

Juxtaposing Aboriginal Hip Hop, Local Heavy Metal Scenes, and Questioning Public Recreation/Leisure Services

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Abstract: Listening to music and music-making are so ubiquitous that the spatio-temporal requirements for music-making is often overlooked. However, without the spatio-temporal contexts, especially leisure spaces and times, music cannot exist, because desire and imagination are aesthetically concentrated in leisure forms. Although differently positioned, both Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal cultures must struggle against numerous odds to simply make their music let alone find venues and audiences that can support musicians while resisting dominant societal forces to voice themes of diversity and social justice. If music-making is to be sustained and understood in its complexity, then the power of leisures (desires, pleasures, spatio-temporal contexts, and identities) needs to be included in studies of popular music, and popular music/ music-making must become a greater focus of popular music and leisure scholarship and practice.

Vignette 1¹: *Transparent to the uninformed eye with no signage or marketing in place other than glistening neon signs across the street emblazoned with the words “Divas Exotic Ultra lounge,” the Mead Hall sits pushed to the “perimeter” of the city much like the music that goes on inside its walls. Strolling by this concrete structure on a non-concert night you would never imagine any other uses than the security offices located on the main floor. As the sun begins to set, fans, their heads beginning to move with the music, approach the building dressed in jet black shirts with artistic renditions of skulls, bodily contortions, Viking horns representing bands such as Cannibal Corpse or Violator. The musicians’ fingers prodding at their strings, drums silhouetted in the background of mist and making the beat, and the vocals emanating louder than the other instruments.*

Vignette 2: Dressed in multiple layers of shirts, sweaters, jackets, toques and gloves, five young Aboriginal men assemble at their favourite parking structure furnishing a minimum of protection against the cold and wind. With minimum speakers, mp3 player, and flattened cardboard boxes, they tap into the plugs for warming car engines and begin to practice their flares, hops, head spins, and freezes. Later when they can access a large non-descript room with a minimum of chairs and a television set, they claim some space with a Macbook, amplifier & speakers, compete with the television, and practice with the DJ of the group. Later that night, they will enter a battle as part of a self-organized fundraiser for child soldiers and children affected by war.

Both of these vignettes highlight the significance of space and time for the production of music. Listening to music and music-making are so ubiquitous in many peoples' lives that the spatio-temporal requirements for music-making are often overlooked. Frequently, the final products—whether a concert, songs on the radio, CDs/downloads to a mp3 player, or the lives and histories of the bands or musicians—are the focus of music knowledge and enjoyment, discussion and analysis. However, without the spatio-temporal contexts, *especially* leisure spaces and times, music cannot exist, because desire and imagination are aesthetically concentrated in leisure forms (Fox and Klaiber 2006; Rojek 2005). Leisure spaces and times, even though invisible or taken for granted, are required for music-making and appreciation—times and spaces for people, programs, acoustical practice and performance spaces, and listening. However, when music genres or movements emerge from the margins, ingenuity, perseverance, and passionate people are required not only to make music, produce performances, and sustain audiences (Harris 2007), but also to create, find or construct musical leisure spaces and times. Although differently positioned, both Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal cultures must struggle against numerous odds to simply make their music, let alone find venues and audiences that can support the musicians and technicians while resisting dominant societal forces to voice themes of diversity and social justice (Harris 2007; Price 2006).

Making, listening, and participating in music provides substantial benefits (e.g., improving health and memory, stimulating creativity, avenues for expression) for individuals and groups. Given the benefits from music (Levitin 2003), the lack of space, time, and equipment for music in normative public recreation facilities is surprising. This gap is particularly relevant and constraining for individuals/groups who inhabit the margins, endure societal negative judgment, or lack resources. A review of the literature of leisure/

recreation studies is dominated by public recreation spaces and facilities with a focus on physical activity. Few of these facilities are constructed with adequate dance floors, rooms equipped for digital technology and sound equipment, and programs to support young people in music-making or enjoyment. In this article we discuss the emergence of Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal within leisure spaces and times, the significance of these music communities, and how they highlight the lack of music within public recreation and leisure studies in general and specifically for music-making emerging from alternative, often politically intertwined, music communities. We discuss the dominant and normative focus on physical activity and sports to the detriment of music-making (especially for children and young people) in leisure studies in general and public recreation, explore the significance of leisure studies for music-making, and highlight how Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and heavy metal cultures make visible the need for attention to leisure times and spaces both in the studies of leisures (Fox 2010; Fox and Klaiber 2006) and popular music.

Taking Leisures Seriously

Leisure has typically been defined as an activity performed by an autonomous self during free time. Such a definition privileges people with free time, focuses on individuals and their benefits, and narrows an activity to discrete, often physically-related practices. Structures, hierarchies of volunteers and public funds, and dominant societal values of what is acceptable are typically assumed or left unarticulated in a focus on physical activities such as sports or outdoor recreation (Fox and Klaiber 2006; Rojek 2010).

However, a simple definition of leisure is not a theory, nor does it provide explanatory power to how Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal music practices emerge on the margins through creating their own leisure times and spaces for expressing “forbidden” and resistant topics. Fox (2010) suggested that *leisures*, not leisure, refocus the discussions and scholarship around how leisure pursuits emerge from various cultures and perspectives with contrary and competing values around self, time, space, community, social justice, and freedom of choice among many implicated aspects. She suggested that leisures are:

... fragile, fluid, open dynamics among spatio-temporal contexts, mind-body-spirit relationships, and community/environment/universe interactions where all life can play with imaginaries, ex-

pectations, obligations, the what-is of life, and the range of identities and desires (both positive and negative) and potentially create what has yet or needs to become. This fragile dynamic or rhythm is vulnerable to oppression, hegemonic forces, political and economic ideologies, violence, and appropriation while providing potentials for expression, joy, happiness, relaxation, and being.

Resonating with this description, Rojek suggested that fulfilment and pleasure within leisures cannot be disassociated from location and context. He articulated the functions of leisures that arise “from the condition of individual embodiment and emplacement in relation to location and context” (2005:81). The meanings and functions of leisures cannot be investigated as simply individual choice (social psychological and psychological frameworks) or determination (sociology or cultural studies). Individual choices must be situated because societies *reproduce* through economic, cultural, political, and social regulative mechanisms. He further argued that the four main functions of leisures are representation, identity, control and resistance. *Representations* construct *markers* of action and belonging. *Identity formations* establish boundaries of inclusion and exclusion supporting recognition and belonging. *Controls* regulate conduct and lifestyle options. *Resistances* mobilize “resources against agents of control and their associated power regimes” (2005:83). For Rojek, all of these occur in the dynamic interplay of scarcity and surplus.

For this paper, the focus on leisures reflects how specific identities, meanings, and functions are constructed, political and civic discourses arise within and are critiqued, and alternative ways of being are sustained *through leisures*. Although fragile and open to hegemonic and oppressive forces, leisures, with their potential for a type of “freedom” and “agency” (i.e., to experiment with, challenge, and create alternatives to how the world constructs individuals and society), provide the potential elements essential for the ongoing existence of spatio-temporal rhythms that can provide alternatives, and influence hegemonic and oppressive forces that are vital for democratic discourses.

Taking Leisure Spaces/Times Seriously for Music-Making

Leisures must exist within a temporal-spatial context. Existing public recreation sites are grounded in a concept of civil society where leisures are directed toward contributing to the good of society and well-being of individuals as conceived by “national values and heritage” (Rojek 2005)—in this case, dominant Canadian narratives. Normative Canadian public recreation is tied to

dominant and powerful interests specifically enacted through particular forms of recreation to shape national ethics, heritage and dispositions. Gymnasiums, recreation centres, arenas, outdoor courts/fields, and swimming pools are the iconic examples of public recreation facilities, although, arguably, they could include libraries, music halls, theatres, art studios and practice spaces, and museums. The dominant leisure spaces and facilities are regulated, static, concrete, and uniform and provide *moral regulation* of society (Rojek 2005). A careful reading of affordable recreation programming or dominant recreation discourse for children and young people favours physical activities and sports. The infrastructure of sport associations supported by governmental entities supplies opportunities to learn, practice, and compete at all skill levels. A complementary system around the arts, and in this case music, is absent from structures or allocations of government funds. Although these sport and physical activity organizations may intend for their programs to enhance social harmony, these programs function differently for distinct social, cultural and racial groups within Canada. In some instances, these programs will reproduce forms of oppression and exclusion. For instance, sport was a prime instrument of “civilizing” Aboriginal people by English settlers (Forsyth 2007; Paraschak 1995a and 1995b). Furthermore, even as Aboriginal youth began to excel in athletics, they encountered racial discrimination and exclusion from non-Aboriginal leagues and awards.

Since conflict, dissent and change are marginalized or left out of national concepts of leisures, additional energy and effort to create leisures are required from people and groups outside dominant recreation practices. The emphases on certain leisure forms reflect influences of dominant groups over production and consumption partnerships and particular ethics situating aggression and sexuality (Rojek 2005), whether that is cisgender² activities or success measured by participation numbers. Withstanding the normative consumer culture of dominant leisure and recreation is formidably difficult. In contrast with static and regulated dominant recreation sites, urban Aboriginal hip hop artists turn unused private spaces into public rehearsal spaces or reclaim various public spaces for resistive and expressive performances. Metal heads convert warehouses into venues and performances that bring forth parts of life (e.g., body parts, death, violence, and blood) typically hidden or excluded by dominant societal values and recreational programs.

Public space, whether as the traditionally conceptualized squares, sidewalks, and parks or constructed arenas, museums, and community leagues including and especially recreation spaces, have become more constrained, policed, and regulated according to particular values and ideals of behaviour concomitant with the forces of development, commercialization, and pri-

vatization. The dichotomy of public and private space plus the surveillance and regulation of public space by capitalistic and productive values leaves few spaces for exploring alternative ways of being in public (Amster 2008). However, to seek access to existing public recreation spaces designed around capitalistic and productive physical activities may unintentionally appropriate, undermine, or commodify groups such as Canadian local heavy metal and urban Aboriginal hip hop practices. That is, entering into dominant normative recreation spaces and accessing existing resources reduces the opportunities for expression, political critique, and creating alternative concepts of life. In fact, part of the power of urban Aboriginal hip hop and heavy metal is that they emerge from and represent the margins, and critique taken-for-granted normative values and practices. Resistance through leisure in music, writing, and drama generates cultural and political capital that acts as a bulwark against capitalism, and provides necessary alternatives and pluralistic choices required for a healthy dynamic society and democratic imaginary with openings for social innovation and critiques of seemingly monolithic hegemonic forces (Rojek 2005). Contrary to popular views of democracy focused on the needs of the majority or reaching the most users, democracy is more than a “tyranny of the majority” (Guinier 1995) and moves to include or keep minority groups and perspectives heard, seen, and addressed.

Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal cultures create interactive sites where others are invited to join, to experiment with identities and different ways of being, and to modify the structures and processes of society. Lefebvre’s (2004) rhythm analysis is useful for noting how these leisures are movements, sounds, social rhythms, temporal processes, and shifting spaces rather than the “piece itself.” This shift toward processes not only uncovers functions of leisures but how they are produced by particular power relations and are productive of power relations in social spaces.

Marginal and ephemeral leisures are produced through complex webs of social rhythms, new possibilities and horizons, desires for social justice, tribal forms of expressivity, healing practices, and acknowledgement of the impermanence and uncontrollability of life. These leisures represent opportunities for both harm/violence and creative/expressive. Soja suggested that third-spaces transform “the categorical and closed logic of either/or to the dialectically open logic of both/and also” (1996:60). Marginal and changing leisures and their associated times and spaces, in contrast with the supposedly “good,” normative, dominant and more concrete, static and controlled leisures, are *both* good and bad and *also* more. Developing third-spaces and *oppositional identities* involves creating alternative spaces to routine, standardization, and conformity. In these third-spaces, individuals may explore ambiva-

lent relations with dominant value systems of conformity, rational self control, specific moral values around acceptance, and alternative ways of being, healing, and community. For Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal cultures, resistance emerges from deviant means to achieve generally sanctioned ends such as exploring the complexity of the “good life,” finding purpose and healing in self-created art forms consistent with Aboriginal traditions, and creating leisures supportive of their family structures, lives, struggles, and successes.

Contrary to the values of dominant society, the values of arts in general, and music for this paper, are best articulated by American polyartist John Cage (Kostelanetz 1996). Music, sounds, and arts do not necessarily “fix” or improve society but play with existing processes, sounds, and rhythms so they work in multiple if not an infinite number of ways. Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal open conversations around how leisures, life, identities, and social justice can work in multiple if not infinite number of ways. Both of these music practices emerge from communities seeking ways to express themselves, give words, rhythms, and actions to their views, and contribute to society. Playing with the rhythms of Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal—rather than trying to change or control them—enhances understandings of daily practices of being, pleasure, desire and social justice within leisures honouring differences and similarities.

While many in society seek structures to hedge against indeterminacy and impermanence, urban Aboriginal hip hop artists are often mired in the realities of an indeterminate and impermanent world, and heavy metal artists struggle to bring into consciousness the inevitability of death for us all. Both acknowledge the conditions of fleeting fragmentation, while “cherishing out-of-placeness” (Bauman 1996:29). As each, in their own way, struggles to voice and enact a form of resistance not unwittingly complicit with the fragmentation, they struggle to create practices that are not in search of some final goal that does not exist, and to observe, reflect and voice that which is and actually occurs in the world—and that which may emerge in the world.

The question is not how Canadian heavy metal and urban Aboriginal hip hop are brought “into the existing structures and programs”; rather, the question is how do we in a democratic society use public funds, facilities, programs, and resources to ensure that people have access to leisures beyond dominant recreation practices. The question focuses on a process of access and support that assures diverse identities and processes for refining and developing music-making and honours a fluid and indeterminate world.

Voices from the Margins: Canadian Local Heavy Metal and Urban Aboriginal Hip Hop Cultures

Vignette 3: With two thin room dividers stretched between drywall, a space within a community hall is formed. The sound of kids screaming and balls beaming against the wall resonate from one side, while the synchronized counting of an aerobics class blares from across the way. With several concrete pillars jutting out from the floor and numerous blue foam mats littered in a corner, a group of young Aboriginal men scan the space. Having bartered some of their equipment and saved up what they could, they had the room for the next hour. Immediately they placed cardboard boxes over the worn floor. They begin practicing freezes, handstands, caterpillars, and flares with their speakers muffled by competing sounds and inopportune pillars.

Bachelard (1994) conceived of space as the “abode of human consciousness” (Ockman 1998), where humans experience space not as a subjective response to a set of objective coordinates, but experience embodied space *prior to* creating objectifying accounts of it (Denton 1986). Canadian Aboriginal hip hop artists create revolutionary spaces with cardboard in public spaces, turn unused private spaces into public, and reclaim various public spaces for resistive as well as expressive forms such as rapping to people waiting for the bus. Metal musicians and fans symbolically construct their own leisure boundaries through styles of dress, aggressive physical practices (moshing and headbanging), and retreating to private subcultural spaces that play with darker aspects of existence (Snell and Hodgetts 2007). For these two groups, space is imagined or experienced as a buffer against capitalism, surveillance, and conformity through the use of dress, symbols, and performance styles since the body is often the first site of the contest over public space (Kawash 1998).

Lefebvre (2004), who was influenced by and influenced Bachelard (1994), theorized rhythm analysis as emphasizing relationships often kept separate and implied a relationship of a time with a space. This relationship between time and space is particularly crucial for the cultures of urban Canadian Aboriginal hip hop and heavy metal. Heavy metal is typically excluded from mainstream venues because of the loud music, the often “illegal” practices of mosh pits, and the controversial lyrics and performances that include body parts and dark symbolism. Although hip hop has more potential access to mainstream venues, the need for practice space, technology for production, and access to accomplished b-boys and b-girls is highly constrained for urban Aboriginal hip hop artists who struggle to maintain stable homes, income,

and schooling, let alone enter political conflicts over the lack of and access to art spaces. Ephemeral and shifting times and spaces resonate with life as they live it, highlighting the unpredictability of life, and representing the challenges they face living daily on the margins. Although some consistency or stability is needed for skill progression, production of CDs and videos, and funding, the static regulatory nature of dominant recreation spaces focused on conformity and security undermine and discount the realities of urban Aboriginal life, metal musicians and fans, or violence and death that face us all.

The presence of Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and heavy metal in irreducible third spaces of leisures makes apparent how many of our notions of identity are intertwined with stability of place or more precisely with things being in the right place and focused on the right things. Heavy metal songs about death, body functions and dismemberment or urban Aboriginal rap and spoken word poems about poverty, homelessness, and violence, are not about being in the right places and speaking the right things. Each of these groups is constantly and consciously negotiating meanings, attempting to transform relationships to those around them, and striving for a self-realization that values who they are as they are while rejecting the sham and fraudulent promises of mainstream society. Both groups find it difficult to continue with their lives without expressing the critique and knowledge that many of the supposedly “right” goals of education, society and leisure, bring emptiness, superficiality, environmental destruction, and continuation of discrimination or avoidance of life as it is experienced.

Although provision of time, spaces, and structure is necessary for all types of music, it is their presence on the margins that makes visible the taken-for-granted leisure times, spaces, and activities in other music endeavours, and highlights the disadvantages as well as the advantages of leisures created on the margins. It may seem straightforward to advocate for inclusion or space in traditional recreation—and certainly that needs to be done from a democratic and inclusive perspective. However, such inclusion in normative leisure spaces, where capitalistic forces hold primacy and appropriation, commodification and surveillance are seen as unproblematic, also risks changing the very spirit of urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal communities. Lefebvre (2005) suggested that revolutionary practices required revolutionary spaces; rather than creating spaces in abstract, mainstream public facilities, local heavy metal and urban Aboriginal hip hop need strategies to sustain them within their own spatio-temporal choices. This endeavour requires re-envisioning how spatio-temporal forms of leisures and their associated cultures are enabled and sustained on margins.

Contesting & Creating Leisure Spaces: Urban Aboriginal Hip Hop and Local Heavy Metal Cultures

Vignette 4: Mead Hall became distinguishable when groups of people huddle outside with cigarettes in their hands, donned in black metal shirts, long hair, and leather jackets. In June of 2011 due to financial concerns, lack of proprietorship, and finding financially sustainable locations, Mead Hall was closed. The ephemeral, evanescent nature of Mead Hall appearing and vanishing in various industrial settings on urban perimeters reiterated metal music's understanding of impermanence, loss, and death.

The profession and scholarship of recreation as well as more acceptable mainstream music communities typically distance themselves from politically resistant leisures and music forms, specific racial and cultural groups and their histories, and critiques of mainstream programs. This distance reflects ambitions intertwined with capitalistic, productive, and political forces. The emergence of urban Aboriginal hip hop and heavy metal cultures demonstrates how young people create their own leisures and musical styles relevant to their position in society, the realities of their lives, the political values of their needs, and their dreams for the future. Unlike the programmed recreation offerings with positive benefits for industry and society, hip hop and heavy metal cultures keep alive the realities, stories, and aspirations of young people seeking other alternatives and ways of being.

A primary message of Aboriginal hip hop focuses on the reality of reserves deeply connected to political movements for sovereignty and self-determination by Aboriginal peoples and the establishment of traditional Indigenous ways of knowing. However, the young urban Aboriginal people are struggling to maintain contact with reserves and traditional Aboriginal lands/cultures while living in a modern glocalised world. For urban Aboriginal young people, they express lives born of multiple heritages (e.g., turntablist CreeAzian from Edmonton is both Aboriginal and Asian), grounded in and preferring urban areas, and positioned as neither prioritized by bands/tribal affiliation nor by non-Aboriginally dominated municipal councils, bureaucracies, or structures. Standing in two worlds means that Aboriginal hip hop artists struggle for recognition, spaces and times to practice and perform, and forums with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal audiences.

Local heavy metal's focus on mortality and lack of ultimate control of our lives conflicts with emphases on progress, peace, and industry. Metal's demographic consists mostly of educated working class young people who have been labelled with negative connotations of drug abuse, men in menacing

attire, delinquency, and excessive levels of noise. They seek underground venues to provide safety for ritualized activities that promote social expression, advocacy, resistance, and gender role transgression. Metal communities are typically forced to the peripheries where bands and devoted fans grunt, growl, headbang, and mosh in local community halls, people's basements, small bars, and industrial warehouses.

Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal artists and fans intuitively create times and places for expression, healing, and political action unacknowledged by mainstream leisure and governmental structures (Fox and Lashua [in press]). As much as they seek and need leisure space and times, leisure/popular music scholars and the public recreation sector risks perpetuating discourses of exclusion, privilege, and mainstream leisure/music practices when the creation and emergence of leisure times and spaces for marginal music communities are overlooked.

Conclusion

Vignette 5: Aboriginal young adults and children circle around the perimeter of a linoleum cut out, the edges curling upwards, signifying the transient nature of the space, music-making, and participation. A handful of young Aboriginal b-boys and b-girls with the hems of their pants rolled up are showcasing a wide variety of moves from "baby freezes" to "crossovers." As they finish, Aboriginal children, no older than seven and as young as three, clamour to the floor. Mimicking their parents and other adults, they attempt or perform head spins and one-arm stands. As one boy finishes, he is greeted by an enthusiastic applause as one Aboriginal dad crouches down hand out, with an open smile.

If music-making is vital to the lives and well-being of people as demonstrated by social scientific and neuro-scientific research, the history of popular music, and the intertwining of music with political engagement (e.g., the songs of the Worker's Movements or resistance to the Vietnam War), then public recreation/leisure provision has obligations to support a variety of leisure pursuits and population segments including a diverse set of spatio-temporal requirements—structures, times and equipment. Paradoxically and because of the fragility of the spatio-temporal dynamics of music-making and leisures on the margins or in third spaces, the demand for support may, by necessity, need to enable or sustain leisures in liminal spaces and times. Unlike the more controlled programming approach of recreation services, Canadian local heavy

metal and urban Aboriginal hip hop communities model alternative creative and innovative approaches that nourishes specific spatio-temporal dynamics related to the power and purposes of marginality while investigating all possibilities through music-making. They demonstrate that everywhere there is the possibility of an interaction of time, place, and rhythm (or expenditure of energy). With various rhythms in various times and spaces, the rhythm welcomes, gives birth to, and produces differences. So, urban Aboriginal hip hop artists share their hopes and dreams with their children while creating forces of love, identity, and belonging and provide critiques of existing practices. Heavy metal communities explore the overlapping edges of violence, physicality, and caring. Cage (1996) suggested that encountering and entertaining the extremes changes and transforms how people think, view the world, and act—in this case how both leisure and popular music scholars might conceive of sustaining the spatio-temporal contexts of Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and local heavy metal cultures.

When Canadian urban Aboriginal hip hop and heavy metal perspectives are honoured, leisures are envisioned differently. For example, urban Aboriginal hip hop not only addresses the needs to express a particular story but also provides opportunities for Aboriginal young people to give imagined positions of strength and alternative futures. They envision potential spatio-temporal realities to support hip hop that include healthy food, child care facilities, counselling services, traditional ceremonies, cross-cultural learning, and safe places. These spaces of leisures are not from a lack or a deficit but from their music-making which nourishes their spirit and ability to create their own positive futures. Local heavy metal communities seek spaces that allow them to explore and play with ideas, thoughts and behaviours typically seen as deviant, repulsive, or offensive. Yet, metal venues are also places to actively re-negotiate or subvert normative gender identities or intertwine metal critiques with Buddhist symbolism and perspectives on peace, compassion, and demons.³

Democratic societies by nature require a dynamic relationship between the normative majority/status quo and groups/individuals on the margins. All centres have boundaries that vary in terms of malleability and porosity. The existence of strong marginal groups keeps the boundaries malleable and porous whether because of the commitment of the centre to a democratic imaginary or through resistance and power strategies of minorities. Without margins, social cohesion and the centre become oppressive and static. Margins are sites for diversity and innovation but with substantial costs to groups/individuals. However, the presence of these groups may usurp the mechanisms of marginalization and initiate moral, social and political change (Fox and Lahsua 2010: 244). Voices of the what-ness of life and the trampling of social rights, ethical

decision-making, and peaceful choices are sustained on the margins. Music-making has consistently provided a forum that nourishes artists, shares messages in non-confrontational but significant contexts, and reflects generational or local cultures even as it contends with glocalized forces and forms. Public recreation/leisure deeply connected to democratic processes and imaginaries is philosophically called to nourish a range of leisures including music-making. Dance and music-making is especially important to peoples on the margins or from cultures where intelligence resides in dance, and music-making, psychological and spiritual health is grounded in the arts. If music-making is to be sustained and understood in its complexity then the power of leisures (desires, pleasures, spatio-temporal contexts, and identities) needs to be included in studies of popular music, and popular music/music-making must become a greater focus of popular music and leisure scholarship and practice. 🌱

Notes

1. The vignettes in this article are taken from field notes by the authors.
2. Cisgender identifies “individuals who have a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity” (Schilt and Westbrook 2009), complementing transgender identities.
3. The emergence of Buddhist themes within heavy metal include The FirstBorn and Death Angel bands.

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