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**Music Education and/in Rural Social Space:  
Making Space for Musical Diversity Beyond the City**

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## Music Education and/in Rural Social Space: Making Space for Musical Diversity beyond the City

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*In this paper I argue that there are established vernacular music traditions in rural communities that can be productively integrated into a hybrid music education curriculum. I draw on my own informal education in folk music, which bore an ambivalent relationship to the kind of formal music education on offer in my youth. I argue that music education can and should draw on vernacular, hybrid, and improvisational rural musical traditions and practices. Such integration creates generative space for the entanglement of experience and schooling. Basil Bernstein called horizontal discourses reflecting everyday knowledge forms (little “m” music), and the vertical discourses that have dominated much secondary music education (big M” music). This way of think-ing about curriculum holds potential for building productive bridges and trans-lations that respects living musical knowledge and invites authentic rural community engagement as well as complex understandings of music and rural social space.*

*Keywords: rural education, music education, curriculum, experience, folk music, community*

**W**hat can the field of rural education contribute to the study of music education? It is now well established that the hegemony of formal music training in schools is not the only way to think about what constitutes an effective musical education. Popular music forms and new technologies have transformed what happens in many music classrooms. I offer here a narrative analysis of my own experience of learning music, one that is inflected by a particular rural culture at a particular point in time. I am interested in this piece to explore the relationship between the musical forms I grew up with, both

in terms of the popular music of my youth and with respect to the music I learned to perform outside school. I also use some of Basil Bernstein's (1999, 2000) conceptual tools to think about the nexus of context-dependent horizontal and context-independent vertical knowledge through a narrative analysis of my own non-schooled rural music education.

### **Tapping into the sonic backdrop: Rural education and music education**

If I had to assume a musical identity it would be that of a country musician. This is a musical identity, and a set of musical practices that had (and probably continues to have) little traction in school music programs in Atlantic Canada where I grew up. What I want to illustrate here is the way that the music curriculum I experienced (or rather did not experience) in secondary school and the musical community of practice in which I learned to play, tended to be mutually dismissive of one another. My own work in the field of rural education has focussed on the interface between vernacular forms of knowledge and structured, generic pedagogies.

Rurality is a very slippery concept to begin with, and contemporary theorizations of the rural now go beyond demographic boundary-making that has historically sought to establish clear distinctions between rural and urban space (Cloke 1997; Halfacree 2006; Pahl 1966). While some have argued that rurality is pretty much a defunct construct at this point because there is no accepted way to define it, contemporary theorization recognizes the concept's ongoing importance. Rurality remains significant, in part, because it is a frame of social, cultural, and psychological reference representing the transformations of non-urban space that are as complex as well-known urban transformations. It is now generally well accepted in critical rural sociological analysis, for instance, that rural places are incorporated into wider capitalist economic and productive geographies that are intimately tied in with the urban (Gilbert 1982). From a liberal democratic perspective, demographic definitions of rurality remain important for determining which places need extra support for social, health, and educational services because of their low population density and/or distance from services. It is also the case that when boundaries and categories are constructed, they are done so for a purpose. Boundaries are manifestations of power, and populations and

geographies are actively constructed to define space and to distribute resources. In the process, categories of inside and outside are created with significant consequences.

Beyond raw demographics or strict associations with productive activity (i.e. a fishing village or farming community), it is now recognized that rurality can and should also be understood as sets of sociocultural, historical, and spatial practices (Soja 1996; Lefebvre 1992). This way of thinking about space and/in education is increasingly common (Gulson and Symes 2007; Leander, Phillips and Taylor 2010), and this spatial turn has begun to influence the field of rural education (Reid et al. 2010; Green 2013; Green and Letts 2007; Corbett 2014). These practices are also infused with power in the sense that common activities within different communities are assigned meaning and worth within hierarchical matrices of power (Ching and Creed 1997; Howley, Howley, and Johnson 2014; Donehower, Hogg and Schell 2007). Often power is assumed to be concentrated in the metropolis with the rural “peripheries” lurking at margins as rustic spaces, to use the terminology of Ching and Creed (1997).<sup>1</sup>

The problem of power illustrates a third dimension of rurality, which is the historical. Rural communities, regions, and individuals living within them often hold a very particular position in the national imaginary fuelling regional nostalgia (McKay 1994). Here the rural comes to signify a place “outside time,” which is simple, reparative, and clean. In addition to sitting outside time, this imaginary conjures a rurality that also sits outside the complexity of urban social space. These constructed ruralities are then packaged and used in the branding of rural regions as tourist destinations or clean-green places where air, water, food and lifestyles return the traveller to nature and as some recent Newfoundland tourist advertisements indicate, to “find yourself” (Kelly 2013).

Part of this cultural imaginary is traditional folk music. An important part of my own sense of rural life relates to the musical forms that are associated with small places outside the city. I taught for nearly 20 years in small, rural Canadian communities where the sonic backdrop in houses, stores and coffee shops was (and still is) three-chord country music. One of the most satisfying aspects of my teaching in these rural schools was playing that music and singing with young people.

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This practice I describe can be understood in Basil Bernstein's (1999) terms as the introduction of "horizontal" or place-specific knowledge into curriculum. In Bernstein's terms, horizontal discourses differ across social and geographic space and represent the knowledge forms that are particular to places. This contrasts with what he called 'vertical' discourses, or those forms of knowledge represented by more abstract concepts representing what Michael Young (2007) calls context-independent "powerful" knowledge. With the idea of horizontal and vertical discourses, Bernstein theorized the challenging pedagogical space in between different forms of knowledge and the spaces in which these different knowledge forms are valued. While Bernstein's formulations are, in some ways, overly abstract (ironically mirroring the very problems he was working on), I think they are useful to help us think about pedagogic spaces and the way that knowledge is produced and evaluated in schools.

As I pointed out in a previous piece (Corbett 2008), as a musician I am a total outsider in terms of vertical largely theoretical discourses that are inscribed in written music and the elite canons of classical music that might be described as big "M" music. I've spoken and played with highly accomplished professional musicians who believe that they do not "know" music because they have had no training in these vertical musical knowledge forms. I wrote in that article about how, despite my musical "illiteracy" as I termed it, I was still able to make money as a folk musician. I also had a great deal of fun playing and learning in informal circles in which "reading" music was seen as something real musicians do and sometimes even a kind of scaffolding that "real" musicians (i.e. those who can jam effortlessly) do not require. So here we see a different epistemological frame around what does and doesn't count as making music in particular communities of practice. In the musical community in which I operate, most of us don't consider that we "know" music, only that we play it.

Because I played and sang in the unschooled folk tradition, that is precisely what I did with my students through the 1980s and 90s when I was asked to teach music and lead choirs in the small rural elementary school where I worked.<sup>2</sup> I taught my students as I was taught, by sitting, watching and by mastering the same three chord structure ubiquitous in the sonic backdrop of their lives. You can play anything with three chords I told them: just listen and you will hear it. When I showed my students how to chord and pick, I was teaching them

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to play within the structure of the music they knew and loved and that their parents knew and loved. This was a classic, informal community of practice that we built at lunchtime and recess. When the bell rang, I sometimes joked to my students that it was time to stop learning and go back to class.

### **Foundations: Three chords in 4/4**

Doing music in school was something other people did in the time and place I grew up. They walked to school from their middle class neighbourhoods with their instruments under their arms. They did music theory classes and played in the school orchestra. They were exclusively high-achieving academic students, and in the transparent alphabetic hierarchy that marked the social order of the school, they were the “A” class (this is actually how they were known). None of the students of the “A class,” so far as I know, picked the country guitar, banjo, mandolin, or fiddle. But of course, I could be wrong.

Participation in community orchestras notwithstanding, I also have a hard time imagining that many youth from country places still play the trombone, flute, or the trumpet today for pleasure even if they did get a chance to join the school band in high school. But I could be wrong about that too. There is also the phenomenon of the music student who achieves a very high level but who abandons the instrument because learning it was someone else’s agenda. I lived with a young woman who would occasionally sit at the piano and play beautiful classical pieces but who told me she only does this in private and when she is out of sight and hearing of her mother. Another thing I have experienced is that when I ask people who received their music education in this system with its focus on formal theory and graded levels of proficiency, few of them feel comfortable jamming with a group of folk musicians. In my experience, most of these “trained” musicians, including some of those who have played their instruments at a very advanced level, are actually in awe of people who can sit in with one another and just make music happen by ear without ever having practiced or even met one another previously. To experienced folk musicians, to play together or to jam is the essence of the production of music because it is the mixing of different instruments and instrumental styles and voices that creates a unique (and more or less coherent and satisfying) musical experience.

I grew up around folk music. I think most everyone did in the time and place of my upbringing, which was a small town in Atlantic Canada in the late 1960s and the 1970s. Ubiquitous transistor radios provided my generation with an education in electronics, mechanical tinkering, globalization, Americanisation, and in the three chord structures of country, rock, blues, and various hybrid genres of pop. By the late 1960s, the local radio station CKDH had transformed from a country station to one focussed primarily on rock and roll.

But it was in the dark, when the house was still and everyone was asleep, that the music really started up for me. When the night time airwaves filled up with a dazzling array of U.S. stations whose transmitters elbowed out our Canadian frequencies, I went to bed with my earpiece. There I listened to the rock stations from upstate New York, skipping over the powerful country signal from Wheeling, West Virginia seeking out a more modern, urban vibe. This was the auditory surround of a 1960s childhood and 1970s adolescence.

The sonic backdrop I describe here pounded the backbeat into my arms and feet and shellacked my soul with the pentatonic scale that Paul Robeson considered foundational to all folk music.

Continued study and research into the origins of the folk music of various people in many parts of the world revealed that there is a world body—a universal body—of folk music based on the pentatonic (five tone) scale... And always with my “pentatonic ears’ my interest in the five tone scale grew (Robeson 1988, 115).

For me, musical performance history began when my cousin Carl and I raided his mother’s pots and pans and spirited them away to a little nook beneath the stairs in the old school house where my Uncle Sammy was janitor. Through the summer we found solitude and sang our hearts out undisturbed and unheard. On our improvised drum kits we hammered out 4/4 time and stumbled over the illusive back-beat as we accompanied the scratchy rock and roll music that screeched forth from our transistor radio. And it sounded good, at least to us. We found a way of participating in a musical conversation both with each other and with the performers, but also with the deep structure of folk music that Robeson describes above.

At the time we would never have thought to associate our trendy, modern music with the rustic fiddle of Uncle Ernie who lived with Carl’s family. Ernie was an old time musician and his fiddle music also provided an auditory surround

that was heard but not acknowledged in the same way that *The Beatles*, *The Guess Who*, and bubble-gum bands like *The Archies* were. But Ernie was there as a real embodied person whose arm seemed one with his graceful lively bow. His rapt concentration and slightly quivering eyebrows marked the clear single notes of his country swing. Unlike *the Beatles* and *the Guess Who*, Ernie was a physical presence, an actual person who made live music.

I later came to learn that Uncle Ernie was the leader of an old time group that played barn dances, church halls, picnics, and the kind of rural events that required music. He was something of a local star in the 1940s and 50s and his popular dance band, *Ernie Lirette and the County Playboys*. Their motto, “Swing and Sweat with Ernie Lirette” riffed playfully off the popular slogan of 1940s and 50s American band leader Sammy Kay (Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye).

By the time I picked up a guitar in the mid 1970s, country rock was back, disco soured me on pop music, and I gravitated musically back toward the old-time and country traditions of my uncle. I even got to play with Uncle Ernie a few times before he died. Ernie didn’t trust me to get the changes properly, but his button accordion player Fred Robichaud, World War I veteran, reassured Ernie that “he’s got the ear,” an endorsement that allowed me to sit in. That’s how I learned to learn music. In this case, the circle included a 90+ year-old accordion player who survived Ypres and Paschendaele, another uncle who chorded the guitar mechanically and an Acadian country fiddler. I’m now learning to play the fiddle and I’ll probably do it mainly by channelling Uncle Ernie rather than by taking lessons. I’ve gravitated to playing along with Hank Williams because the tunes are simple and the pace is slow.

### **Vernacular music: The invitation**

An important part of a folk musician’s education, at least from my perspective, is finding the courage to enter into a musical circle. After a great deal of listening and personal study, which is described very well by Paul Berliner in his *Thinking in Jazz* (1994), the novice player either waits to be invited or barges in to take a chance and impose him or herself into a musical conversation.

The invitation extended to me by Fred Robichaud is the entry point into the musical community of which he was a part. For some time I hung around the



edges of music circles waiting. I was allowed in to some and not others. I wanted to join some and not others. I still watch performances and sometimes find my fingers chording along with what I hear. The circle is the typical geometric form in which folk music is made in my experience. With my new second-hand Yamaha, I edged my way in where and when I could. I was always up for tunes. I could see the grimaces of the other players when I lingered too long in a chord, changed too soon, or struggled to stop the E and B strings in the first fret to make the F-chord. My musical community at the time was very tolerant. I was expected to improve, and I did improve through this apprenticeship in the musical circles that allowed me in. Within a year or so I was leading songs on my own.

The Catholic boys choir also served me well. We learned next to nothing about reading music, but a great deal about timing, harmony, tone and pitch. The body of the Director swayed like Uncle Ernie's bow materializing what the music was supposed to do; and that is what we made it do. As boys we listened with the big ears of youth and nailed our parts, then sat there bored as the men in the community struggled to grasp their bass and baritone parts. Here I encountered music that was written, for the most part, in the eight tones of the major scale. Can't they hear it, we boys laughed; it's so simple.

My invitations came not because of my guitar playing which was (and continues to be) of middling quality. But I could sing and relatively few men are willing to do that. The choir and the sessions beneath the old school steps with Carl were excellent training for stepping up and breathing life into popular songs that were easy to learn because of their ubiquitous repetition in the soundscape. The invitation to play and join in brought with it an immersion in other people's music, their particular rhythms, the songs they play and the structures and patterns of folk music. In time I could listen and in seconds know where I was in the genre, in the common structures of the chords, and in the stylistic inflections of the players in the circle, which allowed me to sit in with a number of different groups.

### **Epistemology: Knowing music and playing music**

What does it mean to know a song? Recently in a jam session, a young musical friend asked me whether or not I knew a particular song. I replied that I did not. She then picked it out of one of her music books and started to play. I joined in

with her, sang a verse looking over her shoulder at the lyrics, and then played a short lead break on the guitar. When we finished, she said, I thought you said you didn't know this song. I said, I don't know it, as you can see I needed the sheet to play it. Ah, so you read music, she said. Well actually I don't. "Then how did you know how to play the song?" she asked. Well, I have heard it before and I listened to the way that you were performing it. The chord chart gave me the structure so that I could easily predict where the changes were.

This all raises the question of what it means to know a song. For me, in the folk tradition, this means being able to perform the song from memory. This is the oral tradition and as I have written previously, this is a way of knowing predicated on the spoken word rather than written text (Corbett, 2008). To be able to "fake" a song with the assistance of a book is not to know it, but rather to be able to play it more or less. There are then songs I can accompany because they are part of a genre I know well enough to predict the chord changes and rhythm. There are other songs I can reproduce with instrument and voice with the aid of text. These are typically songs that I have heard a number of times and which fit within a genre I know. Still others I need text and chords to "fake." These tend to be songs that fall outside a familiar genre, which are structurally more complicated, and/or which I have not heard often.

My musical ability is founded on active listening and independent learning as well as on an apprenticeship situation or community of practice that begins with what Wenger (1999) calls "limited peripheral participation." This process is not unlike the process of learning to be a jazz musician described by Paul Berliner as one that involves "paying dues" where the learner takes responsibility to do the hard work of both coming to know the structure of the music, and also how to establish and cultivate a unique improvisational voice.

Although the jazz community's largely supportive atmosphere is a prominent theme in personal narratives by improvisers, this is not the complete story. Students face enormous challenges in mastering both their respective instruments and the complex musical language for which, until recently, there have been few written aides. Moreover, the driving passion of the experts, even those who assume the role of teacher is, of course, their own music. None assume exclusive control over the training to their students, nor do they typically provide a program of instruction comprehensive enough to form the complete basis of the education of students. ... Veterans describe the trials and tribulations that ac-

company the learner's efforts to absorb and sort out the musical knowledge as examples of "paying dues." (1994, 51)

It is this independent transformation that is based on extensive and intensive listening to the pieces of a genre, so that their cadences and rhythms become as familiar as breathing, that allows one to know a song in my sense of what that means. To know a song is to be able not only to reproduce it from a textual or auditory template, but also to be able to develop and make it one's own. To know a song in this understanding means then to be able to improvise and transform it in a way that is original yet coherent. While there are debates amongst folk musicians about how "far one ought to go" in the process of transforming a piece of music, the fact that each performance is more or less unique is what gives folk music its dynamic quality. Indeed, in folk music there is often no original song, only endless reproductions and the impact of a folk song can be measured by the range and number of different interpretations it stimulates.

My young friend, on the other hand, has committed relatively few songs to memory and considers knowing a song to be the ability to reproduce it with the aid of textual support. The musical world in which she came to know music was the world of formal music lessons on piano, school-based instruction in music appreciation and theory, and instrumental training through participation in her school orchestra. Unlike many people who have undergone this sort of music education, my friend branched out into folk music, transferring her music education from piano and flute to guitar. Her principal instrument, though, remains the piano and she is able to sit down with a sheet and reproduce songs she has never heard. This amazes me.

I would argue that this ability to know things in the way that my young friend knows music is one which is consonant with schooled music and the kinds of learning and teaching practices that are privileged there. My way of knowing and learning, on the other hand, tends not to sit so well in school, at least not in the parts of the school world that are most privileged as I described in the previous section relating to the way that music education was layered on to the academic hierarchy of the school I attended. I will further argue, building on some of my own recent work in rural education (Corbett 2013; Corbett, Vibert, and Green 2016), that this epistemological divide is at the heart of some of the key challenges we face today with respect to improving educational achievement in many

rural locations. Of course, today the world of music education has changed and vernacular forms of music are part of many music education programs.

### **Move over big “M” the little ole “m’s” a moving-in: Theorizing rural music education with Bourdieu and Bernstein**

Some of the early work of Pierre Bourdieu deals with rural France and particularly the region in which he was raised (Bourdieu 2008). Of course, he went on to develop more broadly based structural theories that he applied to French society in the 1960s and 70s and which have been taken up by a wide range of sociologists in different national and transnational contexts to understand educational processes. In the film that was made about his work, Pierre Bourdieu (2010) reflects on his upbringing in rural France. When he speaks of returning to the place of his birth, he mentions his almost unconscious revulsion when he hears the accent and phrasing of local people. Bourdieu does not appear to demean what he is hearing so much as reflecting on the way that his academic education took him out of his community of origin and created an embodied physical reaction when he hears language that must have been entirely normal to him as a young person.

This moment in the film is poignant because it is Bourdieu confronting his own theory in his personal life, something, according to one biographer (Reed-Danahay 2005), he seldom did. Bourdieu’s formal academic education caused him not only to think in certain ways, but it also caused him to develop a physical reaction that he then articulates as the ambivalent revulsion his education created for him, perhaps because he saw himself and felt his own struggles to “leave” his home place in those speakers (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Corbett 2001; Ching and Creed 1996; Theobald 1997).

Bourdieu’s reaction to his own present cultural location in relation to the one into which he was born illustrates a tension I am articulating above between a located, vernacular cultural form and one that is context-independent and one that represents an academic habitus. I willingly embrace the vernacular and popular musical forms that were pretty much all that was available to me, which perhaps indicates an imperfect academic socialization. But I think not. I think the space between context-dependent localized knowledges and context-independent

knowledge is now the subject of considerable educational interest and research. Today, the space between home and school or the culture of the child and the culture of the school is routinely problematized in a range of ways, both in academic fields like the sociology of education and rural education, but also in practice-based fields of curriculum and pedagogy including music education. Indeed, new hybrid transdisciplinary fields such as inclusive education, gender studies, equity studies, critical race theory, queer studies, and a wide range of other emerging spaces of inquiry seek ways to explore and work in the complex geographies of identity, place, and pedagogy.

Every pedagogic situation contains a complex relationship between who a student is and where s/he comes from on the one hand, and what the school is and the way it formulates and assesses knowledge on the other. One way to think about this problem in the field of music education is to use the work of Basil Bernstein (1999) to explore

the tensions between student voice, participation, and enhancement, and the responsibility teachers feel to develop context-independent knowledge and understandings for their students as well as to acknowledge students' informal knowledge and interest (McPhail 2015, 2).

McPhail's work problematizes the choices made by contemporary music teachers who are faced with challenges perhaps unimaginable for my teachers a generation ago. They understood their work to be the business of transmitting context-independent knowledge and cultural practices that had little grounding in the working class communities in which I grew because such immersion in vertical knowledge would be good for us. Indeed, for some of us it was a good thing while for others it was a disaster that led them to believe that they were the problem and not the narrow way that knowledge was framed in school. She goes on to suggest that music education is a particularly interesting case in which to think about the singularity of context-free big "M" music and the multiplicity of different localized and popular small "m" musical forms.

Specifically, McPhail uses Bernstein's (2000) spatial notion of regionalization, which he used to illustrate the tension between multiple (horizontal in his lovely spatial metaphor) local knowledges, and what he called (vertical) knowledge "singularities." McPhail argues that Bernstein's concepts are useful tools to, "make visible the degree to which links between knowledge discourse

can be created for students” (2015, 8). It is not in the either-or binary constructions of the vertical discourses of big “M” music vs. the horizontal discourses of small “m” music that debates about music curriculum ought to focus. It is rather, by creating space where both of these musical forms are treated together and allowed to speak to one another that what McPhail calls, “the realization of a cohesive curriculum and apposite pedagogies” (2015, 8) is possible. To use Bernstein’s spatial metaphor of the region, the verticality or singularity of the traditional music curriculum is expanded and extended to include, in McPhail’s terms, “other regions of knowledge [which] become sources for curricular content” (2015, 9).

I would argue that what rural education may have to contribute to music education is the kind of regional focus on the horizontal discourses that operate within particular geographic regions. Indeed, the concept of region is now a standard proxy for rural in the sense that rurality as a singularity itself has long been considered impossible to define (Cloke 1997; Pahl 1966). The field of rural education is on a journey that is perhaps similar to that of music education in the sense that both have come to problematize their established traditional practices and ways of thinking about what constitutes not only the nature of their inquiry but also the very idea of what counts as rurality or music in the first place.

In the field of rural education, this has signalled the emergence of a more focussed concentration on the nature of social space, drawing on the work of contemporary geographers and rural studies scholars who problematize the way that rurality has been understood as a singularity rather than as a complex set of sociocultural, demographic, and political arrangements (Lobao 1996; Cloke 1997; Cloke et al. 2006; Pini and Leach 2011; Woods 2011). It has meant a focus on a relational conception of space that combines the social and the historical with the geographic (Soja 1996). This is combined with an understanding of space, dynamic and in motion as well as actively produced rather than inert (Giddens 1979; Lefebvre 1992).

It is my sense that the field of music education is on a similar journey away from essentialist notions about what constitutes music and how it should be presented and taught in school. I would argue that attention to place and space is crucial to the transformation. I think the regionalization hypothesis presented by McPhail may be useful for thinking about ways to bridge the emplaced rural

musical world (which is, of course, informed by certain types of popular culture) I have inhabited with school music programs. What is important about the idea of rurality, it seems to me, is the way that geographies of disadvantage, marginalization, and an assumed rusticity need to be both recognized and addressed in music education in spaces outside the city. This, of course, is happening in many places and in many ways as place-sensitive and rurally attuned music teachers integrate the world of my Uncle Ernie and popular music into their curriculum. But this is not a universal practice and I suspect that in many rural communities in Canada the school music program continues to be largely a middle class endeavour for “town kids.”

An important practical concern, then, is to find ways to bridge place-based rural knowledge forms and the vertical discourses of theoretical music and also those musical forms that may be alien to children living in the country. The question then is how to help rural children understand a number of things simultaneously. First of all, a good music curriculum will help rural youth understand that their Uncle Ernie is a legitimate musical producer. Secondly, they need to be shown, in a concrete way, that the music they hear in their sonic backdrop, and that the music they make (if only in their imaginations), counts as well. And finally, at the same time, this experiential knowledge should be carefully bridged into powerful forms of vertical musical discourses and linked into others such as literature, history, geography, sciences, and mathematics.

### **About the Author**

Michael Corbett is Professor of Rural and Regional Education at the University of Tasmania. His research interrogates contemporary and historical conceptions of the rural, and particularly the ways in which these conceptions have inflected discourses around education, schooling and literacies. Corbett is also a folk musician influenced by the Acadian and Celtic musical traditions he grew up around in Nova Scotia. His latest album, *Places in Time* is available on SoundCloud (<https://soundcloud.com/mike-corbett-11/sets/places-in-time>).

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes though the rural can actually be considered to be a seat of power given that established political arrangements that favour rural electorates can be seen to disadvantage cities.

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<sup>2</sup> I am well aware of the limitations of this way of thinking about music and learning in general as well as the problems associated with the binary separation of formal and informal study of music.