

Delete the PDF and Start Again? Exploring the Potential for Innovative Dissemination Methods of Music Education Scholarship

Rhiannon Simpson

University of Melbourne (Australia)

ABSTRACT: Research from Sheehy (2016) found that in-service educators are increasingly disengaging from the scholarly field. This paper highlights and critiques paradigmatic approaches used to disseminate scholarly research in music education which ostensibly lead to teacher disengagement, including the use of academic language, issues of accessibility, and the “printable” formats of scholarly texts. It utilizes Reynolds’ (2009) discussion of factors which led to the development of the musical genre “post-punk” as a framework to critique, compare, and discuss how discourses of social media may inform the development of innovative scholarly research dissemination methods. In doing so a new “genre” of scholarly publication which is informed by normative academic practices *and* those associated with social media is both proposed and exemplified. It is argued that these proposed innovative dissemination methods have the potential to reengage in-service educators within the scholarly field; and foster academic publications which are considered more engaging, accessible, and relevant.

KEYWORDS: Research dissemination; social media; publication; teacher engagement; in-service teachers; music education

AUTHOR NOTE: This paper utilizes images, animations, GIFs, videos, and sound to support the text. As a result, it is best viewed via this dedicated Google Site page accessible at this link: <https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/the-paper/non-printable-document>. An audio recorded version of this paper can be found at this link: <https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/the-paper/audio-recording>

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In her 2016 dissertation, Meghan Kilpatrick Sheehy found that K–12 music educators increasingly feel disconnected from the scholarly field. Teachers stated that they find the scholarly language used in academic texts inaccessible; the formats via which they are disseminated unengaging; and the content largely irrelevant to their everyday practice (see also Laprise 2017; Madison 2012). In contrast, research from Hartung et al. (2023), Liljekvist et al. (2021), and Zavitz et al. (in press) found that teachers are increasingly seeking new pedagogical ideas, resources, and peer communities on social media sites. Notably, these scholars argue that the use of accessible lay language, formats that compel engagement, and the practical foci of the content on social media sites is attractive to in-service teachers.

This paper questions and critiques the perpetuation of the research dissemination discourses and formats which ostensibly lead music teachers to disengage with the scholarly field. It then explores whether the discourses and practices associated with social media could—or should—inform the development of dissemination methods which may be deemed more accessible, engaging, and/or relevant to in-service educators. Drawing from Reynolds (2009), I explore which discourses associated with social media could inform future scholarly research dissemination practices using a “post-punk” framework. By embracing media-rich content and interactive elements (see [associated website](#)), this paper also serves as a representation of how a text embracing both paradigmatic academic journal publishing practices, and practices associated with social media, could look.

Ripping It Up and Starting Again? Post-Punk as a Methodological Framework

The title and framework of this paper is inspired by Reynolds’ (2009) book *Rip It Up and Start Again: Postpunk 1978–1984*. In this text, Reynolds (2009) argues that the genre of post-punk was developed when musicians, critical of musical and lyrical tropes associated with “punk” and “progressive rock,” respectively, began to consider how a hybridized form of these genres would sound. To do so, musicians had to critically consider which aspects of both genres to perpetuate within this new genre, and which to leave behind. Notably, post-punk musicians tended not to utilize elements of each genre deemed to be inaccessible (such as progressive

rock's use of compositional tropes that rely on virtuosic musicians for performance), unengaging (such as punk's use of simplistic chord progressions and repetition) and irrelevant (such as progressive rock's tendency to include lyrics which were not directly connected to the lived realities of audiences). However, those deemed accessible (such as the focus on non-virtuosic playing associated with punk musics), engaging (such as the multiple musical sections and use of technology associated with progressive rock) and relevant (such as lyrics critiquing socio-political norms/events associated with punk) were carried forward into this new musical genre.



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/figures/figure-1>

Figure 1. The identification, assessment, and critique of normative practices in the genres of “progressive rock” and “punk,” respectively, which led to the development of the genre “post-punk.”

This paper proposes that a similar process of assessment and critique could be applied to an analysis of normative scholarly research dissemination practices; as well as those associated with social media. This in turn may foster the development of a new “genre” of dissemination which might be more accessible, engaging, and relevant to K–12 music educators.

An Analysis and Critique of Normative Practices Associated with the Dissemination of Research in the Field of Music Education

This section identifies, assesses, and critiques normative research dissemination methods. The goal of this process is to identify aspects of these practices which could inform the creation of new methods of research dissemination that promote

accessibility, engagement, and relevance. It begins by highlighting the purpose of the dissemination of scholarly research, before critiquing the kind of language used throughout paradigmatic scholarly publications. The section goes on to analyze the characteristics of websites from which digital scholarly publications are downloaded, the “printable” formats that are utilized, and the often non-practical foci of such articles.

What is the Purpose of Scholarly Publications, and is this Purpose Being Achieved?

Schmidt (2005) asserts that at its core, the purpose of critical research in the field of music education is to aid in “the envisioning of a new reality” (7) that can be achieved by educators. Baker (2018) argues that academic research has the potential to “catalyze exploration and experimentation, rather than the reproduction of existing ideas and methods [which may be problematic and/or ineffective]” (186). This line of thinking is also reflected in the Action Ideals of the MayDay Group (2021) that aim to “provoke inquiry and change” (para. 1); and “challenge taken-for-granted practices in order to open up possibilities” (para. 3). The notion that the dissemination of research can make implicitly perpetuated music education practices visible—and thus able to be changed—is important when justifying why scholarly research is valuable to in-service educators; and has implications for the cessation of problematic music education practices (including those that may reinforce racist, colonial, and/or sexist discourses).

If disturbing the status quo and influencing the thinking, ideals, and practices of in-service educators is a primary purpose of critical scholarly research in music education, Sheehy’s (2016) findings that music educators are increasingly disengaging from scholarship is of concern.¹ Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) and Madison (2012) argue this phenomenon has the potential to render critical, thoughtful, meaningful, and relevant propositions made by academic authors unnoticed by in-service educators. If a goal of critical scholarly journals (like *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*) is to directly influence teaching practice and/or provide support for educators, finding ways to encourage educators to engage with scholarly publications more readily would be beneficial.

The Role of Neoliberal Discourses in Obscuring the Purpose of Scholarly Publications

When considering that scholarly research dissemination practices have largely remained unaltered despite teachers disengaging from research, one must ask if the purpose of scholarly publications has become obscured. Reay (2020) argues that neoliberal higher education policies have placed increased value on the quantity of academic publications, rather than the quality or influence of this scholarship. She suggests that this leads scholarly publications in the field of education to be perceived as tools “in games of pointless distinctions and academic vanities” (823), rather than tools that can potentially change practice. Similarly, Muller and Young (2019) highlight that the extent to which a publication is said to be “useful to a community of peers” (203) is often measured in the form of quantifiable citation metrics, rather than by impacts to teaching and learning. Thus, critiques that normative scholarly dissemination practices are inaccessible or unengaging may not be considered important to scholars—whose reasons for increasing research output are associated with employment, promotion, and tenure.

Woodford (2019) actively problematizes the ways in which the neoliberal discourses of quantifiability, marketability, and employability influence scholarly practice; and argues that such paradigms can be changed. In alignment with discussions from Yang (2014) and Bourdieu (2000), Woodford (2019) states that the conscious consideration of alternatives to paradigmatic practices allows agents to reevaluate the purpose of their actions. The following section aims to render norms associated with scholarly research dissemination (including associations with neoliberalism) conscious, and thus able to be critiqued.

Language in Scholarly Publications

Scholarly texts are often characterized by their use of academic vocabulary and language conventions, which teachers in Sheehy’s (2016) research considered inaccessible. In critiquing this phenomenon, Madison (2012) argues that the normative discourses of academic publication “promotes theoretical jargon that renders the ... analysis itself ineffectual at best and silly at worst” (35). Similarly, Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) argues that the scholarly language used in academic texts is often “exclusive and esoteric” (9), discouraging in-service teachers from engaging with the ideas and proposed practices explored in such texts.

Reading dense academic language can be time-consuming for educators who have not previously been exposed to such language conventions, or find reading difficult (due to reading skill, vision impairments, neurodiversities, etc.). Research by Gunn et al. (2023) has found that teachers are increasingly afforded less time for planning, researching, and engaging with professional development. Teachers may therefore choose to spend their limited time engaging with more accessible materials, rather than undertaking the time-consuming process of deciphering complex academic language. Hartung et al. (2023) notes that the use of accessible language within social media content, and their shorter forms, may encourage educators to engage with education-related content on social media more readily.

Hosting Platforms

Teachers in Sheehy's (2016) research also indicated that the number and type of publications to which they had access often differed from the scholarly sources in which academic researchers publish. Teachers identified that the financial toll of subscribing to non-open access journals was a barrier to access, as was the time it took to search for relevant literature, log in to systems required to access these documents, download files, and open them in an appropriate PDF viewer. Different publishers usually require different logins and subscriptions to access materials, augmenting the issues of financial obligation and time commitment. This stands in contrast to social media sites, for which one login often garners you free access to all content posted by various users.

It is also notable that scholarly publications tend to be housed on platforms that do not allow for two-way communication channels. Thus, these sites tend not to facilitate spaces in which readers can comment on, or react to, published materials. Bernstein (2000) and Schmidt (2020) have articulated that this one-way hierarchical communication between scholars and audiences may contribute to an educator's decision to disengage with scholarly discourse; feeling that their voices are not valued within scholarly fields. Though it is possible to respond to academic texts by writing response articles or book reviews, this process is time consuming and requires an understanding of academic publishing conventions (Laprise 2017). This phenomenon may contribute to research remaining uncriticized by in-service educators, limiting the extent to which research foci are shaped by their values, thoughts, and experiences (Lawrence-Lightfoot 2005). This differs significantly

from social media sites, which actively encourage readers to publicly engage in dialogue with content creators and other members of their audience (Waldron et al. 2020).

Who Creates the Content?

Though teachers in Sheehy's (2016) research largely indicated that they felt disconnected from the scholarly field, many regularly accessed practitioner journals. Teachers indicated that the practical nature of such journals provided them with overt applications and explicit strategies that could be trialed in their practice. Narita & Feichas (2021) argue that the perception that academics are out-of-touch with contemporary challenges, policy environs, and student needs may stem from a tendency of scholarly writers to engage with abstract critiques and theories, but not propose relevant alternate practices.

Laprise (2017) argues that teachers often lack the time, confidence, and knowledge of scholarly processes required to publish within academic journals and books, meaning most authors publishing academic texts are not current K–12 educators. Sheehy (2016) advanced that this phenomenon at times led in-service educators to consider the content of academic texts irrelevant to contemporary teaching contexts and policy environs.

However, Hartung et al. (2023) found that in-service educators do feel comfortable posting content on social media; and that teachers are drawn to content which is created by other K–12 teachers due to its practical nature and perceived relevance to in-service practice. At the time of publication, the hashtag #teachers-followteachers has over 6.3 million Instagram posts, and videos with that hashtag have accumulated over 182 million views on TikTok (Instagram 2023, TikTok 2023). You can view some of the TikTok content including this hashtag in Figure 2.



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/figures/figure-2>

Figure 2. TikTok content inclusive of the hashtag #teachersfollowteachers.

As teachers continue to feel disconnected from the scholarly field, the extent to which they utilize social media content created by other teachers to inform their practice is likely to increase (Sheehy 2016; Zavitz et al., in press). Though this is not an inherently problematic notion, Yang (2014) and Wright (2019) note that scholars who are not currently in-service teachers may be more likely to actively question normative practices within the educational field, and prompt critical reflection.

Format and Media Use

Historically, scholarly publications were distributed in physical forms, and thus the format needed to be “printable.” Though some journals still distribute physical copies, many journals (including *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*) are distributed solely online. Regardless, the discourses and practices associated with preparing documents for print still inform the formats of digital documents, and thus these documents tend to look incredibly similar to physical copies of texts. They dominantly consist of black text upon a white background, using the format of a page to locate writing. Images and diagrams are at times used to support thinking, however these images are often displayed without color (which may be rooted in previous print publishing practices in which authors were charged extra fees for the color printing of images). In any case, it is notable that even within documents distributed digitally, the content is usually “printable”; that is, able to be printed without the content of the article being compromised in any way.

Thus, the potential for scholars to embed rich “non-printable” media (such as video, audio, and animation) into digitally distributed documents is rarely realized. Though some journals encourage the creation of video abstracts (including *Sociology of Health and Illness* and *Journal of Visualized Experiments*), the embedding of non-printable media within digitally distributed scholarship is uncommon. Research from van Alten et al. (2020) noted that animation and video-based visual supports help to strengthen a reader’s understanding of complex concepts and increase engagement. However, such tools remain under-utilized within scholarly publications. Notably, “printable” documents, which do not allow readers to play or interact with sound clips, are still dominant within music education scholarship. Rather than embedding sound clips directly into scholarly texts, sonic materials are often represented by “printable” visual forms, including notation styles which Tagg (2016) argues are unable to accurately represent sonic complexities.

Additionally, most texts which are published within online journals represent “stagnant” digital documents; that is, documents that are not altered or alterable after publication. The dominance of stagnant documents in academic research does not allow for minor edits (such as the addressing of grammatical errors, spelling errors, or pronoun changes) or major edits (in response to reader critiques or because errors have been found) to be made by the author after publication. Though the costs of re-printing and redistributing printed articles has previously justified this paradigm, the ease with which digital documents can be altered renders this justification moot (with previous versions also easily archivable and made available for reference).

There are many possible explanations as to why most digital academic publications are in the form of “printable” documents, despite being distributed online. Urkevich (2020) argues that the field of music education tends to “receive technology with strategies of assimilation, where technology is perceived as simply a device to extend the status quo” (2). Urkevich (2020) gives the example of an educator using a tablet to display 300-year-old sheet music. The potential of the tablet to change the ways in which music education is approached, facilitated, and taught is not embraced. Rather, it is used to more efficiently perpetuate existing discourses of music education (in this case a focus on developing Western notation reading skills). In the same way, the ubiquity of digital documents and their potential to alter the field’s reliance on “printable” documents has not been embraced by the music education scholarly community. Rather, documents that look extremely

similar to those created soon after the invention of the printing press have been “assimilated” into the digital sphere; perpetuating the status quo. This process is represented visually in the video found in Figure 3.



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/figures/figure-3>

Figure 3. Video representing the ways in which the field of music education may “[receive] technology with strategies of assimilation” (Urkevich 2020, 2).²

Attempts to reduce workloads and costs associated with publication may also contribute to the perpetuation of printable, stagnant documents as normative. In the case of journals which distribute both physically and digitally, the use of the same document for both dissemination methods is convenient, cost saving, and time saving. Relatedly, the introduction of non-stagnant documents into the dissemination practices of journals may require editors, reviewers, and authors to develop technological skills they may not already possess; including the embedding of media into documents, basic coding, and/or video editing skills. As many scholarly journal editorial positions are unpaid positions, increasing workloads without financial reimbursement may have problematic ethical implications (see Tennant 2020).³ Powerful figures within the academic dissemination process (including authors, editors, editorial boards, and peer reviewers) may perpetuate normative practices without a conscious recognition of potential alternatives. Bourdieu (1988) argued that the academic field may be particularly susceptible to the perpetuation of normative practices without conscious critique, stating that “the intellectual world, which believes itself so profoundly liberated from conformity and convention, has always seemed to be inhabited by profound conformities” (Bourdieu quoted in Reed Danahay 2005, 1). However, Bourdieu (2000) highlights that reflexivity and active professional development exploring alternative practices can

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help to render the unconscious conscious, and thus allow for the reevaluation of normative practices. One way to render such unconscious dispositions conscious is the active assessment and critique of practices outside of the dominant field (Yang 2014). The following section serves to undertake analysis of the discourses of social media; and explore which aspects of these discourses could inform the creation of a new “genre” of scholarly publication.

An Analysis and Critique of Normative Practices Associated with Social Media, and their Applicability to the Scholarly Field

The decision to analyze practices associated with social media within this paper stems from research by Hartung et al. (2023), Liljekvist et al. (2021), and Zavitz et al. (in press), which has found that teachers are increasingly turning to social media platforms to seek knowledge, teaching ideas, and peer communities. This section explores some of the normative practices associated with social media which may draw teachers to these platforms.

What is the Purpose of Social Media, and is this Purpose Being Achieved?

Table 1 highlights the public-facing mission statements of five of the most popular social media websites in 2023. When analyzing these mission statements, it is implied that the purpose of social media platforms is to build community, inspire creativity, and remove barriers for participation in public discourse.

Platform	Public-facing mission statement	Dominant format
Facebook	“To give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together” (Meta, 2023, para. 1).	Short and long form posts
Instagram	“To capture and share the world’s moments” (Instagram, 2023, para 3).	Images and short form content
TikTok	“Our mission is to inspire creativity and bring joy” (TikTok, 2023, para. 1).	Short form video
Twitter ⁴	“To give everyone the power to create and	Short form posts

	share ideas and information instantly without barriers” (Twitter, 2023, para. 1).	
YouTube	“We believe that everyone deserves to have a voice, and that the world is a better place when we listen, share and build community through our stories” (YouTube, 2023, para. 2).	Short and long form video

Table 1. The public-facing mission statements of social media platforms.

When noting the vast and growing numbers of people using social media in their daily lives (Ortiz-Ospina 2019), the increased sharing of creative user-generated content within contemporary platforms, and the curation of online professional communities (Hartung et al. 2023), it could be argued that the social media platforms listed above are achieving their publicly stated missions. In the context of education, the exponential growth of teacher-specific communities on social media is notable. At the time of publication, the hashtag #teachersofinstagram on Instagram has over eleven million posts and #TeacherTok is positioned as one of the fastest growing professional communities on TikTok (Hartung et al. 2023). These communities promote the creation and sharing of teacher-generated content, encourage dialectic conversations amongst members, and create spaces for critique and questions.

However, to take the mission statements and purpose of social media platforms at face value may be naive. Each of these platforms represent companies valued in the billions of dollars, and discourses of profit-making undeniably inform the design, user interface, and normative practices associated with these sites. boyd (2015) argues that “social media is now intertwined with neoliberal capitalism and data surveillance” (2); and that assumptions otherwise foster naivety to the ways in which platforms shape and analyze behavior. The Cambridge Analytica scandal—in which detail of the ways meta-data is collected and sold by Facebook to conglomerates aiming to influence spending or political outcomes—brought this to the public consciousness; reinforcing the adage that if you are not paying for a service, you are the product (Schneble et al. 2018). Schneble et al. (2018) have found that this process (sometimes referred to as “data mining”) remains common across social media platforms, despite public critique.

This paper conceptualizes the facets of community building, increased creativity, and more diverse engagement associated with the public-facing mission statements of social media companies as potential gains in the development of more innovative research dissemination methods. Though these facets have themselves been used as means for profit-making within the context of social media, an active critique of these phenomena may allow the conscious rejection of such outcomes (as is visually represented in Figure 4). However, ongoing conscious reflection upon the ways in which innovative practices may implicitly reinforce neoliberal ideals of entrepreneurship, marketisation, and profit-making will be necessary if such practices are indeed embraced.



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/figures/figure-4>

Figure 4. Image carousel⁵ acknowledging the potential neoliberal/capitalist outcomes of social media sites, and the proposed rejection of such discourses within innovative dissemination methods.

Language in Social Media

As social media posts tend to be considered more successful if engaged with by a large number of people, the use of accessible language on these sites is common (Kim 2017). Though subcultural online communities may utilize group-specific languages, the aim to ensure that the intended audience is able to understand content encourages accessibility. Notably, the vast majority of content is created or engaged with by non-academic communities, discouraging the use of formal academic language within these spaces.

Hosting Platforms

Though each social media platform includes its own unique discourses, ideals, and encouraged behaviors, Waldron et al. (2020) identify factors common across them. These factors include the sharing of user-generated content (UGC) that expresses the thoughts, values, and practices of individuals; and the encouragement of audience members to respond to this content in unique ways. This process is often facilitated by the presence of “react” buttons (including hearts, likes, and pre-set emojis⁶) and comment sections (in which audiences can share their own thoughts, opinions, and critiques). This process not only facilitates dialogue between the content creator and their audience; but also promotes interaction between members of sub-cultural communities. Ren et al. (2012) note that the ability of audiences to share ideas, bond over common responses, and directly inform the types of content that will be created develops an engaged online community, inclusive of members who feel a sense of ownership over these virtual spaces. The strength and actions of these communities can have positive outcomes (i.e., the funding of a maternal healthcare center in Sierra Leone; see vlogbrothers 2023) as well as negative ones (i.e., the spread of misinformation in the lead-up to the 2016 and 2021 USA elections; see Brady et al. 2017).



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/figures/figure-5>

Figure 5. Visual representation of the dialectic and non-dialectic communication channels associated with normative scholarly research dissemination methods, and social media platforms respectively.

Who Creates the Content, and What Content is Shared?

A key tenet of social media is that anyone with an account is able to express their values, experiences, thoughts, and opinions. However, the ease with which the

voices, ideas, and practices of all users can be shared on social media may serve as a limitation within professional sub-fields. Brady et al. (2017) criticize the ability for social media users to make claims which inform public discourse without the need to undergo a peer review process. Thus, the ease with which information is distributed on social media may influence educators to adopt practices informed by content that has not been critiqued. As Escandón et al. (2021) have observed, the “straw man fallacy, ad hominem fallacy, appeal to emotion, appeal to ignorance, and appeal to authority fallacies have all run rampant across social media” (711), with the presence of such fallacies having potentially problematic implications for the practices of educators.

YouTube (2023) states that “we believe everyone should have a chance to be discovered ... and that people—not gatekeepers—decide what’s popular” (YouTube 2023, para. 5). Though the implied absence of gatekeepers associated with social media in this mission statement is misleading, it is noted that in this context the term “gatekeeper” has a negative connotation. However, the scholarly fields’ reliance on gatekeepers to publication (such as journal editors and peer reviewers) may be conceptualized as a strength in the field of academic research. Unlike social media platforms, upon which anyone can post content, the peer review process ensures that academic publications are as critical, thoughtful, and rigorous as possible before they can inform teacher practice.

The focus on developing content that is “popular” (see quote above) also reflects normative practices associated with social media. Posts which are “liked” and “shared” are most likely to gain increased reach within the field; at times encouraging conformist behaviors. Importantly, Kim (2017) highlights the function of algorithms within social media platforms. Algorithms render content more or less likely to be viewed depending on engagement such as likes, shares, and emojis. Thus, posts which are critical, confronting, and/or promote non-conformist practices may not be easily seen or engaged with by teachers on social media sites.

Format and Media Use

Hartung et al. (2023) and Waldron et al. (2020) highlight that social media platforms utilize creative forms of media to engage users. The use of images, video, animation, and sound within social media posts is typical. Bhargava and Velasquez (2021) argue that this use of media-rich content has helped social media to mo-

nopolize the so-called “attention economy,” noting such formats increase the likelihood of users actively engaging with content. Though aforementioned connections between the level of attention given to specific content (i.e., algorithms) and the value of the data collected about this attention (i.e., data mining) may be problematic, the outcomes of increased engagement and level of understanding may be pertinent in the scholarly field.

Which Practices, Norms, and Ideals should the Scholarly Field Embrace when Developing Innovative Research Dissemination Methods?

Using Reynolds’ (2009) discussion of post-punk musicians as inspiration, the following section uses the previous analysis of normative practices within the fields of scholarly research dissemination and social media, respectively, to determine which elements from each could/should inform future practice (Figure 6). These include the use of accessible language (drawn from social media), the use of the peer review process (drawn from scholarly research dissemination practices), and the embracing of non-printable media-rich content (drawn from social media). This discussion aims to highlight scholarly research dissemination practices which in-service educators may deem more accessible, relevant and engaging.



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/figures/figure-6>

Figure 6. A comparison of practices which could inform the creation of innovative dissemination practices in music education scholarship.

Using Accessible Language

Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) argues that “if we want to broaden the audience for our work, then we must begin to speak in a language that is understandable, not exclusive and esoteric” (9). Unlike scholarly academic language, which Madison (2012) argues gets “lost to the acrobatics of abstraction and theoretical word play” (35), social media is characterized by the use of lay language. This is not to argue that academic writing should become simplistic or uncritical. Rather, I argue that the ability to explain complex ideas using direct, relevant, and accessible language is an advanced skill that all academics should aim to acquire. Doing so fosters a more inclusive environment, which may see the audiences for scholarly publications become broader.

The use of lay language does not imply that the level of detail or complexity in these papers should be compromised. Unlike social media posts—which often limit the amount of text that can be displayed within a post—academic documents require extended time and space to develop ideas. Though the ability to be concise is an asset, the use of structural frameworks, an exploration of opposing views, and the extended discussion of concepts helps to make academic writing thoughtful and rigorous. This focus on clarity and depth affords authors the space to explore, question, critique, and problematize normative practices in a manner which may not be possible within the constraints of social media posts.

Maintaining the Peer Review Process

The embracing of lay language within scholarly publications may encourage those who previously felt excluded from the scholarly field to consider actively contributing to it. Laprise (2017) notes that creating processes and systems that aid in-service educators in contributing to the scholarly field may help to “bridge the gap” (28) between academics and K–12 educators, reengaging the latter. In saying this, replicating social media’s tendency to allow anyone to post content without critical review has the potential to undermine the rigor of the academic process. The peer review process ensures that published papers have considered multiple perspectives, acknowledged relevant critiques, and are as academically rigorous as possible before they are able to influence practice (Brady et al. 2017). This in turn assures readers that these sources are reliable and that any personal/financial interests have been acknowledged. Muller and Young (2019) note that “the power of

the internet and social media have considerably amplified the possibilities and reach of non-rational persuasion” (202), in part due to a lack of fact-checking and critical review of posted content. The peer review process helps to ensure that the kinds of fallacies Escandón, et al. (2021) argue “run rampant across social media” (2) do not begin to inform published academic research in a similar manner.

Use of Non-Printable Media and New Platforms

One of the most significant practices that I propose researchers in music education consider is the adoption of non-printable forms of media. This paper’s use of animation, video, and image carousels highlights the ways in which visual forms of non-printable media may be embedded into future scholarly documents. The use of such media forms may help to foster increased engagement and comprehension for non-academic audiences (Alten et al. 2020; Sheehy 2016). Additionally, this paper highlights the ways in which audio files can be embedded into papers exploring music and musicianship; and may be used as tools to foster accessibility. An audio file in which I read this entire paper aloud has been embedded into the beginning of this document (and can be found in Figure 7) with the aim of supporting those with low vision, backlight sensitivity, and/or those who prefer to engage with audio representations of texts. This practice also has the added benefit of allowing me to embed tone and inflection within the paper to further communicate meaning and intention.⁷



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletethepdf/the-paper/audio-recording>

Figure 7. Link to an audio recorded version of this paper.

Though a “printable” version of a document may require the use of word processors and/or PDF document readers, there is no reason that alternate file types

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which generally are not associated with print publications could not be embraced when distributing digital publications. This link (<https://sites.google.com/view/deletehepdf/home>) demonstrates the way this paper would look if utilizing a Google Site webpage as the host for this paper. This allows for video, audio, and animation to be embedded into the document at relevant times, without the need to open new web-tabs/windows, or manually play embedded files within the article.⁸ Web-based versions of digital articles ensure that all devices with internet access are able to access the same file, content, and information. This remains the case regardless of device type; with automatic device adaptation ensuring that all text, images, and figures can be read on computer, mobile, or tablet devices. The hosting of these documents in an online space also ensures that they are readable regardless of operating system (Microsoft, Apple, Linux, Chromebook, iOS, Android, etc.), and do not require potentially financially costly additional downloaded software to access (such as Microsoft Word or PDF viewers).

The use of non-word processing-based document types also allows external apps, websites, and code to be incorporated into digital documents. This can facilitate the inclusion of live reactions, reader polls, and comments. Hartung et al. (2023) and Nolan and Temple Lang (2007) note that such tools may increase user engagement and conceptual understanding. Importantly, such tools also allow the voices, opinions, and critiques of readers to be actively engaged with by other readers; and by academic authors. This form of dialectic communication could help to “close the gap” identified by Laprise (2017, 31) between the author(s) of scholarly texts and those whose practices/thinking the text aims to inform. Interestingly, the “live” nature of digital hosting tools could allow the author to make changes to their text in response to this feedback and critique after it has been published.⁹ This may provide readers with a sense of ownership over texts, and help authors to determine the extent to which their work is considered relevant or applicable to in-service teachers in varying contexts.

Conclusion

Using Reynolds’ (2009) exploration of the factors that led to the development of post-punk as inspiration, this paper has analyzed practices associated with two “genres” of knowledge dissemination: scholarly research publications; and social

media. In exploring the purpose of these knowledge dissemination tools, normative practices within them, and relevant critiques of them, an examination of whether their discourses could (or should) inform the development of innovative scholarly research dissemination practices was undertaken.

In alignment with the MayDay Group's (2021) "technology and digital media action ideal," this paper serves both as a space to critically discuss the ways in which the discourses of social media may inform scholarly publication practices; and as an example of how these academic publications could look. I hope that in exploring the potential of such documents, readers are open to embracing the ways in which technological tools may "alter[s] the ways in which we interact, communicate, and make meaning of our world" (MayDay Group 2021, para. 18). With the aim of embracing social media's dialectic communication avenues, I hope that the conclusion of this paper does not serve as a conclusion of this discussion. Figure 8 serves as a comment board within which you are encouraged to engage with ideas posed in this paper.



<https://sites.google.com/view/deletehepdf/discussion-board>

Figure 8. Link to interactive discussion board exploring the content of this paper

About the Author

Rhiannon Simpson is a lecturer in Music Education at The University of Melbourne. She has published book chapters and journal articles in the fields of policy, sociology, and music education. Her dissertation research explored teacher initiated pedagogical changes through the lenses of Bourdieu's (2000) concept of "hysteresis" and Schmidt's (2020) concept of "policy knowhow." She has twice been featured as the keynote speaker at the Statewide Instrumental Music Teachers Conference (Victoria, Australia) and is the co-founder of INERTIAeducation. Rhiannon was the recipient of the "John and Eric Smythe Prestigious Travelling Scholarship" (2019; The University of Melbourne), the "Ontario Graduate Scholarship" (Ontario Provincial Government; 2020, 2021) and the "Davis Sells Prize" (ANZARME; 2023). When she's not teaching or writing, Rhiannon works as a sought after blues guitarist across Australia, Europe, and the USA.

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Notes

¹ A phenomenon also noted by Walker et al. (2019) and van Schiak et al. (2018) in non-music specific educational fields.

² This video includes an image of YouTuber John Green (vlogbrothers; CrashCourse), who has given permission for his videos to be used for educational purposes.

³ Some institutions allocate time in an academic employee's workload to activities such as journal reviewing and editorial positions (often labelled as "service").

⁴ Twitter is now known as "X."

⁵ An image carousel is a tool utilized in web-design which allows multiple images to be viewed in succession via "backward" and "forward" arrows, or swiping gesture.

⁶ Emoji reactions are visual representations of human facial expressions used to signify a user's feelings in response to posted content. They include, for example, "angry," "sad," "laughing," or "shocked" faces.

⁷ There will be some readers who will prefer to print a physical copy of a text before reading. Ensuring that all pertinent information is included within the textual body of these papers will ensure that no meaning is lost for these figures. The use of QR codes linking to files embedded into digital documents may allow those who prefer to read from a printed page to engage with additional file types via a mobile device.

⁸ Similar possibilities are available within Canva Docs, a newly developed document editor designed to create, edit, and host digital documents.

⁹ It is notable that the presence of a live document does have interesting implications for the role of journal/text editors. Questions surrounding whether an editor/peer reviewer would need to approve all updates to a live file, and whether changes should be highlighted for readers would need to be considered.