

Research Assessment #3

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Assessment:

Music, in itself, is ever changing and evolving. This statement is reflected in its existence within the market. Musical performances, for hundreds of years and across the globe, have contributed to the ebbe and flow of the music market (Laing, 289). Also, music poses as an economic anomaly due to the fact that performers, especially opera singers or orchestra members, are more concerned with the quality of their organization rather than their payment (293). A more recent invention, recorded music, has evolved into digital, cassette and disk recordings, which has made music more accessible than ever. Its accessibility has caused the market of music to deflate, however it has been rejuvenated by the use of copyrights and royalties, which ensure that creators are properly compensated for their work (296).

From the perspective of an upcoming musician, this information is extremely important. Any artist such as myself can easily, and for free, release their music into the internet, and that is a beautiful thing! The internet cuts costs for both the creator and listener. However, there is also a negative. The internet and new forms of consumption have led to a saturated market; the demand for music is far outpaced by its creation. While fans may await their favorite pop artist's new album, they have a practically infinite amount of music to listen to in the meantime. The question is, who are they listening to?

The answer is that they explore. This explains the rising popularity of alternative artists like Tame Impala, Still Woozy, Clairo and Rex Orange County. Now, what do these artists have

in common? Well, nothing. That is the point. Their unique compositions and lyrical abilities set them apart from mainstream pop artists. For example, Rex Orange County's extensive use of minor 7 and major 7 chords give him a unique sound compared to a pop singer like Selena Gomez. From my perspective, this tells me that in order to attract listeners, it is essential that I take the time to develop a sound that is personal and, most importantly, different. In the past 5 years, Kevin Parker's (Tame Impala) music has exploded in popularity, and it is apparent as to why: nobody else is doing what he is. Parker has combined sounds from many different eras and genres, and in doing so he has created a sound that carves out a space for him in the music industry. The only way he has been able to do so is with lots of time spent developing his music. I need to, like Tame Impala, forget about what is popular and dedicate time to making music that is entirely *mine*. As mentioned in previous assessments, however, I am lacking in the area of music theory. While it is not the most fun part of music, it allows one to communicate ideas more effectively, and also to create the sounds that you hear in your head. As I start to make music, some of my time will be dedicated to learning theory.

The mention of royalties within the article presented another idea to me: why only make music for myself? Royalties are paid to musicians whose music appears in other settings that they do not have control over, such as movies or television. Instead of making music for myself, though, why not express myself by scoring films and television shows? I have always had a love for the world of film, and music can make or break a movie. The creative challenge of attempting to bring about a specific emotion within the audience is very enticing for me. Also, the ability to work with renowned directors and actors in a creative environment sounds like a dream come true. However, this profession seems to lack the degree of creative expression that is seen within making music for oneself. This is something to consider as I move forward with my mentorship and research assignments.

The idea that freelance musicians are willing to take a pay cut in exchange for their environment and "coworkers" (293) is something that resonates with me. Yes, money buys nice

things and, to an extent, is necessary to live comfortably. However, I do not believe that the love of money should dictate my career or the environment that I put myself in. To put it bluntly, we are all going to die someday, and in the scope of everything, our lives are small, insignificant things. Why waste our limited time here doing something that we aren't passionate about? I greatly appreciate the fact that musicians dedicate their lives to music instead of money. It shows me that I have chosen a field full of people that do what they love, which is the sort of people that I hope to surround myself with in the future.