Simplicity to represent the Delta blues authentically.

<div align="center">Theme 4: Standard Knowledge</div>

Teaching and learning the blues requires a universal set of blues knowledge. The instructors differed on the composition of a standard repository, often based on instrument or role within a blues band. Isaac discussed the importance of drummers learning basic drum patterns, especially shuffles, whereas Haley discussed the importance of bass players learning various bass lines. Therefore, standard knowledge is largely dependent on the instrument and role. Likewise, the instructors disagreed on literature in a standard repertoire or whether a standard repertoire exists for blues music. Observations included, however, that the instructors employed several common styles of blues music and even demonstrated some of the same songs. Gabby emphasized that there are standard songs that most blues players know, but ignorance of this repertoire will not deter a beginner from successfully performing with a group. Therefore, the standard knowledge of blues music includes certain blues fundamentals, primary concepts, and musical "tools."

Blues Fundamentals

Most Pinetop Workshop instructors downplayed the importance of teaching blues fundamentals in their context. Haley provided specific insight into this phenomenon, "Most of our, [or] all of our kids at Pinetop already understand a shuffle, usually a 12-bar blues and an 8 [-bar blues]." Gabby confirmed that some years, the instructors, or interns, will take novice

students aside to teach them the basics, but the students learn the basics quickly. Most of the blues fundamentals of the Pinetop Workshop, then, were ascertained through observing the students to determine the knowledge that appeared to be collective, prior, or implied. These fundamentals included knowledge of the "I-IV-V" chords, the 12-bar blues format, and the pentatonic scale. One instructor stated, "If you know your pentatonic scale and your I-IV-V progression, you can play blues."

I-IV-V

The author notates these chords using Roman numerals to maintain consistency with contemporary music theory practices, considering that none of the Pinetop Workshop musicians would likely consider Roman numeral analysis. The I-IV-V chords refer to the tonic, sub-dominant, and dominant chords, respectively, within each key, e.g., in the key of G, a G chord is I, a C chord is IV, and a D chord is V. Every instructor, intern, and student spoke about basic chords as common knowledge. Several musicians, including instructors, admitted an inability to read music. They stated, however, that they memorize chords and structures from non-musical elements such as hand positions. Jeff specified why most blues music focuses on these three chords, saying, "Just I-IV-V, that's the big cadence… those are the heaviest chord changes… it's got the heaviest resolution." These "heavy" chord changes help performers and audiences follow along with the progressions.

No participant specified the voicing of each chord, although major or dominant seventh chords may be assumed from observations. David and Jeff discussed advanced chord voicings as an aid rather than a rule. Jeff told his students that "playing a minor seventh above the four chord helps solidify the four." This means playing the chord as a dominant seventh chord helps the progression. David discussed advanced chords while demonstrating advanced techniques.

Twelve-Bar Format

The twelve-bar blues format is the standard musical form for the blues music genre. Most instructors, however, only referred to this structure as the "I-IV-V." One instructor clearly articulated the importance of this standard progression.

> Many blues is based around similar progressions, so like a I-IV-V, or I-IV-V with a quick IV, or those kind of standard core progressions, really, as long as you're familiar with those, you could play any [blues] song…So if you have the [twelve-bar] I-IV-V chord progression, and with the seventh chords, you can pretty much implement that anywhere throughout the blues… The basic [twelve-bar] I-IV-V progression is what you'll see most often when you're jamming.

I	I or IV	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	IV	I	I or V

Figure 14. Twelve-Bar Blues Format, with variants

This table (Figure 14) shows the basic twelve-bar structure with two frequent alterations. This table is divided into three rows and four columns. Each box represents a measure or a bar. The twelve-bar structure is divided into three main sections. In practice, the rhythm, tempo, and lyric structure vary by song. The first alteration of the twelve-bar structure is nicknamed "quick four," in which the second measure is a IV chord. The second alteration of the twelve-bar structure is more common. The final chord of the structure is usually a dominant V chord to lead back to the beginning. This is called a turnaround in blues and will be discussed as a primary concept.

Jeff taught his class about the origin of the twelve-bar structure. He claimed that when blues artists began recording, the twelve-bar structure reduced the required costs and time of recording. Jeff also taught about altering the form, claiming that making minor changes demonstrates mastery of the music. He also showed his students that omitting a turnaround helps

build momentum. When asked whether knowing the twelve-bar structure was prerequisite knowledge for the Pinetop Workshop, he said, "It's rare that a student doesn't know the [twelve-bar] format... or at least a song with that structure." Therefore, it is not necessarily prerequisite knowledge, but it is considered fundamental.

Pentatonic Scale

The next fundamental is the pentatonic scale (Figure 15), a five-note scale that serves as the basis for several folk music genres, including blues. There is a major and minor version of the pentatonic scale, but blues performers most often employ a minor pentatonic. The Pinetop Workshop instructors taught their students to apply this scale for playing solos and improvising melodies. Gabby discussed the importance of the pentatonic scale for blues performance, "You can play those five notes, and you can scramble the order as many times as you want to basically play an entire solo over a twelve-bar blues [form]." Matthew agreed, stating, "You can be a really great blues player, just with the pentatonic scale."
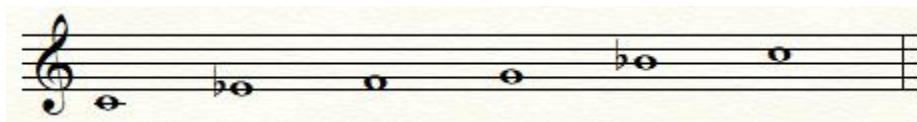

Figure 15. *C minor pentatonic scale.*
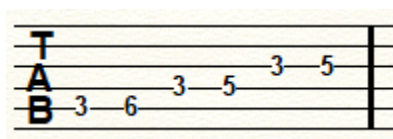
Figure 16. *C minor pentatonic tab, first position.*

Gabby called the pentatonic scale a "box" or "house." This refers to the method by which guitarists typically learn their scales. Figure 16 shows a first-position minor pentatonic box, in which the third fret would be played by the index finger, the sixth by the pinky, and the fifth by the ring finger. This example shows a c-minor pentatonic because it begins and ends on a c note.

However, this position may be employed for any pentatonic scale by changing the beginning note and keeping the fret and string pattern. Guitarists may perform a minor pentatonic scale in five total positions. Gabby discussed the importance of guitarists learning this minor pentatonic box.

Primary Concepts

The instructors also taught specific primary concepts, based on need and instrument, to aid their students regarding blues performance. The first primary concept is turnaround. A turnaround is a method for implementing the V chord to lead into a repetition of the twelve-bar format. Any combination of notes ending on the V chord works as a turnaround (e.g., Figure 17).
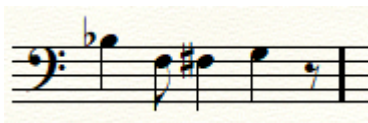
Figure 17. *Simple Turnaround.*

Beginning and ending songs usually employ a similar technique to the turnaround. Starting a song applies the same chord structure with any combination of notes ending on the V chord to lead into the first iteration of the twelve-bar form (e.g., Figure 18). Finishing a song will apply a similar technique but ends with notes on a I chord, generally tonic, to provide closure for the song (e.g., Figure 19).

Figure 18. *Simple Blues Intro.*

Figure 19. *Simple Blues Ending.*

The instructors did not teach the basic turnaround technique, but this technique was observed in every instrument's masterclass. Jacob claimed this concept was observed but not explicitly taught because it was not necessary for them to teach this year, saying, "We've done little mini lessons on how to start a song and end it... [whether we teach it] kind of flips every now and then, year to year."

Several instructors provide insight into advanced or additional options for turnarounds. Matthew claimed he learned,

> Six or seven turnarounds... all related to that Robert Johnson classic two-note turnaround. And then fleshing that out with chords. Sometimes, we've done four-note, bigger chord voicings that sound a little more sophisticated... just having the ability to switch it up is so useful. And it's really [helpful] learning [turnarounds] in different parts of the [guitar] neck.

In class, David taught his students these "bigger chord voicings" as an option for adding variety to their sound. Other instructors added variety in turnarounds by demonstrating the techniques of famous musicians.

The next key concept is what Haley called a "library of patterns." This library consists of standard knowledge that provides the opportunity to perform in various blues styles, especially for the rhythm section. This study found two "libraries" of patterns through the Pinetop Workshop instructors. The first is the library of drum patterns. Isaac briefly described this library.

> The earmarks of classic blues drumming [include] Delta shuffles, [the] Memphis four or quick shuffles, then a lot of Chicago slow blues... those are the key areas that you're going to branch off [from].

Second, each bass instructor spoke about "bass lines" as an essential library. Trevor referred to this concept as "standard bass lines, the standard grooves," stating the importance of

"[knowing] the style of bass line that needs to be played." Haley shared terminology for several

bass line styles, cautioning that the terminology tends to vary by location.

> There'll be common things that are the same, but then there'll be sometimes there's even
> a different word for the same thing. [For example] the lump, [our] mentors called it the
> flat tire, and [another instructor] learned it as the lump.

> She also discussed how stylistic terminology helps musicians perform together, "A key,

or the word shuffle, or that BB King song... I can make a good decision on how to back them."

Several sessions of the bass masterclass involved learning new bass lines in a variety of blues

styles. As a bass player himself, the researcher was invited by the instructors to sit in and learn a

few bass lines [Appendix P]. The instructors clearly communicated the importance of a bass

player developing a library of bass lines that he or she may employ in various situations.

Tools and Advanced Techniques

David communicated a teaching philosophy that prepares students to become their own

musicians rather than simply imitating someone else. He said, "I'm not here to teach you licks;

I'm here to teach you tools... You learn licks to sound exactly like someone else; we all have the

same tools, but our house is a little different." The house to which he refers is a metaphor for

musicianship and sound. He also spoke about tools and advanced techniques as valuable assets

for the students to employ in appropriate situations, stating, "just because you're learning this

stuff doesn't mean you gotta play it all the time." Some of "this stuff" included alternative

turnaround options, hybrid picking techniques, and alternate tunings.

One of the most important alternate tunings that several Pinetop Workshop instructors

taught is the "Open G" tuning. This tuning requires lowering the E strings to a D and the A string

to a G so that a G chord can be played without any frets [DGDGBD]. Ben demonstrated slide-

guitar techniques with the Open G tuning, teaching that Muddy Waters employed the Open G

tuning for slide guitar while he lived in the Delta. One instructor emphasized a variance of Open

G tuning called "bastard G," in which the first string stays an E [DGDGBE]. The tuning,

especially helpful for solo acoustic guitar players, allows the bass notes to efficiently perform

chord changes without altering the technique for the melodic voice because the first four strings

remain unchanged. Finally, David articulated that alternative tunings are important because they

allow the musician "a different mindset."

Jeff discussed the benefits of guitarists employing capos during performances. He said

capos were not meant to allow a performer to play in any key but, rather, to allow the performer

to choose the position in which he or she plays for a given key. After stating this, Jeff

demonstrated the benefit of employing a capo for this purpose.

The Pinetop Workshop instructors also held full-group masterclasses that examined

universal topics. One topic was stage presence, for which two instructors conducted an open

forum to discuss various aspects of stage presence, from attire to positioning. Another topic was

microphone use, in which Lynn addressed the importance of appropriately singing into the

microphone to draw the audience into the performance. Intentionally left open to interpretation,

these tools helped provide insight for the students to make their own musical and performance
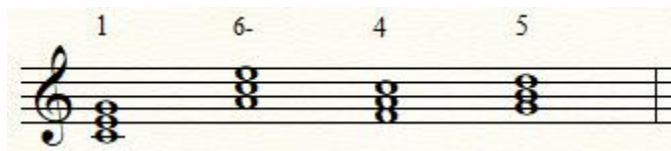
decisions.

Figure 20. *Nashville Number System Example*

The bass instructors also introduced two further advanced techniques. Haley discussed

the usefulness of the Nashville Number System in her recording career. The Nashville number

system [Figure 20] allows musicians to quickly read chord charts in any key by placing Arabic

numerals instead of chord letters, similar to traditional Roman numeral analysis. Figure 20

identifies the Nashville number system for C-major, A-minor, F-major, and G-major chords in

the key of C. The second technique the bass instructors discussed is called "slap bass." One

instructor's experience with funk music positioned him to offer instruction in this advanced

technique for one student who wished to gain experience in funk and jazz styles.

Theme 4 Summary

The standard blues music knowledge includes fundamentals, primary concepts, tools, and

advanced techniques. The blues fundamentals include understanding the I-IV-V chords, the

twelve-bar blues format, and the pentatonic scale. Primary concepts include turnarounds and

critical libraries of patterns. Tools and advanced techniques include hybrid pickings, alternate

tunings, stage presence, microphone technique, the Nashville number system, and slap bass

technique. The Pinetop Workshop instructors provided access to this content for every student.

Findings for SRQ 2

Sub Research Question 2: What teaching strategies are implemented to engage students in

learning?

Hypothesis 3: The teaching strategies implemented by blues instructors include modeling,

imitation, creating, and performing, consistent with current research and educational theory.

This study also sought to discover the teaching strategies the expert instructors

implemented in the Pinetop Workshop. The instructors employed various strategies to convey

pertinent information and engage their students in learning. Two primary themes emerged when

considering teaching strategies. First, the instructors demonstrated appropriate techniques, styles,

and strategies, drawing on their performance experiences and vast knowledge of resources.

Second, the instructors allowed students to experiment with musical performances, especially

with tactics such as trial and error, formative assessment through evening jams, and a summative

assessment and celebration at the final showcase.

Theme 5: Demonstration

The primary teaching strategy of the Pinetop Workshop was Demonstration. David said,

"What I'm trying to do is demonstrate to them what [blues] is and what is going on... so they can

hear it and see it." Jeff articulated the purpose of this strategy, stating the importance of "steal

from the best" and, as David said, "listen to a bunch of different styles." "Stealing" from the

best, in this context, means listening to blues legends and standards to learn appropriate content.

Jeff said that learning the blues is the following:

> Kind of like riding a bike. You can't do that for them. You can put their fingers on the
> neck and teach them the chord, but all you can do is demonstrate and talk, show, pick [a
> student] who's doing it [as an example] because that's obviously going to help them.

Lynn employed demonstration with each of her voice students. During her first lesson,

she completed an echo exercise in which she sang a few notes and asked the student to repeat

them. This allowed her to measure the student's ability and demonstrate her style quickly. David

demonstrated and spoke simultaneously. He gave his students listening directions, performed the

excerpt or exercise, and then described the technique and purpose while still playing. This

simultaneous talking and playing helped the students understand each exercise's purpose before

attempting it. Matthew agreed that this strategy was helpful to him:

> Showing, explaining the reason behind why things were [was helpful], [David said] 'I'll
> show you that lick if you want, but here's why, here's what I'm doing.' And that's been
> really helpful.

Example

A significant aspect of Demonstration is providing examples for the students to follow.

These examples include musical elements and extramusical characteristics. For example, the

bass guitar and drum class combined to collaborate on learning as a rhythm section. The instructors briefly discussed a plan for the session, exemplifying extramusical collaboration for their students. Then, the instructors demonstrated their exercises together. They played the learning exercises for the students to match before expecting them to understand the purpose and reproduce each activity. Vance included several occurrences in which he exemplified demonstration in this manner. He often played an exercise to demonstrate the expectations for his students before aiding their performance of the exercise. The instructors also spoke of and demonstrated the importance of holistic training. This included teaching the students to act kindly, include others, and help their peers. They demonstrated these traits to the students by speaking encouragingly, employing positive language, including all students in all activities, and modeling peer tutoring.

Experience

A primary element of Demonstration is to ensure that each instructor demonstrates accurately and efficiently. The instructors effectively engaged their students in authentic learning because they drew from vast experience performing and teaching in the blues genre. One instructor claimed the Pinetop Workshop is "more like a college approach to education...they're people that have such great experience." For example, Lynn drew on her vocal expertise from recording ten albums and pedagogical expertise from experience teaching musical theatre. One instructor spoke of her classical training compared to her blues training, highlighting the benefits of teaching blues aurally rather than with notation. Gabby claimed the expertise of one instructor particularly motivated her as a musician, "Haley has been around for a really long time, and also grew up kind of just being thrown onstage saying 'okay, figure it out.'" Haley's success as a

performing musician helps positively influence her students. David shared a critical opinion

regarding the instructors' experience:

> I mean, if I was a kid, and I was here going for this, [knowing] this instructor here played
> with such and such, and played this, and toured with this person, made this many records,
> won this many awards, all this kind of thing.

David implied that students who realize their position to learn from highly experienced blues

musicians benefit more greatly from the Pinetop Workshop because they are more open to

learning. He is among those instructors who "[was] really fortunate to [have] played with some

of the greats." Ben also discussed how his experience empowers the students:

> Fifty years ago, I got into [Muddy Waters'] band, and so I got to study [the blues] up
> close. I fell in love with that music beforehand and played well enough that he gave me
> the chance to play with him. And I know that I can bring [my experience] to the students.
> [Although] Muddy has been dead since 1983, I can tell you what he said about this or
> that, and I can kind of give you an approximation of how he played... [I can't] sing the
> songs, neither can anybody else... but I can do kind of a reflection of his guitar playing.
> And I know some of the things that were important to him because he told me so.

This experience from the musical director inspires the students and instructors alike, enhancing

the total experience of the Pinetop Workshop. Although Ben's experience includes performance

with a blues legend, every instructor boasts experience performing, recording, or touring with

significant blues musicians.

Resources

Finally, the instructors demonstrate technique and expose their students to appropriate

and authentic recordings because of their expert knowledge of resources. Trevor spoke about a

vital music listening experience to his development:

> When I first started playing with [a significant blues player], I didn't have any knowledge
> of the blues [because] I was a Gospel musician coming from a Pentecostal church, and I
> had a lot of learning [to do]. He gave me three CDs with thirty or forty songs and told
> me, 'study this and get these feels, get the feels of the bass lines. If you learn all the stuff,
> you'll be able to go play with anybody in the world.'

Trevor said this collection of thirty or forty songs consisted of blues standards and various styles of blues music.

Ben emphasized that modern ease of access makes significant recordings available to any music student:

> You could take your phone and, on any of the streaming services, say, 'give me a blues playlist' and 'classic blues songs,' and you'll probably get to hear [Muddy,] and you'll go down the rabbit hole if you hear something like that like I did when I first heard Muddy Waters when I was a teenager.

Modern technology makes access to high-quality blues recordings infinitely available. However, part of the Pinetop Workshop instructors' expertise is their knowledge of objectively appropriate recordings. Jeff stated the importance of knowing which resources will promote effective teaching:

> [The students'] frame of reference, obviously, is going to be a little more limited. So I was coming back to stuff they didn't know but trying to pick stuff they would relate to. [For example] Blind Lemon Jefferson is hard to relate to, for someone our age, because it's from another world. One hundred years ago was a different world, but the seventies, sixties, that was a different world, too, but not in the same way. So I picked some things that was kind of a bit funky, some driving stuff, because [the students] relate to that funkiness and the drive. That's part of their world, too, so I tried to do some of that.

Jeff selects recordings that demonstrate the musical content he wishes to share in styles that relate to the students. Gabby also discussed the importance of personal interests in choosing recordings. She said, "I think a lot of the instructors just use what they like to listen to and say, well, 'here's this little piece in this one song, that this is what I want to talk about.'" She continued to discuss the challenge of choosing appropriate recordings, "trying to find a specific recording that captures what you're trying to show can be very difficult." David claimed that breadth is important in finding quality resources, telling his students to "listen to a bunch of different styles."

Isaac said that knowledge of resources also includes print materials. He discussed learning new and standard drum patterns from legitimate sources. For example, "*Blues Magazine,* [and] pretty much every drumming magazine has had some of the best shuffles or best beats for blues music... I do my own research, if you want to call it research, which is just pulling different sources from the internet." Isaac's expertise includes gathering resources and the knowledge to disseminate helpful information for instructional purposes.

Theme 5 Summary

Demonstration enables the Pinetop Workshop instructors to show their students what, how, and why to play specific styles or passages to perform in the blues genre successfully. This demonstration includes performing certain passages or styles on their instrument and playing significant recordings to show passages and styles in context. Demonstrating exemplifies blues performance technique and can empower the instructors to exemplify extramusical characteristics of blues performance. Successful demonstration relies on the instructors' previous experiences in blues performance, recording, and touring. Finally, vast experience informs the instructors and builds a significant knowledge of resources for enhancing the demonstration and aural learning techniques.

Theme 6: Experimenting

Following Demonstration, the Pinetop instructors encouraged students to experiment with new concepts. Each instructor generally demonstrated a concept and then gave their students an exercise to practice it. Experimenting allowed each student to try new concepts in a safe environment and provided the instructors with opportunities for informal assessment. David overtly stated the benefit of this teaching strategy, "It's good to experiment and go for things. If you make a mistake, you'll know not to do that again." One observation iterated, "David gave

students a ton of room to just play, make mistakes, and see what works for them." Every

instructor employed Experimenting as a strategy, but each implemented the strategy in different

manners. Vance introduced exercises and continued playing with his students while they

experimented with soloing techniques. One exercise required him to "swap two" with them, in

which he alternated soloing two measures with each student so they would have practice

employing this performance technique.

The bass teachers often taught the students a new bass line, and everyone played it

together until it was fully learned. One student discussed the benefit of this tactic, saying, "I

gotta woodshed it; I'm in the learning phase." Jeff structured the experimenting phase as an

opportunity for informal formative assessment. He would have everyone play simultaneously to

practice a new concept while he walked around checking each person's technique independently.

When he wanted the students to practice soloing, he had everyone continue a backing pattern in

the twelve-bar form while each student took an opportunity to solo. This allowed the students to

experiment with soloing and accompanying techniques within one exercise.

David mixed his experimental tactics depending on the needs of each exercise. He began

the workshop by asking each student in his class to play two heads of a twelve-bar structure to

give him an idea of their ability. For one exercise, he had each student continue playing and

soloing simultaneously, focusing on a concept that required the right thumb to remain steady and

a minor pentatonic melody. He observed each student individually and kept his comments

relevant to the exercise.

Therefore, experimentation was a teaching strategy each instructor employed during the

Pinetop Workshop. However, the Workshop centered its activities on the concepts of

Demonstration and Experimentation. The students spent each day learning new concepts and

practicing with their instructors. However, everyone involved with the workshop gathered for an

evening jam session each evening.

Jams

Each night, the Pinetop Workshop jam sessions allowed students to play together,

practice collaborating, and enjoy making music. The evening jams occurred at the Hopson

Commissary's stage [Figures 21 and 22]. The instructors performed the first set at the first jam

session to demonstrate the importance of performance opportunities. Students signed up with the

Workshop interns daily to perform in various groupings and play familiar songs. Isaac compared

the evening jam sessions to appropriate teaching strategies for core subjects, stating that just as

he expects his English students to practice grammar skills in realistic settings, he expects

musicians to practice performing in practical settings. Haley discussed the importance of a jam

session in a safe environment:

> Having that jam night that's [in] a comfortable space, where [the students] have their
> instructors, and the interns, and their parents, and people to comfort them and hold their
> hand [is important], because you don't know [what to expect]. What if someone's gonna
> have stage fright? They can be the most talented kid learning an instrument, and then you
> put them on stage, and they melt down. I was one of those kids, [which is] why I'm so
> nurturing about that.

Haley added that she ensures all her students, even outside the Pinetop Workshop, get an

opportunity to jam. "When I have a local bass student, I try to hook him up with getting a jam

with Lucas because that's a unique experience."

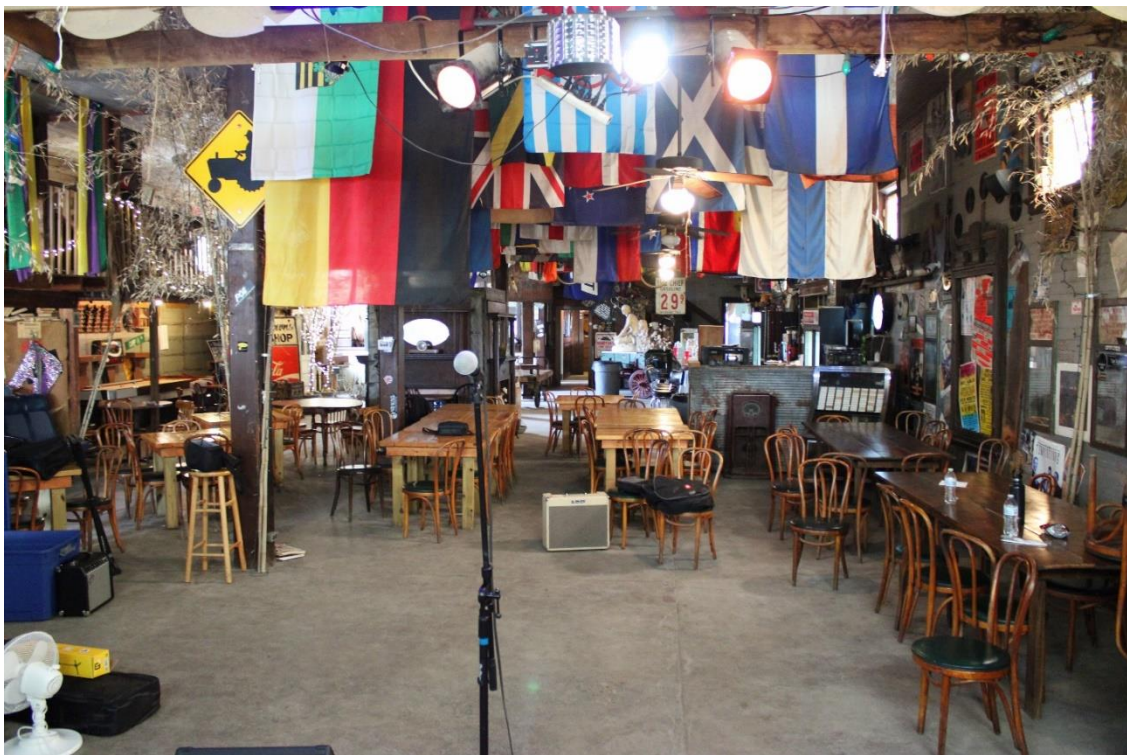Figure 21. *Hopson Stage,* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Figure 22. *Hopson Stage View.* Photograph by author, June 16, 2023.

Showcase

The most important evening jam session is the final showcase conducted at the Ground Zero Blues Club (Figure 23) in Clarksdale. The students, instructors, and interns collaborated to form performance groups, create a setlist, and otherwise prepare for a live show. The instructors began the show by performing a set with songs featuring each instructor. Then, every student performed with at least one group. Ground Zero Blues Club was open to the public, including regular blues fans, supporters of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation, local musicians, and a large group of unsuspecting golfers participating in a local tournament. Hosting a concert in such a significant location and for a diverse, paying audience served as a summative assessment for the students.

Figure 23. *Ground Zero Exterior.* Photo by Nolan Dean, (Appendix O).

Theme 6 Summary

Providing the students with opportunities to experiment served as a significant teaching strategy for the Pinetop Workshop instructors. The students followed their instructors' examples for performance techniques. In turn, the instructors employed activities that required their students to practice techniques in isolated contexts. The evening jams served as formative assessments, allowing the students to practice their new findings, skills, and techniques authentically. The final showcase at Ground Zero Blues Club allowed the students to experiment as performers in a legitimate blues venue for a paying audience.

General Findings

A few general findings of this study directly relate to more than one research question and, therefore, help provide an overview of blues music education from the participants' perspectives. The researcher observed and heard the following themes from every participant in the study, demonstrating the universality of these concepts in blues music education. The general themes were Feel and Improvisation.

Theme 7: Feel

Every participant said the word "Feel" at some point during an interview or observation. However, the term conveyed two meanings depending on context. The first meaning was the sensation of awareness or experience relating to music performance. The second meaning was the relationship between music and emotional response. However, the two meanings did not appear as separate concepts but as supplemental ideas that allow a musician to communicate adequately with collaborative performers and audiences.

Feel as Awareness or Experience

Vance describes Feel as awareness or experience, stating, "Get out of your own head; you can't play boogie-woogie to the note." With this statement, Vance implies that overthinking is the opposite of Feel. Ben articulated this point differently: "If it sounds good, and it feels good, it is good." He continued by defining Feel, "Just so what feels good in the moment depending on what the person is here for, and what information I can [or] want to impart. You just saw it in action [during the masterclass]. A lot of [Feel] is improvised, depending on the audience." Haley discussed the concept of Feel by comparing blues performance to classical training:

> I really love it when I have somebody like you [the researcher], a classically trained musician that's used to reading charts or something, to get them to throw that away and just come stand on stage with me at Ground Zero and just try to jam, and close your eyes, and just open your soul, and just feel it.

Feel as Emotion

The participants agreed that emotional expression and response are significant components of Feel in blues music. Jason articulated the emotional meaning of Feel:

> Blues, I swear, is ninety-percent feel… It's the emotion. It's the stories. I think we can all identify with at least one blues song. You know, once you dive into it, and you really listen to it, and I don't mean just turn [it] on, 'hey, that's got a nice beat,' or 'yeah, I love the guitar part in that.' If you sit down and let yourself marinate some of that songs, when you do that, you're hooked… [Blues] it's a very deeply emotional genre.

Gabby added the importance of music eliciting emotional responses for an audience:

> I think that it's for a long time, blues has helped people get through their struggles in life or get to share their excitement of life… And so whether that's sadness, or happiness, or anger, or excitement, all of those emotions can be conveyed through music, and blues does a really amazing job of making your audience really deeply feel those emotions.

Vance agreed that roots or blues music is "best when played emotionally."

Feel as Communication

When the participants discussed the concept of Feel, it almost always related to communicating with other musicians on stage or the audience. This elicited two further sub-components. First, "Feel" implies experiencing and expressing music with other performers. Second, "Feel" means expressing feelings to an audience and attempting to elicit feelings from an audience.

Communicating with Performers

Communicating with collaborative musicians during performance facilitates technical success and combined expression. Vance discussed the importance to "communicate musically with other musicians." Communication in performance is a skill for blues musicians. Isaac states the importance of "understanding how to read other performers while playing live music." He explains this importance by saying, "You cannot play over the top of the bass guitar because if you're playing over the bass, then nobody can hear the [chord] changes." Trevor compares performance communication to conversation:

> Have you ever [had] a group conversation with somebody just talking? And then somebody's trying to tell the story, and then you got somebody else in this conversation that just keeps interrupting them? They can't get the point across because this guy keeps saying too much… Got to have respect for the conversation, musical conversation.

Lynn discussed the importance of listening to the musical conversation:

> The big key is when you're playing together, as [you are] listening to what everybody else is doing and seeing how you fit in to make it more beautiful. And they say, 'if you can only hear yourself, you're not doing a very good job.'

Trevor also said musicians "feed off of each [other]." This helps the band play as one cohesive group. Trevor spoke about the importance of the rhythm section playing as a unit:

> The drums and the bass, that's the booty movers. If they ain't together, if they separated and not locking like they need to, people ain't gonna know which way to shake they butt. It's gonna feel weird trying to dance to a bass player and a drummer that ain't locked in

together because you don't really know which way to groove. When they lock in together, it takes them hips and makes them swing. So that's [the] importance of the bass player and drummer locking in, and that's one of my favorite things to try to teach you and your style.

Jeff spoke about communication as "learning how to listen and adjust while you're playing, that's different than just playing, that's playing at a higher level." He discussed that musicians must learn the "etiquette" of playing as a group.

Communicating with Audiences

David discussed the relationship between musicians and audiences with a hypothetical example:

> To communicate to other people or also realize how important it is to communicate. If I may give you an example. Let's say you are playing. In the audience is a guy that's a plumber, a real good plumber, and he loves this gal, but he don't know how to tell her. But up on the stage, [a] guy sings a song, and he can go over and just touch her and say, 'See what that guy's saying? That's how I feel about you.' Now, that's a wonderful thing the plumber gets from us, but the other thing to remember, this musician, chances are, cannot fix the under-the-floor plumbing. It's a mutual kinda thing, the way I see it, right?... If you can give that kind of communication to a student, or musician to musician, communication between people on a level that don't have any words.

This provides key data to show that one key element of communicating with audiences is expressing elements of the human condition, such as love. Trevor argued that creating music for dancing is another integral purpose of blues music, saying, "I'd be wanting [the students] to learn how to make people dance; [the students] are supposed to make [the audience] feel good." Several instructors discussed the importance of blues as dance music. Finally, Gabby discussed audience communication, saying, "the blues is a very special way of storytelling." She added, "the blues is partially about passing on stories of people that came before us."

Theme 7 Summary

Therefore, understanding and employing the concept of Feel is integral to performing as a blues musician. Feel includes fostering awareness and experience on stage as a performer, especially while collaborating with other musicians. Feel also includes understanding the emotional expression and responses of music and music making. The purpose of Feeling music is to communicate with other musicians and audiences adequately. Feel is both a means and an end to blues music-making.

Theme 8: Improvisation

Improvisation is more than just a musical technique for solos; it is a way of life for the blues musician. This integral component of blues music informs three elements of improvisation. The first is the most common, improvising music, especially as a solo during a piece of music. Second, blues musicians embody the ability to "figure it out." Finally, as musicians who regularly improvise solos, bass lines, and drum patterns and as performers who regularly "figure it out" on stage, the Pinetop Workshop instructors employ improvisation techniques in their teaching.

Improvising Music

Creating melodies remains as a significant element of blues music. Isaac stated that the blues is "more spontaneous than just about any other genre of music." Vance created several exercises for his students to practice improvising melodies. He asked his students to work on specific strategies, such as soloing with only the right hand. Vance and Jeff helped their students learn how to "swap bars" or share solo sections with another musician. Creating a melody during a solo section is integral to blues performance.

Improvising and ornamenting patterns are vital to blues improvisation, especially for the rhythm section. Isaac discussed the possibility and purpose of drum fills. Haley discussed the concept of ornamenting bass lines. This form of improvisation allows musicians to implement their library of patterns into various songs.

Finally, Lynn spoke about improvisation as a form of pragmatism in music performance:

> So a lot of what comes up is, they're young, and their voices are changing, especially the young men… So there's one note that you can hit well, [you] don't hit that one note because that's too high, [so] hit something below. Improvise around there so that you still have a strong note when you're singing.

Lynn activated philosophy during her first voice lesson. The student sang a verse of a familiar song but strained on a higher note in the chorus. Lynn taught the student to sing this note a third lower so it still fits with the chord but stayed in a comfortable part of the student's voice. She encouraged the student to change the key or improvise if the melody was out of range.

Figuring it Out

"Figuring it out" refers to a blues musician's ability to perform successfully without specific preparation for a given performance. Gabby spoke about Haley's expertise in "figuring it out:"

> Haley has been around for a really long time and also grew up kind of just being thrown on stage saying, 'okay, figure it out.' And being a blues musician, you deal with that a lot. You don't necessarily know the songs, and they just say, 'okay, we're playing this, here's the basic form, play.' Haley always has really great insight into how to just figure it out.

Haley said she learned several bass lines by "picking them up by ear because it was faster." She also stated that part of the learning experience for jams included the concept of "figuring it out" for her bass students.

Improvising Teaching

When the researcher inquired about teaching or lesson plans, each instructor responded similarly to one instructor who stated, "Basically, there's no plan, honey." Isaac, a schoolteacher, stated, "I originally came in with really strict plans that I wanted to stick to. And I had to learn to be spontaneous and adapt." Vance explained that the reason for improvisation in teaching is that there is a "different beginning point every year:" his approach is to "come in with an open lesson plan, focused on student needs." Trevor agreed, stating, "I wait to see individually what each student already has to offer." Haley planned based on her experience: "I'd kind of have a little bit of a plan, maybe just for my own teaching experience, but each year it's new students." Most blues musicians function as musicians first and teachers second. Haley discussed that the "development of my teaching skills has been flying by the seat of my pants, pressure [rather] than inspiration." In this manner, "figuring it out" transfers from the performance stage to the masterclass session. Each instructor understands their craft, the pedagogy of their instrument, and the blues genre so deeply that once they learn their students' current levels and needs, they can improvise lessons that facilitate engaged student learning.

Theme 8 Summary

Improvisation is an integral component of blues musicianship. First, improvising music allows blues musicians to express themselves in unique ways. Improvising music also allows musicians to pragmatize their performance to ensure success. Second, improvising includes the concept of "figuring it out," which allows blues musicians to succeed without prior knowledge or rehearsal for a specific performance. Finally, improvising also informs the teaching philosophy of musicians who adapt completely to students' needs and wants based on prior knowledge and experience.

Other Findings

This study also examines data outside the primary themes, especially topics relevant to the theoretical framework. Classroom management related to Danielson's framework for teaching. Music as a language and songwriting relate to Gordon's music learning theory. Finally, evaluation related to Danielson's teaching framework and Bruner's spiral curriculum.

Topic 1: Classroom Management

Classroom Management emerged as an issue in a few participant interviews. Haley discussed how respectful the students in her masterclass acted, especially regarding listening to the stories of the Bill. However, the bass class was the smallest and comprised the highest mean age. One intern lamented that "guitar players are known to, what's called, 'noodle…' [or] basically they are playing their guitar…over anything that's happening." The electric guitar class was the largest and comprised the youngest mean age. Another intern stated the issue positively, "Every now and then, you'll get a lot of excitement." Student engagement became an issue, especially near the end of each exercise that required students to play one by one. One intern stated the reason for this, "[With a large group] by the time we're getting towards the end of the circle, the beginning kids are maybe getting bored."

Topic 2: Music as Language

Several instructors discussed music as a language. David articulated that music is "not a spoken language, [but] it's a language that comes to you." Gabby stated, "I think music is definitely a language." She added that aptitude facilitates learning, "Some people are going to learn that language faster… some people are just automatically going to be musically inclined, and they're just going to get it really fast." Lynn spoke about the universal nature of music, "it's the universal language that we can speak with our brothers and sisters from another country."

Topic 3: Songwriting

Lynn focused on students' original music when applicable. She stated, "When they bring [their own music] out, it's amazing because that's coming from their heart and soul." Matthew discussed his songwriting motivation:

> I like writing my own stuff in the blues… If you're the kind of musician that is going to express your soul purely through playing guitar or playing harmonica, that's great. But some people express [themselves] a little easier through their own words.

Songwriting is an important aspect of blues musicianship but is optional for blues performers. Therefore, the Pinetop Workshop instructors did not explicitly teach songwriting, but it was encouraged when students showed interest in writing their own music.

Topic 4: Evaluation

The instructors discussed how they measured success for their students. Isaac spoke pragmatically, saying that students succeed "whenever they can play whatever they're trying to achieve, consistently," adding that "the cool little side things that they can do, don't matter [until] they can play whatever beat they're trying to get consistently." David claimed that student success was beyond technical achievement:

> You know, when they get it when, of course, when you hear it, but there's something that happens before you hear it. You can see it in their eyes, you see, that clicked inside the brain… That might be the most gratifying thing of everything. When I see them get it, and hear them do it, and I can see that look in their eyes and go, 'I got this,' that's a great feeling.

Other Findings Summary

Classroom management can become an issue with the instructors in a masterclass setting. The instructors primarily rely on the students' interests in the course material. Music also serves as an unspoken language that can be universally shared and may be learned more quickly by those with a natural inclination for musical performance. Furthermore, songwriting facilitates

creative expression for individual musicians. Finally, the instructors evaluate their students'

successes pragmatically by measuring consistency and abstractly by seeing a "click" in their

eyes.

Summary

This instrumental case study examined the pedagogical elements of teaching and learning

at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience. Nine instructors, two interns, two

students, and two board members participated in this study, contributing to its findings. The

central research question focused on the pedagogical elements of blues music education and the

relationship between teaching and learning. The first sub-research question examined the specific

content taught by the instructors to impart knowledge and skills pertaining to blues music. The

second sub-research question inquired about the instructors' specific teaching strategies during

the masterclass sessions and other educational components of the Pinetop Workshop.

This study included eight themes and four minor topics relating to blues music education

at the Pinetop Workshop. The themes naturally progress with the pedagogical themes informing

the teaching strategies, the teaching strategies leading to content knowledge, and the general

themes informing each category. The other findings also fit within this model, with each topic

relating to a thematic category. Figure 24 demonstrates the relationship between each theme.
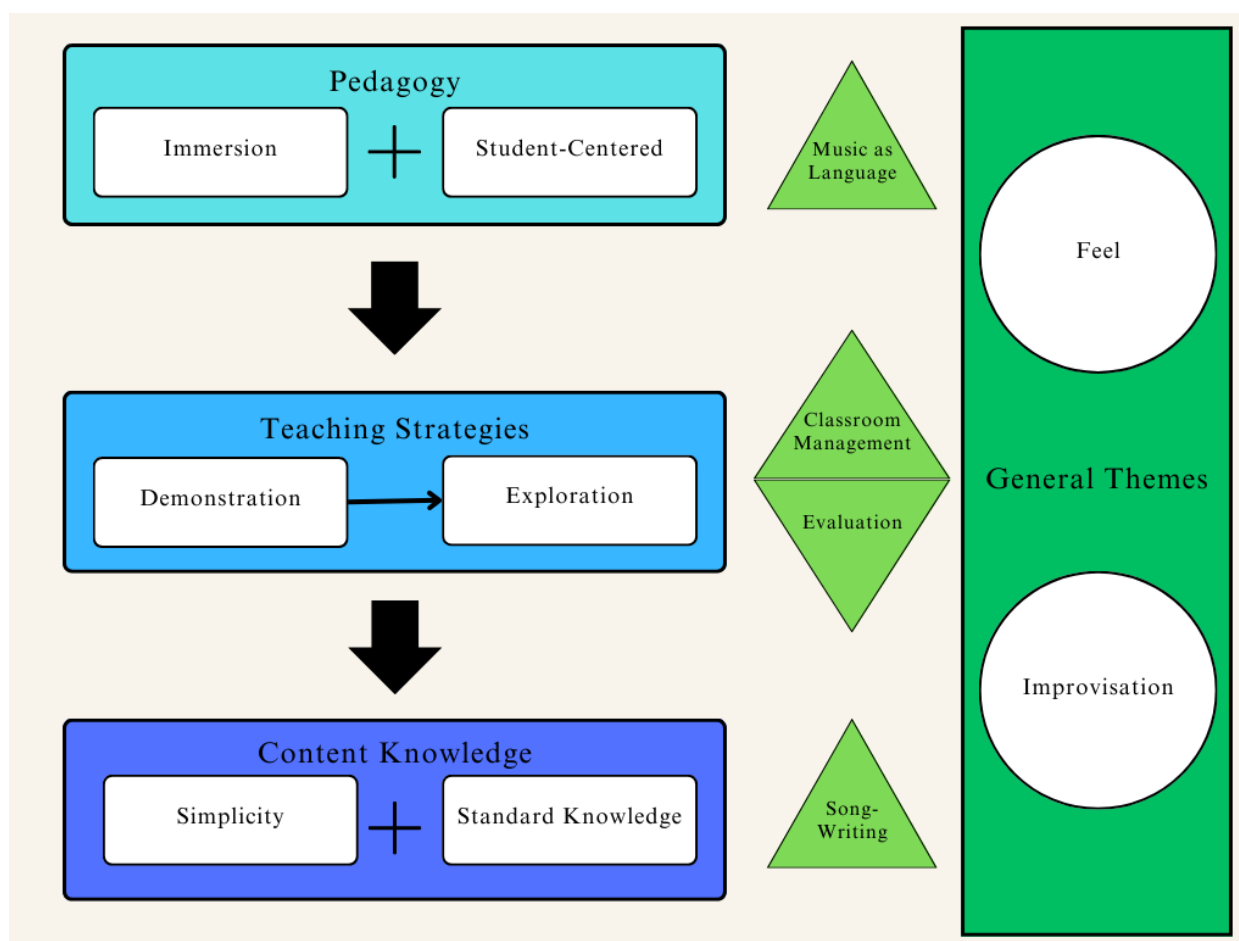
Figure 24. Blues Music Education Model.

The themes for the first research question were Immersion and Student-Centered. Immersion referred to the location of the Pinetop Workshop and the community of those involved with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation. The location of the Pinetop Workshop is Clarksdale, Mississippi, a historically significant town for the Delta blues because of the musicians who lived and performed there, the Juke Joints that were in the city, and the performance venues that remain significant. The community of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation includes all the board members, instructors, students, interns, and their families and focuses on the joy of making blues music together. Student-centered encapsulated the pedagogical focus of

the Pinetop Workshop. The focuses were students' needs and wants, preparation for employment

or lesire, and holistic education regarding the characterics of authenticity and humility.

The themes for the first sub-research question were Simplicity and Standard Knowledge.

Simplicity referred to performing music that would be enjoyable for an audience, can be

successfully performed, and remains authentic to the Delta blues tradition. Standard Knowledge

included blues fundamentals, key concepts, tools, and advanced techniques. The blues

fundamentals included the three basic chords, the twelve-bar format, and the pentatonic scale.

The key concepts were turnarounds, libraries of patterns, and blues terminology. Tools and

advanced techniques included alternative turnarounds, advanced picking techniques, and

alternate tunings for the guitar.

The themes for the second sub-research question were Demonstration and

Experimenting. Several elements constituted Demonstration, including providing an example for

the students, building on experience as a musician and teacher, and employing a knowledge of

resources for enhanced instruction. Experimenting generated two components. First, the

instructors created opportunities for the students to practice their newly learned techniques and

skills. Second, the Pinetop Workshop hosted evening jams and a final showcase, allowing

students to perform in a realistic context.

The themes Feel and Improvisation relate to multiple research questions and, therefore,

serve as general findings of the study. Feel was defined as the awareness or experience of

performing as a group and as the emotional expression of blues music. The purpose of Feel was

to communicate with collaborative performers and communicate with audiences. Improvisation

referred to instantaneously composing music during a performance, "figuring it out" as a blues

musician in a performance context, and basing instruction on experience and knowledge rather than extensive plans.

Finally, four minor topics related to the theoretical framework, related literature, and research questions emerged but were largely non-significant and inconsistent to constitute a theme. Classroom management emerged as a topic because it became an issue for one class. Several participants discussed music as a language but did not reach a consensus regarding the implications of such a statement. A few participants discussed the songwriting as a creative outlet for blues musicians, but the Workshop did not focus on songwriting instruction. Finally, each instructor discussed evaluative measures and techniques but did not focus efforts on assessment.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

This instrumental case study examined the pedagogical approaches, content knowledge, and teaching strategies of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience. Danielson's framework for teaching, Bruner's spiral curriculum, and Gordon's music learning theory served as the theoretical framework for this study. This chapter summarizes the study, examines the findings compared to prior research, addresses the limitations and delimitations of the study, discusses recommendations for future study, identifies implications for practice, and concludes the study with final thoughts.

Summary of Study

The Pinetop Perkins Foundation hosts an annual Workshop Experience, providing students with an authentic blues music education. The Foundation selects instructors based on their performance experience, past success, and pedagogical expertise within the blues genre. Students originate from locations across the United States and internationally to perfect their skills and learn the blues. While instruction is geared towards young people, the Foundation intentionally includes those identified as "young-at-heart" to further the blues genre. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation hosts their workshop at the Shack Up Inn and Hopson Plantation just outside Clarksdale, Mississippi. This setting creates an authentic, immersive experience for learning the Delta blues amid its original location.

This study employed a qualitative, instrumental, descriptive, single, embedded case study to examine the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience. The background of this study included the history and society of the blues, including events, institutions, and locations of the Mississippi River Delta and the implications of social learning experiences. Data collection included qualitative interviews and observations of both live masterclasses and video recordings

of masterclasses and workshops. The researcher employed thematic analysis through deductive and inductive coding to analyze the data.

The data collection deviated from the original plan. Early observations informed the researcher that a second interview would not yield substantial data. Therefore, several instructors provided two observations and one interview in lieu of two interviews and one observation. There were two groups of participants. The first group comprised nine instructors who permitted interviews, observations, and video recordings. The second group included two students, two interns, and two board members, and each permitted one interview. Therefore, the data collection yielded authentic information, allowing appropriate data saturation.

Summary of Findings and Prior Research

The data analysis allowed the researcher to discover eight themes and four other topics relevant to blues music education. Two themes pertain to pedagogy and the central research question. Two themes relate to content knowledge and the first sub-research question. Two themes reference teaching strategies and the second sub-research question. Two themes apply to all three research questions. Finally, four other topics pertain to related literature, research questions, and data but not to a degree that constitutes themes. This section examines the findings pertaining to the research questions, related literature, and theoretical framework.

Pedagogy

Central Research Question: What pedagogy is implemented in blues training institutions that influence students with an authentic experience and a high-quality music education?

Hypothesis 1: The pedagogy implemented in blues training institutions includes methods consistent with informal music lessons, private studios, and masterclasses.

This study adopted Loughran's definition of pedagogy as the relationship between teaching and learning.[310] Two themes emerged as comprehensive concepts motivating the purposes of the Pinetop Workshop. The first theme was Immersion, which included the importance of location, the history of the blues, and the community of the Pinetop Foundation. The second theme was Student-Centered, which consisted of the wants and needs of the students and the future outcomes for Pinetop alumni. Therefore, Immersion and Student-Centeredness demonstrate critical elements for blues music education pedagogy. Loughran found that teaching is problematic because there is no one way to teach successfully.[311] The Pinetop instructors demonstrate consistency with this finding because, while several teaching strategies remained consistent, each brought his or her style to the workshop.

Immersion

Bruner identifies "folk pedagogy," or how individuals form pedagogical ideas based on cultural norms, personally lived experiences and beliefs about how children learn.[312] This study discovered a folk pedagogy of blues education. The blues-folk pedagogy of the Pinetop Workshop remains consistent with historic blues learning experiences and popular music pedagogy. The consistency between historic and modern blues education confirms Bruner's theory that meaning is a culturally constructed symbol passed through generations.[313]

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[310] John Loughran, "Pedagogy: Making Sense of the Complex Relationship Between Teaching and Learning," *Curriculum Inquiry* 43, no. 1 (January 2013): 135.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Jerome Bruner, *The Culture of Education,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990): 14, 45.

[313] Ibid., 3.

The generations of blues musicians began with African-American sharecroppers in the American South.[314] The Pinetop instructors advocated for continuing and teaching the tradition of the music and relating it to the harsh history from which it developed. Immersion, then, included immersing the students in the history of the blues. The Pinetop Workshop's location solidified this component by occurring on an old plantation, with cotton still growing nearby. Gussow warns of two pitfalls for modern blues study concerning race. The first is "the blues is nothing but African American social history," and the second is "race no longer matters when we're talking about the blues."[315] The Pinetop instructors balanced this approach well, ensuring the students learned the history and culture while keeping the focus on music performance.

The Hopson Bartender's tour of Clarksdale aided this effort. Red Paden allowed the students to visit his juke joint on this tour. Stolle calls Red's "the real juke joint" and claims that "[h]e continues to offer as traditional of blues acts (mostly African American) as he can find."[316] Although the students did not experience live music during this visit, they experienced an authentic juke joint and spoke with its owner.

Gussow also discusses the importance of Immersion for his own musical development. He stated that the method book "*Blues Harp* couldn't take me all the way. But it was a start."[317] The Pinetop Workshop serves as the next step for serious blues students. However each student began their blues playing, the Pinetop Workshop took them the rest of the way. Yerxa confirms

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[314] Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues,* (New York: Penguin, 1981): 23; Roger Stolle *Hidden History of the Mississippi Blues,* (Charleston: The History Press, 2011): 26; Winslow Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica for Dummies,* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2020): 9.

[315] Adam Gussow, *Whose Blues?: Facing up to Race and the Future of the Music,* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020): 39.

[316] Roger Stolle, *Juke Joint Confidential: House Parties, Hustlers, and the Blues Life,* (Charleston: The History Press, 2019): 94, 97.

[317] Gussow, *Whose Blues,* 237.

this approach; although his book serves more like a written tutor and addresses a broad scope, he advocates for the learner to find a teacher.[318]

Lucy Green confirms the importance of immersion or enculturation into a music context, claiming that music learning occurs naturally for popular musicians.[319] The Pinetop Workshop encourages such enculturation through Immersion and a lengthy timeframe. Most importantly, the Pinetop instructors seek natural methods for students to learn the music in an authentic context.

Student-Centered

Student-centeredness begins with the blues folk pedagogy. The instructors made decisions based on their perceptions of the learner's cognition, acting on those assumptions.[320] These assumptions led to decisions regarding teaching strategies and content. Deciding content and strategies based on students' needs also remains consistent with Gordon's music learning theory, which claims that pedagogy should account for student differences.[321] The instructors differentiated instruction based on each student's achievement and perceived aptitude.

The participants discussed the importance of outcomes for the Pinetop students. However, the instructors brought various perspectives on what the outcome focus should be for the students. Several addressed the importance of teaching employable skills, while others advocated for preparing students to participate in music-making as a form of leisure. Loughran

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[318] Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 163.

[319] Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education,* (New York: Routledge, 2016): 3; Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning, and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy,* (New York: Routledge, 2016): 1.

[320] Bruner, *Culture,* 46.

[321] Edwin Gordon, *Learning Sequences in Music,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2012): 248.

discusses how teacher preparation should focus on pragmatic application to various situations.[322]

The varied approaches each instructor brought to the Pinetop Workshop allowed them to prepare

students for various outcome possibilities.

The instructors discussed authenticity as both a pedagogical foundation and a core

subject. Authenticity as a pedagogical foundation remains consistent with Muddy's claim that

learning by ear helped him to develop a "Delta sound."[323] Davis claims he passed this sound on

to the musicians in his band, which served as "sort of a blues graduate school."[324] The musical

director for the Pinetop Perkins Foundation is a former member and "graduate" of this school.

Focusing on students' wants and needs allows the instructors to follow D'Amore and

Smith's recommendation to focus on informal learning instead of authority.[325] The instructors

demonstrated this concept through repertoire selection and the evening jam sessions. Students

selected the music they wished to perform, and the instructors prepared them to do so. This also

allowed for leisure education by helping students participate in music through music-making.[326]

The Pinetop instructors did not require the students to develop music literacy but focused

on aural skills. This remains consistent with the literature that considers music literacy a barrier

in workshop settings.[327] Likewise, social and personal development took precedence at the

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[322] Loughran, "Pedagogy," 135.

[323] Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 104.

[324] Francis Davis, *The History of the Blues,* (Cambridge: De Capo Press, 1995): 196

[325] Abigale D'Amore and Gareth Dylan Smith, "Aspiring to Music Making as Leisure through the Musical Futures Classroom," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 61-80, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 70.

[326] Roger Mantie, *Music, Leisure, Education: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022): 202.

[327] Gillian Howell, Lee Higgins, and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, "Community Music Practice: Intervention through Facilitation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure,* ed. Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith, 601-618, (Online edition: Oxford Academic, 2017): 610.

workshop as the student-centered community of blues musicians developed. This echoes findings within other workshop and community music settings.[328]

Hypothesis 1

The Pinetop instructors demonstrated methods consistent with informal music education. However, the Pinetop Workshop exceeds this limitation by providing an immersive experience to its students. Immersion sets the workshop apart from other instances of informal music learning experiences. Therefore, this study partially confirms the first hypothesis because teaching methods were consistent with different informal learning experiences, with the addition of Immersion.

<div align="center">Content</div>

Sub Research Question 1: What is the content knowledge of blues music?

Hypothesis 2: The content knowledge of the blues form is repertoire, artistic styles, and common idiomatic musical passages, including historical and cultural background knowledge.

Content knowledge describes the information, skills, and issues about a particular subject. Danielson specifies that teachers need awareness of both traditional knowledge and newly found developments.[329] Two themes emerged that provide insight into the content taught in a blues-specific musical setting. First, the Pinetop instructors emphasized Simplicity in playing blues music. Second, the Pinetop instructors imparted a body of Standard Knowledge about blues

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[328] Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet, "Community Music Practice," 610; Mark H. Filsinger, "Novice Music Teachers Learning to Improvise in an Improvisation Professional Development Workshop," (PhD diss., University of Rochester, 2012), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (3555020); Janice Waldon and Kari Veblen, "Learning in a Celtic Community: An Exploration of Informal Music Learning and Adult Amateur Musicians," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 180 (Spring 2009): 64-65.

[329] Charlotte Danielson, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching,* second edition, (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007): 44.

performance. These two themes encompass potential differences between learning blues music and other forms of popular music.

Simplicity

Bruner's spiral curriculum describes how any subject may be taught honestly at any level.[330] This encourages the Simplicity theme because the instructors argued that the blues may be taught authentically at a basic level. Teaching Simplicity enabled the students to play successfully and authentically. The instructors' discussion of Simplicity confirmed that their "folk pedagogy" included evidence of Bruner's spiral curriculum.

Heil confirms the importance of Simplicity within a spiral curriculum in her discussion of improvisation education. She employs blues music because of its simplistic nature, and she teaches one component of music at a time before requesting that her students fully improvise.[331] This approach remains consistent with the Pinetop instructors, who often employed similar techniques.

Standard Knowledge

The literature widely discussed how blues musicians learned from one another, often by listening to significant recordings or hearing live performances.[332] The Pinetop instructors continue this tradition by employing similar methods and listening to modern and historical

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[330] Jerome Bruner, *Process of Education,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960): 33.

[331] Leila Heil, "Teaching Improvisation through Melody and Blues-based Harmony: A Comprehensive Sequential Approach," *Music Educators Journal* 104, no. 1 (Sept 2017): 42-45.

[332] Francis Davis, *The History of the Blues,* (Cambridge: De Capo Press, 1995) 99; Ted Reed, *Harmonica Bean* (documentary), directed by Ted Reed, shot and edited by Nolan Dean, Ted Reed Productions, (Clarksdale Film & Music Festivals, 2023): 18:00; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 81-82; Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 13.

recordings. Yerxa also discussed the importance of learning the history of the blues.[333] Several

Pinetop instructors echoed this importance in their practice by explicitly teaching blues music's

historical facts, traditions, and stories.

One significant component of standard knowledge is the knowledge of resources.

Danielson claims that resources include anything directly aiding the instructor, academic

development, or students.[334] The Pinetop instructors demonstrated such knowledge in various

ways. They knew where to find high-quality recordings and which recordings demonstrated

appropriate techniques. Next, each instructor maintained professional knowledge of equipment,

from instrument brands and types to proper amplification. The Pinetop Foundation demonstrated

resource knowledge by communicating with members of the Clarksdale community to arrange

the venue, housing, the showcase venue, food options, and the walking tour.

As the related literature indicates, the twelve-bar structure is imperative content

knowledge for blues musicians.[335] The Pinetop Workshop follows this tradition in their teaching

and learning. Every participant discussed the twelve-bar structure as common knowledge for

blues performance. Learning to improvise marks another imperative for blues musicians. Several

scholars addressed the importance of improvisation and strategies for teaching improvisation.[336]

Likewise, the researcher observed implicit and explicit improvisational teaching in every

masterclass.

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[333] Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 13.

[334] Danielson, *Framework,* 53-55.

[335] Steve Cohen, *Blues Harmonica: Bending & Beyond,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2019): 8-9; Ed Friedland, *Bass Method: Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1996): 22; Heil, "Teaching Improvisation," 55; Marc "Lil' Rev" Revenson, *Harmonica Method, Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2022): 19; Will Schmid and Greg Koch, *Guitar Method, Book 1,* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2002): 10; Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 97-117.

[336] Heil, "Teaching Improvisation," 53-55.

Several instructors mentioned regional distinctions within blues music. Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet discuss how such regional distinctions provide cultural meaning for the people living in an area.[337] Davis and Palmer specify different Mississippi, Texas, and East Coast blues characteristics.[338] Terry "Harmonica" Bean further defines the difference between a slow Delta blues and the upbeat hill country blues.[339] One instructor confirmed the differences between Mississippi, Tex, and East Coast blues, while several participants spoke about the differences between Mississippi Delta and Mississippi hill country blues.

One instructor stressed the significance of teaching "tools, not licks." Yerxa conveys a similar thought in harmonica instruction by emphasizing basic, intermediate, and advanced techniques.[340] This concept is a centerpiece for content at the Pinetop Workshop.

Hypothesis 2

The Pinetop instructors relayed standard knowledge and ideas consistent with the related literature. The content knowledge of the Pinetop Workshop included components of a standard repertoire, specific artistic styles, common idiomatic passages, and historical and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, the researcher observed these components in each masterclass session and during the jam sessions. However, the Pinetop instructors rarely conveyed such information explicitly and, at times, argued that these components were not necessary for successful blues performance. Instead, they emphasized primary concepts, blues fundamentals, tools, and advanced techniques. Therefore, this study partially confirms the second hypothesis because the

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[337] Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet, "Community Music Practice," 602.

[338] Davis, *History,* 115-116; Palmer *Deep Blues,* 43-44.

[339] Reed and Dean, *Harmonica Bean,* 16:00.

[340] Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 36-48.

researcher observed the hypothesized content, but the findings indicated more specific content than hypothesized.

Teaching Strategies

Sub Research Question 2: What teaching strategies are implemented to engage students in learning?

Hypothesis 3: The teaching strategies implemented by blues instructors include modeling, imitation, creating, and performing, consistent with current research and educational theory.

Teaching strategies describe the specific methods instructors employ to impart knowledge, develop skills, and engage their students in learning. Teaching strategies allow instructors to focus on pragmatic applications in their teaching and learning settings.[341] Instructors who employ a "folk pedagogy" will act on their assumptions of how their students will learn best. These actions become the teaching strategies in their context. Two themes emerged that describe the teaching strategies of the Pinetop Workshop. First, the instructors employed Demonstration to teach techniques, styles, and strategies. Second, the learners developed knowledge and skills through Experimenting.

Pairing these themes correlates with Bruner's theory that a learning "episode" occurs in three states: acquisition, transformation, and evaluation.[342] In this case, Demonstration coincides with acquisition and Experimenting coincides with transformation. Furthermore, Bruner theorized three modes of representation: enactive, iconic, and symbolic.[343] Enactive learning involves experiencing music, which includes both Demonstration and Experimenting.

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[341] Loughran, "Pedagogy." 135.

[342] Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960): 48-50.

[343] Shelly Cooper and Laura Dunbar, "The Magic of Manipulatives in the General Music Classroom," *Kodaly Envoy* 43, no. 1 (Fall 2016): 4-9.

Gordon's concept of audiation supports the Pinetop teaching strategies. First, there are six types of audiation.[344] Demonstration correlates with listening to and reading, while Experimenting correlates with the remaining types, most significantly recalling and performing, and creating/improvising. The stages of audiation further support the teaching strategies. Demonstration correlates with short retention, imitation, and establishing tonality and meter, while Experimenting correlates with retention, recollection, and anticipation.

Demonstration

Bruner summarizes "folk pedagogy" by claiming that if an instructor believes the child will learn best by seeing action, he will implement demonstration and imitation.[345] This means that instructors teach based on their perceptions of student learning. Therefore, the Pinetop instructors believe musicians learn by seeing, hearing, and experimenting and employ such teaching strategies.

Bluestine discusses a "whole-part-whole" approach in applying music learning theory. This approach includes introducing a concept, applying or practicing a smaller component, and then re-contextualizing the smaller component within the concept.[346] The Pinetop instructors employed this technique throughout the workshop. They regularly introduced a topic and demonstrated the "part" students needed to practice. This allows the students to learn new skills out of context before re-contextualizing them into the topic.

Blues music's oral tradition further supports Demonstration in blues education. Several scholars compare delta bluesmen to griots who conveyed history and culture orally through the

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[344] Edwin Gordon, *Learning Sequences in Music,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2012): 13.

[345] Bruner, *Culture,* 51-52.

[346] Eric Bluestine, *The Ways Children Learn Music,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2000): 18.

arts.[347] Red Paden confirms that his juke joint creates an avenue for teachers to help the next generation.[348] In the same way, the Pinetop instructors orally demonstrate blues methods, techniques, and skills for their students to learn directly. Such demonstrations ensure the students learn authentic skills and repertoire. Stolle's interviews of blues musicians confirm this technique as authentic for both historical and modern blues education, as the musicians he interviewed often learned directly from other blues performers.[349] Aural learning also remains consistent with other folk music, community music, and workshop settings contexts.[350]

Experimenting

Gordon claims that students should develop the ability to self-learn by generalization and inference.[351] Experimenting provides such an opportunity to the Pinetop learners. First, the instructors demonstrated concepts and content for the students. Then, the students experimented with performing that new concept or content. This allowed them to self-learn with the structure of a masterclass setting and in the presence of a mentor.

Historically, several bluesmen learned through trial and error and by listening to recordings.[352] Green and Yerxa confirm this approach's relevance to the modern blues student.[353] Green further states that various activities are "inseparable" from learning popular music,

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[347] Davis, *History,* 111-112; Palmer, *Deep Blues,* 27.

[348] Stolle, *Juke Joint,* 56.

[349] Stolle, *Hidden History,* 90-110.

[350] Howell, Higgins, and Bartleet, "Community Music Practice," 610; Waldron and Veblen, "Celtic Community," 64-65.

[351] Edwin Gordon, *Corybantic Conversations,* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2008): 147.

[352] Davis, *History,* 99; Stolle, *Hidden History,* 81-82; Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 13.

[353] Green, *How Popular Musicians,* 61; Green, *New Classroom Pedagogy,* 6; Yerxa, *Blues Harmonica,* 13.

including "copying" and "jamming."[354] Pinetop instructors demonstrate techniques and play recordings for their students before leading them to trial and error through Experimenting. Therefore, the Pinetop Instructor's aural teaching strategies remain consistent with historical blues education and contemporary popular music learning theory.

Jams served as an integral component of the Pinetop Workshop. Mingus led his students to experiment during their Friday night gigs, which served as the educational setting by which Mingus mentored his students.[355] The Pinetop Workshop's jams served a similar purpose. The students learned and practiced concepts and music throughout the day and then experimented with implementing those concepts in a live performance setting at the end of each day. Therefore, the jams facilitated Experimentation.

Hypothesis 3

The Pinetop instructors employed modeling, imitation, creating, and performing in their teaching strategies. Therefore, this study confirms the initial hypothesis regarding the blues instructors teaching strategies. However, the Pinetop instructors advanced student engagement by empowering the students to experiment with musical concepts and performance. These teaching and learning strategies remain consistent with historical blues and popular music education, and contemporary popular music learning theories.

General Findings

In addition to the themes that directly correspond to a research question, this study identified themes that relate to all three research questions. Feel and Improvisation themes

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[354] Green, *How Popular Musicians,* 41.

[355] Jennifer Griffith, "Mingus in the Workshop: Leading the Improvisation from New Orleans to Pentacostal Trance," *Black Music Research Journal* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 73; Scott Saul, "Outrageous Freedom: Charles Mingus and the Invention of the Jazz Workshop," *American Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (Sep. 2001): 389-390.

pervade every aspect of blues music education. Feel conveyed two meanings. First, the sensation

of awareness or experience in music performance and, second, the relationship between music

and emotional response. Improvisation referred to creating music in time and the concept of

"figuring it out" during music performance and teaching.

Feel

Feel as awareness requires the musician to create meaning with their performance.

Bruner's third mode of representation is symbolic learning, which adds reason to the experience

and icons from the first two modes.[356] Likewise, Gordon adds that audiation is the process by

which musicians provide meaning to sound.[357] Therefore, Feel, as employed by the Pinetop

instructors, directly correlates to Bruner's symbolic mode and Gordon's audiation. Furthermore,

Gordon claims that self-learning occurs through generalization and inference.[358] Feel is the

manifestation of generalizing and inferring during blues performance.

Bruner's third stage of a learning episode requires evaluation.[359] Several participants

paired evaluation with Feel by stating, "if it sounds good, it is good." With this Pinetop

commonplace, the Pinetop instructors encourage their students to complete a learning episode

through aural self-evaluation.

Blues music creates an emotional response. Gussow presents a "blues ethos" by which

blues musicians "acknowledge pain in order to evade suffering."[360] This correlates with the

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[356] Cooper and Dunbar, "Magic of Manipulatives," 4-9.

[357] Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 3.

[358] Gordon, *Corybantic Conversations,* 147.

[359] Bruner, *Process of Education,* 48-50.

[360] Adam Gussow, "Blues Expressiveness and the Blues Ethos," *Study of the South* (January 24, 2018): 1.

Pinetop instructors discussing Feel as a connection between music and emotional response. The emotional response remains within the blues ethos as musicians incorporate Feel into their performance. In this way, blues musicians employ Feel to allow blues music to serve as a form of leisure for the musician and audience alike.

Improvisation

Bruner's second stage of a learning episode requires transforming, or "manipulating," the acquired knowledge.[361] In blues education, improvising serves to manipulate musical concepts or passages. The students practiced Improvisation as a melodic technique. However, they also employed Improvisation as a learning tool for practicing other musical concepts.

Gordon's concept of audiation deeply integrates Improvisation in the music learning process. Three types of audiation directly specify improvising. Furthermore, the final stages of audiation imply the ability of the performer to improvise by anticipation.[362] Therefore, Improvisation in the Pinetop Workshop correlates with Gordon's music learning theory.

Other Findings

This study found four minor topics which the participants discussed and remain consistent with the literature. First, the participants discussed the issue of classroom management. Each participant's approach to classroom management remained consistent with their folk pedagogy or belief about how students best learn. Danielson discusses the importance of managing the classroom environment by employing small groups, ensuring seamless transitions, creating routines, efficiently performing "non-instructional duties," and allowing

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[361] Bruner, *Process of Education,* 48-50.

[362] Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 13, 18.

volunteers to contribute to the classroom environment. Furthermore, she argues to manage student behavior by establishing clear expectations, monitoring student behavior, and appropriately responding to student misbehavior.[363] The Pinetop Workshop's correlation to Danielson's approaches varied per instructor. Some instructors successfully managed masterclass behavior by employing techniques like Danielson's. Other instructors struggled to manage behavior but did not employ techniques like Danielson's.

Second, several participants discussed music as a language. Bruner and Gordon both present theories consistent with language acquisition. Parker found that Bruner's spiral curriculum helps language learning because it helps students build on previous reactions and knowledge.[364] Gordon compares much of his theory with the process of learning a language.

Third, a few participants mentioned the importance of songwriting. Gordon's types of audiation include creating and writing music.[365] Kladder argues that songwriting allows students to construct their learning in popular music education.[366] The Pinetop Workshop did not emphasize songwriting, but a few participants discussed the concept as an advanced technique for musical expression.

Finally, several participants discussed evaluation. Evaluation remains relevant because it is the final stage of Bruner's learning episode.[367] The Pinetop instructors primarily evaluated in two ways. First, they encouraged the learners to self-evaluate their performance and practice.

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[363] Danielson, *Framework,* 72-74.

[364] Jerry L. Parker, "Curriculum Design Research as a Learning Experience and Teachable Moment," *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue* 25, no. ½ (2022): 266.

[365] Gordon, *Learning Sequences,* 13.

[366] Jonathan Kladder, "Songwriting in Modern Band?: Considering Constructivism as an Approach for Teaching Popular Music," *College Music Symposium* 60, no. 2 (Fall 2020): 8.

[367] Bruner, *Process of Education,* 48-50.

Second, they evaluated student performance during the jam sessions. This allowed them to provide immediate feedback and positive encouragement.

Limitations and Delimitations

A few limitations and delimitations narrow the effectiveness of this study. First, this study employed a theoretical framework intentionally predisposed toward formal music education. This predisposition helps to connect the informal nature of blues music pedagogy and formal classroom teaching. However, this perspective also narrowed the search for formal education components not always realized at the Pinetop Workshop.

Second, the researcher's limited performance experience with popular instruments limited the study. The researcher's popular music experience is limited to performance as a bass guitarist and vocalist. Therefore, observing masterclasses for these two focuses yielded more significant data than the masterclasses for instruments in which the researcher has little experience. The data from the other classes would have been richer had the researcher sought intermediate learning prior to the workshop.

Third, the single-case study design presents potential limitations. One common limitation of a single case study is that the rationale for choosing a single case "may later turn out not to be the case it was thought to be at the outset."[368] The single case this study observed did serve as a critical and unusual case, as hoped for at the onset. A second weakness of the single case study involves generalization. The diversity of the participants and the far reach of the Pinetop Workshop allows this study to inform both "theoretical propositions" and a large population of blues musicians.

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[368] Robert Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications,* Sixth edition, (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2018): 51.

Finally, qualitative research implicitly creates limitations. The sample is much smaller than a sample for quantitative studies, and, therefore, the data may not relate to the whole population. It is also impossible to remove bias from a qualitative study. The researcher and participants maintain biases such as perspectives, worldviews, and opinions. As a result, the researcher designs the study to align with his or her biases intact. Likewise, the participants choose to participate, and the information they share, depending on their own biases.

Recommendations for Future Study

Due to the limitations and results of this study, the researcher recommends further investigation into blues music education. First, this study employed a theoretical framework predisposed toward formal education. Similar research designs employing a framework focused on informal music learning theories, such as Lucy Green's investigation into popular musicians, would yield different findings. Researchers should implement such research designs in different blues workshops and other informal blues learning settings.

Second, the researcher served as an observer-participant during the Pinetop Workshop. This limited participation to volunteering in non-musical and non-educational contexts, save for one data-collection event in which he was invited to participate in the bass masterclass. This approach adequately served this model, and studying the Pinetop Workshop as a participant-observer would have yielded different, not necessarily better, data. In the future, music educators should seek to examine the Pinetop Workshop and similar contexts as participant-observers.

Third, the researcher approached this study as a classically trained musician with limited performance and teaching experience in popular music forms. Further research should include investigation by musicians with extensive experience performing and teaching in popular music

forms. Fourth, this study employed a qualitative single-case study. Further investigation should include various designs, including other forms of qualitative research.

Fifth, the researcher participated in the entire length of the Pinetop Workshop. However, the workshop only lasts for four days. Future studies should examine the phenomenon of blues music education in settings that allow a greater length of study. One such setting is the Blues Museum, which offers regular private lessons in an authentic setting and from authentic blues musicians.

Finally, the researcher completed this study with a qualitative method. Future studies should employ quantitative methods to analyze blues music education. Quantitative methods will allow for experimental or quasi-experimental designs with sample sizes that will generalize to the population of blues musicians. Implementing these recommendations will broaden the findings and provide further insight into blues music education.

Implications for Practice

This study's findings and results provide implications for blues music education in various settings. Furthermore, the implications of this study may apply to other workshop settings, instances of regional music, contexts of community music, and multiple forms of music as leisure. This study addressed a gap in the literature by presenting a formal investigation of authentic blues music education.

Implications for Informal Music Education

This study primarily contributes to informal music education by presenting findings consistent with previous literature. The study themes confirm some terminology already circulating in informal music discussions, such as improvisation and demonstration. Other themes provide new vocabulary for widely generalized concepts such as student-centered,

standard knowledge, and exploration. The remaining themes provide new concepts relevant to informal music learning, such as immersion, simplicity, and feel.

Immersion and Simplicity constitute the most significant themes for informal music learning. Immersion informs popular music educators that significant learning will occur in authentic settings. Therefore, students wishing to learn a popular style of music should seek opportunities to perform and learn that style in as authentic a setting as possible. Likewise, instructors and organizations who develop workshops should consider the setting an essential factor. Blues music workshops should occur in authentic settings such as historical locations in the Delta or authentic juke joints. Next, the Pinetop instructors clearly communicated the importance of simplicity for authentic blues performance. Informal music educators should seek to communicate and train blues fundamentals without complex theory or techniques.

Finally, the instructors who succeeded the most with non-instructional teaching issues employed formal teaching techniques. Informal music educators should intentionally employ formal education techniques to improve student engagement. For example, instructors with larger groups of students should consider formal classroom management techniques to manage student behavior and enhance the learning experience proactively. Likewise, informal music educators may also employ components of formal teaching. For example, planning whole-part-whole instruction will prepare students to learn musical concepts out of context before re-contextualizing them.

Implications for Formal Music Education

Formal music educators should seek opportunities to include popular music styles in the music classroom and traditional music ensembles. Many formal music educators remain reluctant to include popular music opportunities for various reasons. One reason is discomfort in

teaching popular music forms. Music educators should learn the standard knowledge and pedagogical methods with a popular music style to remedy this. Music educators wishing to teach blues music should learn the standard knowledge of blues music, such as the basic chords, twelve-bar format, pentatonic scale, and turnarounds. Teaching these fundamentals will adequately prepare any music student wishing to pursue further study of blues music.

Next, formal music educators should teach popular music styles by employing popular music education methods. The primary methods for teaching popular music include demonstration and experimentation. Therefore, music educators should demonstrate popular music styles by either performing authentic repertoire or playing recordings of authentic repertoire. This also means that music students should experiment with imitating and improvising popular music styles.

Finally, formal music educators should seek immersive and authentic experiences with popular music. While it is unreasonable to assume that any music teacher can bring their students to the Delta, teachers may still provide an authentic experience by exposing their students to legitimate recordings and stories of the original bluesmen. Teachers may also present authentic performance opportunities by including popular music selections in traditional concerts.

<div align="center">Implications for Music Education Philosophy</div>

This study provides several implications that contribute to a philosophy of music education. First, including popular music in the curriculum will integrate music learning with other subjects. Learning blues music will help students learn American history, particularly the history of African Americans in the South post-slavery through sharecropping. Popular music's inclusion will help students connect music learning with personal experiences. Blues music's

improvisational nature and connection with emotional response provides a particularly advantageous avenue for expressing personal or community experiences.

Second, community music serves as an outlet for regional music, music as leisure, and lifelong music-making. The blues is the regional music of the Delta and permeates other regions of the United States and internationally. As a regional music, the blues shares historical and contemporary American and Delta culture. The blues also serves a leisure purpose. Several blues musicians, such as Pinetop instructors, consider their performance a profession. Other blues musicians, such as the historical bluesmen who developed the genre, consider the music an outlet for recreation or expression. Therefore, teaching and learning the blues may provide a student with employable skills or skills that provide an exceptional opportunity for leisure. Both approaches create an opportunity for lifelong music-making, which should be music education's goal.

Third, one participant reframed his philosophy as teaching "tools, not licks." Formal and informal music educators alike should adopt similar approaches. Teaching "licks" or learning specific music passages without context allows the student to mimic other musicians without developing independent musicianship. Empowering students with tools, however, will enable students to create their sound and function as independent musicians. Therefore, music educators and music curricula should seek to provide tools that students may apply to various contexts.

Finally, this study contributes to the burgeoning music education philosophy that finds popular music pedagogy integral to the music classroom. The blues uniquely fits into the philosophy for a few reasons. It is a historical musical form with contemporary expressions. Students will find some components of blues music familiar and unfamiliar to their perspective.

Therefore, music educators should include authentic representations of blues music in their formal music classrooms and traditional ensembles.

Summary

This instrumental case study examined the content, teaching strategies, and pedagogy of blues music instructors in an authentic setting. The Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Workshop Experience provided a critical and unique case by which the researcher could observe and analyze such variables. This study found that the pedagogical approaches included Immersion and Student-Centered focus. Immersion requires that learners spend time in an authentic setting and participate in a like-minded community. The Student-Centered focus requires that instructors address the students' abilities and interests within the context of the educational setting.

This study found that the content knowledge for blues music education includes Simplicity and a body of Standard Knowledge. Simplicity allows blues musicians to play successfully, entertain audiences, and perform authentic blues music. Standard knowledge includes blues fundamentals, primary concepts, tools, and advanced techniques. The blues fundamentals include the twelve-bar structure, variations, and the pentatonic scale. The primary concepts include turnarounds and a "library of patterns" pertinent to a specific instrument. Applying these fundamentals and primary concepts will allow any musician the potential to perform within the blues genre. It is imperative that blues musicians develop tools rather than learn licks because it empowers them to perform as independent musicians.

The primary teaching strategies for authentic blues instruction include Demonstration and Experimenting. Demonstration allows the instructor to develop their previous experiences and knowledge of resources to provide authentic examples of blues performance. This ensures the students learn the blues accurately and allows the genre to advance its rich history.

Experimenting allows the students to develop their skills and increase their knowledge by imitating and improvising. Seeking genuine performance opportunities solidifies the learning and allows the blues students to practice their new findings, skills, and techniques authentically.

Two concepts provide an overview of blues music education: Feel and Improvisation. Feel conveys two distinct meanings depending on the context. First, it is a sensation of awareness or experience relating to music performance. Second, it is the relationship between music and emotional response. The former empowers musicians to communicate with each other, the music, or the audience to perform blues music successfully. The latter allows musicians and audiences to express emotions through participating in blues music.

Improvisation is an integral component of blues musicianship. Most commonly, as with many other music forms, improvising melodies serves as a means of expression and entertainment that helps define the genre. However, Improvisation also refers to the concept of "figuring it out." This latter approach applies to several facets of blues music. Blues musicians often perform successfully just knowing a key and a style, or less. Their focus on aural learning prepares them to "figure it out" on stage and communicate with the other musicians. Blues instructors often bring this mentality into the learning session, "figuring out" how and what to teach as each student presents his or her needs and wants within a lesson.

One concern several participants and other members of the Pinetop Foundation expressed was the common misconception that the blues is a dying historical genre. They state that the blues is a historical genre that continues to evolve. Blues festivals continue to expand and thrive, blues albums continue to sell, and blues concerts still book venues. When I first moved to the Delta, I had little knowledge of blues music and even less experience. The community of blues musicians invited, welcomed, and taught me. Music educators carry the responsibility to help

preserve important regional and community music to facilitate lifelong music-making for our communities. This includes teaching blues music. B.B. King, Muddy Waters, and Pinetop Perkins may be gone, but the thrill of blues music is still here.

Appendix A: IRB Approval

IRB #: IRB-FY22-23-1233
Title: The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting
Creation Date: 3-11-2023
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Spencer Byrd
Review Board: Research Ethics Office
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Expedited	Decision	Approved

Key Study Contacts

Member	Nathan Street	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Spencer Byrd	Role	Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Spencer Byrd	Role	Primary Contact	Contact	

Appendix B: Formal Request to the Pinetop Perkins Foundation

March 10, 2023

Dear David,

As a doctoral student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a PhD degree. The title of my research project is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting and the purpose of my research is to better understand Blues music education.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at the 2023 Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop.

Instructor participants will be asked to participate in formal interviews, consent to their teaching being observed, and consent to one masterclass session being video recorded. Selected student, volunteer, and other participants will be asked to participate in informal interviews. All participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Spencer Byrd
PhD Student, Liberty University

Appendix C: Letter of Permission

PINETOP
PERKINS
FOUNDATION

Pinetopperkinsfoundation.org

March 16, 2023

Dear Spencer:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Workshop Experience to examine blues music education in an authentic setting, we have decided to grant you permission to conduct your study at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 Workshop Experience.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☒ We grant permission for Spencer Byrd to contact the instructors of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 Workshop Experience to invite them to participate in his research study.

☒ We will not provide potential participant information to Spencer Byrd, but we agree to send his study information to the instructors of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 Workshop Experience on his behalf.

☒ We grant permission for Spencer Byrd to provide opt-out forms or consent and assent forms to minor participants and their parent or guardian.

☒ We are requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

Sincerely,

David Berntson
Co-President
Pinetop Perkins Foundation

Appendix D: Recruitment Letters

Recruitment Letter/Email (Instructor)

Dear Pinetop Instructor,

As a doctoral student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The title of my research project is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting and the purpose of my research is to better understand Blues music education. I am writing to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as an instructor. Participants will be asked to (1) participate in an in-person or virtual, audio-recorded, pre-fieldwork interview for approximately one hour, (2) permit the observation of workshop teachings sessions (one hour), (3) permit the video recording of one workshop teaching session, (one hour) (4) participate in an in-person or virtual, audio-recorded, post-fieldwork interview for approximately one hour, and (5) review transcriptions of the two interviews to provide feedback and ensure accuracy. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential (participant identities will not be disclosed).

To participate, please contact me at ██████████████████████████████ to schedule an interview.

A consent document is provided with this letter. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me one week before the first interview.

Sincerely,

Spencer Byrd
Ph.D. Student
████████████████████████

Recruitment Letter (Board Member)

Dear Pinetopper,

As a doctoral student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The title of my research project is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting and the purpose of my research is to better understand Blues music education. If you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as a board member. Participants, if willing, will be asked to be video-recorded as part of a workshop teaching session observation (60 minutes), as well as participate in an audio-recorded interview that will last approximately thirty minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please contact me at ██████████████████████████████████ to schedule an interview.

A consent form is provided with this letter. The consent form contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent form and return it to me before the . Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the study.

Sincerely,

Spencer Byrd
Ph.D. Student
████████████████████████████

Recruitment Letter (Volunteer)

Dear Pinetopper,

As a doctoral student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The title of my research project is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting and the purpose of my research is to better understand Blues music education. If you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as a volunteer. Participants, if willing, will be asked to be video-recorded as part of a workshop teaching session observation (60 minutes), as well as participate in an audio-recorded interview that will last approximately thirty minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please contact me at ███████████████████████████████ to schedule an interview.

A consent form is provided with this letter. The consent form contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent form and return it to me before the observation.

Sincerely,

Spencer Byrd
Ph.D. Student
██████████████████████████

Recruitment Letter (Student, minor)

Dear Pinetopper,

As a doctoral student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The title of my research project is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting and the purpose of my research is to better understand Blues music education. If you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite your child to join my study.

Participants must be (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as a student. Participants, if willing, will be asked to be video-recorded as part of a workshop teaching session observation (60 minutes), as well as participate in an audio-recorded interview that will last approximately thirty minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested from your child as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To allow your child to participate, please contact me at ████████████ ████████████████████ to schedule an interview.

A parental consent form is provided with this letter. The parental consent form contains additional information about my research. If you choose to allow your child to participate, you will need to sign the parental consent form and return it to me before the start of the observation.

Sincerely,

Spencer Byrd
Ph.D. Student
████████████████████████████

Recruitment Letter (Student, adult)

Dear Pinetopper,

As a doctoral student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The title of my research project is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting and the purpose of my research is to better understand Blues music education. If you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as a student. Participants, if willing, will be asked to be video-recorded as part of a workshop teaching session observation (60 minutes), as well as participate in an audio-recorded interview that will last approximately thirty minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please contact me at ███████████████████████████████ to schedule an interview.

A consent form is provided with this letter. The consent form contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent form and return it to me before the observation.
Sincerely,

Spencer Byrd
███████████████████████

Appendix E: Consent, Group A

Consent

Title of the Project: The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting
Principal Investigator: Spencer Byrd, PhD 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 (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as an instructor, volunteer, board member, or student. 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 this instrumental case study is to discover the pedagogy, content, and teaching strategies used by blues instructors in an authentic workshop setting.

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. Participate in an audio-recorded, pre-fieldwork interview of approximately one hour to gain an understanding of your musical background and educational plan for the workshop.
2. Permit the observation of your workshop teaching sessions to observe your teaching methods, content, and strategies during the course of the workshop.
3. Permit the video recording of one workshop teaching session to observe your teaching methods, content, and strategies during the course of the workshop.
4. Participate in an audio-recorded, post-fieldwork interview of approximately one hour to discuss the observed teaching methods, content, and strategies you employed during the workshop.
5. Review transcriptions of the two interviews to provide feedback and ensure accuracy.

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 discovery of the pedagogical methods, content knowledge, and teaching strategies used by the instructors of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation workshop. This discovery will contribute to the music education literature by providing a tangible description of blues music as historic, cultural, and popular art form.

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 will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Electronic data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Physical data, including memory storage and observation notes, will be stored in a locked container. After three years, all physical data will be destroyed.
- All personal interviews and masterclass sessions will be recorded and stored on a password locked computer. All interviews and masterclass sessions will be transcribed, and written documents will be stored on a password locked computer. The researcher and members of his doctoral committee will have access to these recordings. All recordings and written documents will be retained for three years upon the completion of the study.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

No personal expenses are anticipated as a part of 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 or The Pinetop Perkins Foundation. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time 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 contact the researcher at the email address and/or phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Spencer Byrd. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ███████████ ███████████████████████ You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Nathan Street, at ███████████████.

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, ██████████████████████████████████ ██████████████████████████████████████

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

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix F: Consent, Group B

Consent

Title of the Project: The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting
Principal Investigator: Spencer Byrd, Ph.D. 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 (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as a volunteer, board member, or student. 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 this instrumental case study is to discover the pedagogy, content, and teaching strategies used by blues instructors in an authentic workshop setting.

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. Be willing to be video-recorded as part of a workshop teaching session observation (60 minutes).
2. Participate in an in-person, audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 30 minutes.
3. Review a transcription of the interview to provide feedback and ensure accuracy.

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 discovery of the pedagogical methods, content knowledge, and teaching strategies used by the instructors of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation workshop. This discovery will contribute to the music education literature by providing a tangible description of blues music as historic, cultural, and popular art form.

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. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Electronic data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Physical data, including memory storage and observation notes, will be stored in a locked container. After three years, all physical data will be destroyed.
- All recordings from interviews and masterclass sessions will be recorded and stored on a password locked computer. All interviews and masterclass sessions will be transcribed, and written documents will be stored on a password locked computer. The researcher and members of his doctoral committee will have access to these recordings. All recordings and written documents will be retained for three years upon the completion of the study.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

No personal expenses are anticipated as a part of 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 or The Pinetop Perkins Foundation. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time 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 contact the researcher at the email address and/or phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Spencer Byrd. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ██████████████ ██████████████████████████ You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Nathan Street, at ████████████████████

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, ██ ██

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

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____

Printed Subject Name

_____

Signature & Date

Parental Consent

Title of the Project: The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Annual Workshop to examine blues music education in an authentic setting
Principal Investigator: Spencer Byrd, Ph.D. 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, they must be (1) affiliated with the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop and (2) participate in the Pinetop Perkins Foundation's 2023 annual workshop as a student. 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 child to take part in this research project.

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

The purpose of this instrumental case study is to discover the pedagogy, content, and teaching strategies used by blues instructors in an authentic workshop setting.

What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to allow your child to be in this study, I will ask her/him to do the following:
1. Allow the researcher to observe and video-record them during the Pinetop masterclasses (60 minutes).
2. Participate in an in-person, audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 30 minutes.

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 discovery of the pedagogical methods, content knowledge, and teaching strategies used by the instructors of the Pinetop Perkins Foundation workshop. This discovery will contribute to the music education literature by providing a tangible description of blues music as historic, cultural, and popular art form.

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 your child 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. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Electronic data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Physical data, including memory storage and observation notes, will be stored in a locked container. After three years, all physical data will be destroyed.
- All recordings from interviews and masterclass sessions will be recorded and stored on a password locked computer. All interviews and masterclass sessions will be transcribed, and written documents will be stored on a password locked computer. The researcher and members of his doctoral committee will have access to these recordings. All recordings and written documents will be retained for three years upon the completion of the study.

How will participants be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to allow your child to participate will not affect your or his/her current or future relations with Liberty University or The Pinetop Perkins Foundation. If you decide to allow your child to participate, she/he is 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/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw her/him or should your child choose to withdraw, data collected from your child will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Spencer Byrd. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ██████████████ ████████████████████████████ You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Nathan Street, at ██████████████████████

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, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, ████████████████████████████████ ████████████████████████████████████

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

By signing this document, you are agreeing to allow your child to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to allow my child to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio/video-record my child as part of his/her participation in this study.

_____

Printed Child's/Student's Name

_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature   Date

_____

Minor's Signature   Date

Appendix H: Child Assent

Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study

What is the name of the study and who is doing the study?

The name of the study is The Thrill is Here: An Instrumental Case Study of the Pinetop Perkins Annual Workshop and the person doing the study is Spencer Byrd.

Why is Spencer Byrd doing this study?

Spencer wants to know more about teaching and learning the blues.

Why am I being asked to be in this study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you are a student at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop.

If I decide to be in the study, what will happen and how long will it take?

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked questions about your time at the Pinetop Perkins Foundation annual workshop. Your class will also be observed, and video recorded.

Do I have to be in this study?

No, you do not have to be in this study. If you want to be in this study, then tell the researcher. If you don't want to, it's OK to say no. The researcher will not be angry. You can say yes now and change your mind later. It's up to you.

What if I have a question?

You can ask questions any time. You can ask now. You can ask later. You can talk to the researcher. If you do not understand something, please ask the researcher to explain it to you again.

Signing your name below means that you want to be in the study.

_____

Signature of Child   Date

Spencer Byrd
███████████████████████

Dr. Nathan Street
███████████████

Liberty University Institutional Review Board
████████████████████████████
████████████████

Appendix I: Observation Form

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)

Appendix J: Video Observation Form

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)

Appendix K: Group B Interviews

Rapport

1. Why did you decide to come to / volunteer at this workshop?

Pedagogy/Content/Teaching Strategies

2. What new concepts have you learned from the instructor(s) at this workshop?

3. What has an instructor done in class that helped you the most?

4. How is this workshop making you a better blues player?

Appendix L: Pre-workshop Interview Questions

Rapport

1. How and why were you selected as an instructor for the Pinetop?

Pedagogy and Theory

2. What is your approach to teaching blues music?

3. How do you plan for a masterclass setting?

4. In what ways is music like a language?

5. How do you teach students of different ability levels at the same time?

Content and Curriculum

6. What must a person learn to play blues music?

    a. Follow-up topics: Topics to be taught, big ideas, learning expectations, and criteria for proficiency.

7. Are there elements of musical technique that are unique to blues music?

Teaching Strategies

8. How do you motivate students during the masterclass?

9. What activities, materials, and examples do you plan on using?

    a. Follow-up: How do you involve students in learning?

10. How do you determine when a student "gets it?"

Appendix M: Post-workshop Interview Questions

Rapport

1. What were the successes of the workshop for you and your students?

2. How was the class session I observed or videotaped different from a normal masterclass?

Pedagogy and Teaching Strategies

3. What is your approach to teaching blues music?

4. How well did your plan go for the masterclass workshop?

5. How were you able to address students of different ability levels?

6. How were you able to motivate students during the masterclass?

7. What activities, materials, and examples were the most successful?

8. How did you know when a student "got it?"

Content and Curriculum

9. What topics and big ideas did you cover?

10. Are there elements of musical technique that are unique to blues music?

Appendix N: Observation Notes

█████ June 14, morning

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Left hand --> brain, right hand --> personality (especially with the blues?) - "Blues was dance music, *power* music" - Power = dampen w/ hand - Sort of a "call and response" between parts; thumb doesn't stop - Space --> time between the lead and the bass - "Taste and space" - Dampening w/ hand the difference between Delta and Piedmont? - On soloing: "When in doubt, leave it out" (space) - Phrasing, take from instruments that need breath	- Each student took turns playing a few heads, of whatever they wanted. 3 out of 4 played a 12-bar. - ████ demonstrates all of the little things he says - ████ kept playing and talking at the same time to teach what he was playing - ████ had all students playing a steady beat w/ g minor pentatonic, call & response. He sat and listened, commenting when necessary.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- "I have to know you... musically" - "an idea of what you're doing and what I can teach you" - "no such thing as a stupid question" - Tomato theory: play like you sing - "I don't teach licks, I'm here to teach you tools."	- "leave your ego, play the music, love the people." - "you express you... as long as it comes from an honest place" - "If you can't sing it, should you be playing it?" - "Everyone can sing; you come to this planet with music"

████████, June 14, private vocal lesson

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- "Take a big breath" - She asks him to play an original song	- She set up a mic and hooks his guitar to amp. - He begins by singing and playing a song, 12-bar, Rambling, ██ listens. - She sings a line for him to echo, trying to find his "sweet spot," she finds it with excitement - He sings two verses of Crossroads; he strains singing too high, she has him sing that note a third lower.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)
- She encourages him and shows excitement - She encourages him while he plays	- ██ welcomes ████ they worked together last year - ████ (19), Colorado, majors in songwriting. - She encouraged him to sing more in college (a capella group) -

██████ June 14, video recording, late morning

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- If it sounds good, it's right; if it sounds bad, it's not. - ████ is using standard rep to teach techniques - Robert Johnson used "G" tuning for 12-bar - Turnaround, "diminished chord going down," chromatic line going down, d-shape, add a note to fill chords - Memphis Minnie turnaround - "Don't be afraid to play *strong"* - "Slave music... truly American" - Changing turnaround adds a little extra color	- Demonstrating the "diminished" turnaround. - Demonstrates each concept as he introduces it. - The students practice each concept. -
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- "Just because you're learning [advanced techniques] doesn't mean you gotta play it all the time." - "Not licks, tools" - "Don't let people know you messed up" - Soloing: "Don't let them see you sweat" "97% of the audience won't know you made a mistake" - When you play and make a mistake, put it behind you	- "It's good to experiment and go for things. If you make a mistake, you'll know not to do that again." - Walk out of any place knowing you did your best

████████, June 14, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Jimmy Reed does a chromatic 5th turnaround - "Capos mean you can choose what position you want to play in" - w/o a turnaround, it builds momentum to next head - Make it as <u>simple</u> as possible, just about aggression and groove - "Challenge yourself to <u>play more simply</u> sometimes" - Question: Where did the 12-bar blues originate? (from student) - It wasn't originally; w/ records we have to organize, to save time cutting records, those who played before records were different - Playing (m7 of IV to the root of IV) helps solidify the IV chord	- Shows recording to demonstrate style - Demonstrates chromatic five chord, doesn't spell it - Goes and checks each technique independently - Has everyone play together to practice new technique - To practice, everyone kept playing 12-bar E and took turns soloing in a circle - Went around making comments on everyone's solo, focused on really feeling each <u>chord</u>.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- He's putting the students interests first	- Had trouble getting everyone quiet after each exercise

██████, June 14, video recording, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- When you play the solo: "If they took away the whole band, could they tell what chord you're on?" - When Muddy was playing in the Delta, he did all open-G slide guitar; changed to standard tuning in Chicago - Muddy often played the same licks, which became his trademark - Go back to the basics; attractive music - Chord-heavy solos - Jimmy Vaughan more popular than Stevie in Austin, at the time. - When trading solos, you don't have to match, you can also offset - "Play something that adds instead of subtracts"	- ██████ demonstrates open-G tuning - ██████ and demonstrate playing lead and rhythm - ██████ demonstrating slide technique - A lot of demonstrating and storytelling
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- "Steal from the best" - w/o drive it turns into folk music	

June 14, Evening Jam

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Jams on familiar forms; lots of 12-bar	- The students sign-up to play; open-mic style
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- Instructors readily give encouragement to students after each performance; a lot of individual, immediate feedback	

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, June 15, video recording, morning

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Classy: "you make everything count, and everything says something in a nice way," "kind of elegant" - Full bend = country music; small tug = blues. - The "Southern thing" of taking your time to change chords, not in a hurry, would have been different if in the city. - If you're doing a 3-hour show, you gotta mix up your beats and grooves."	- Played a recording to demonstrate guitar collaboration. - Had everyone play the bottom part together on the I chord; kept a groove going for them to practice.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- Started by congratulating and making specific comments about the evening jam from the night before	- There's a lot of noodling in quiet moments, classroom management is clearly a struggle - Changing the form (e.g. adding 2 beats to a 12-bar), shows mastery of the concept

██████, ███████, and , ███████ June 15, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Let [the interesting line] be strong and loud. - "Play it soulful, so the notes mean something" not overplaying	- When I came in, they were jamming and soloing, discussing how to support each others solos. - 3 line song - "I gotta woodshed it, I'm in the learning stage." - Spent a lot of time practicing this song, to make sure everyone knew the bass lines/grooves, and were comfortable w/ them
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- Three bass instructors to three students - "You got it, I just can't hear it." - "Spontaneous, we feed off of each individual, where they are, and what they want"	

███████, June 15, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Hybrid picking technique - Pinch (thumb & middle), thumb, 1, thumb, 2, thumb (fingers) - 1, 2 +, 3 +, 4 (rhythm)	- ███████ gave students a ton of room to just play, make mistakes, and see what works for them.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- "tools not licks" - -> You can learn licks and sound exactly like someone else, - -> we have the same tools, but our house is a little different	- Develop your own sound

██████, ███████, ███████ , ███████ , and , ████████ video, June 15, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- "Rhythm section has a unique partnership" - [for transition] lead usually has a signal, sometimes by singing - Drums: "It's got to be straightforward (the transition) if you want everybody to play it." - - "Make sure you use your ears to play together." - - Drums: When transitioning it's important to keep your right foot steady w/ the bass or you'll lose/gain time.	- Combined drum and bass class - ████████ and ████████ began by demonstrating some different styles - Discussion/collaboration between instructors regarding whether to demonstrate or throw students right in - Demonstrating began rumba -> swing -> rumba; last two measures before transitions went from swing to straight, fills changed - They put the students on the same exercise to practice transitions - Played a recording of the next song for everyone to hear the grooves - ████████ and demonstrated by playing the chart
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- One group really struggled w/ transitions, so they redid the exercise... "don't play any extra stuff," while struggling -	- Classroom management: "Hold up while we're talking"

█████, June 15, afternoon, (video)

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Swapping 2 trains for listening and leaving room for shared solos - On building a slow blues solo: avoid middle octaves because it can get lost, and low/high is more <u>vocal,</u> like someone talking or singing. - "Give yourself room to build" - Playing solo, or as a duo, I'll play more in the middle--> with a band there's not a lot of sonic room in the middle, the vocals take up a lot of that EQ. - "Remember to breathe" let the audience have room to think about it.	- Playing a shuffle; everyone goes once, using just the right hand, to practice making it interesting, soloing on a 12-bar - Similar exercise: this time boogie but swaps 2 with each student
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- "If I ever play anyone" just ask and I'll show you	- The students didn't always stick with the exercise, but he never mentioned it or stopped them

█████, June 15, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- roots/blues best when play <u>emotionally</u> - take the audience on a ride, tell a story; the beginning/end most important - Communicate emotions via riffs	- Started class w/o any notes in particular, convey emotions
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- Different beginning point every year - Comes in w/ open lesson plan - Get out of your head, you can't play boogie-woogie to the note - "It's not the notes you play, it's the intent behind what you play that matters, and that's kind of what this music's all about." - "Ask <u>why</u> you're playing more than what."	- Blues music especially meant to be shared w/ people on stage and in audience

██████, June 15, afternoon workshop (video)

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- "sweet spot" and "money note" - People love hearing the "sweet spot" note - First note has to capture everyone's attention - Microphone usage is important - Warm-up: Sing driving to your gig, humming lets you warm-up w/o damage, or a little gap in the lips letting less air out - Lean into mic for softer notes, that draws audience in - She discussed the importance of the history of the a capella song	- She's teaching workshop style, lecture with Q&A. - She's teaching an a capella song by rote. Singing with melody with everyone, then having them add harmony.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- "I focus on singing" because that's her strength.	- Sometimes change the key or improvise a note if it's too high.

█████ June 14, afternoon workshop

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- What you wear should depend on your personality and your audience. - Same with what you sing. - Communicating with other band members should be inconspicuous but clear. - Be confident. - Lean into the mic.	- This workshop was lecture style, Q&A, with examples.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- To accompany the constructivist approach, she is sure to provide suggestions rather than commands.	- █████ presented a workshop on stage presence. - Constructivist approach; teaching there is not one right answer

████████ , ████████ , and , ████████ June 15, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Bass lines; usually following the "lump" pattern, (dotted-quarter-note, eight note, for heavy swing). - Bass lines from Appendix N.	- The instructors showed me the bass line patterns. - They began by asking what I knew, so I played a few lines. - Then, they taught me a few new patterns in different styles than I played. They demonstrated the style and then had me try them. - All of the students were playing the same lines. This helped us concentrate and know when we were off.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- When I messed up, the instructors were patient with me and showed me what would help me improve.	- (The bass instructors asked me to sit in on this session; they handed me a five-string bass and taught me a few bass lines).

██████ and ██████ June 16, afternoon

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
- Always played with a metronome. - They were teaching a specific swing rhythm.	- The students sit in a circle between coaches and chairs. - There was a drum set in the room, but most of the time they all played with their sticks on pillows. They continued this whether one person played on the set or not. - The teachers demonstrated "feels" and the students practiced them.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture)	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)**
- ██████ encourages the students regularly. He also jokes around with them quite a bit.	- Classroom management is good—one instructor is a teacher.

June 16, evening showcase

Content (What is being taught?)	Strategies (How is it being taught?)
	- Instructors played the first set. - The students performed in various groups. They signed up throughout the day. - Some classes presented a song or set together. The acoustic class took turns opening for other sets.
Pedagogy (Methodologies and big picture) - The final showcase is clearly a celebration - The instructors, students, and everybody involved spend quality time together. A lot of encouragement is given.	**Theory (Theoretical concepts displayed)** - Summative Assessment: Showcase is an opportunity to display learning w/ a live, public performance at ground zero.

Appendix O: Nolan Dean Consent

Byrd - Dissertation Photo Permission
2 messages

Spencer Byrd ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ Wed, Oct 11, 2023 at 8:54 PM
To: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Nolan,

Thank you again for taking photographs of Ground Zero Blues Club and Red's juke joint. Can you confirm permission to publish the attached photos in my dissertation?

Thank you,

Spencer Lewis
--
Spencer Byrd
Barton High School, Music Educator
Liberty University, PhD Candidate - Music Education
M.M, Western Kentucky University - Conducting, Teacher Leader
B.M.E, Harding University - Music Education; Leadership/Ministry Major
ΦMA Sinfonia

2 attachments
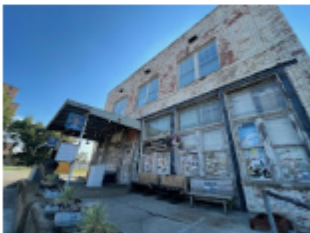
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Nolan Dean ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ Thu, Oct 12, 2023 at 10:51 AM
To: Spencer Byrd ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

I grant my consent to publish these photographs in your dissertation.

Nolan Dean

Director/Producer | Cherry Street Productions
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Appendix P: Bass Lines

Blues Bass Lines

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