

## Critical Popular Music Listening as a Pathway to Holistic Music Teaching & Learning

Judy Lewis

University of Southern California

### **Abstract**

*Listening* is possibly the least explored and least utilized learning activity at all levels of our instruction. And yet, it is the way of engaging with music most available and utilized by our diverse student populations in their out-of-school time. On closer look it becomes evident that “listening to music” means something completely different to our students than to us as trained music educators. For our students, music listening is a complex multimodal activity that weaves together demands for aural, visual, and textual attention and a critical synthesis of those distinct modes. This exciting and challenging way of *musicking* can enrich the music classroom experience for both students and teachers and open up new ways of conceptualizing music teaching and learning.

This workshop will investigate the multimodality of popular music listening as experienced by our students and explore how such a framework for listening may enrich music teaching and learning. Participants will experience a variety of multimodal interactions with popular songs and investigate the multiple music learning entry points (e.g. analysis & interpretation, composition, performance, and multicultural literacies) that popular music listening inspires. As part of the workshop, participants will design their own *multimodal learning plan* based on a popular song of their choice.

### **Framework**

**The Theory of Multimodality** - “the semiotic field of musical engagement” (Kress, 2009; Jewitt, 2009)

Multimodal music listening = *textual; aural; spatial; visual; and gestural* engagement

#### **We must ask:**

What Impact does this have on how we conceptualize:

music listening?

music creating?

music performing?

How might this impact our design of music teaching & learning?

## References

- Bray, D. (2009). *Creating a musical school*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, P. (2005) Deep Listening to the Musical World: When Students Become Fully Aware of the Sounds Around Them, They Can Build Musical Understanding and Performance Skills through Listening. *Music Educators Journal*, 92(1), 30-36.
- Cavner, D. and Gould, E. (2003). Whole Language and Music-Listening Instruction: Part 2 of 2. *Music Educators Journal*, 89 (5), 19-25.
- Elliot, D.J. (1995). *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education*. Oxford University Press.
- Gault, B. (2016). *Listen Up!: Fostering Musicianship Through Active Listening*. Oxford University Press.
- Jenkins, H. (2006a). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: NYU press.
- Kaschub, M. and Smith, J. (2014). *Promising practices in 21st century music teacher education*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Kress, G. (2003). *Literacy in the new media age*. East Sussex, UK: Psychology Press.
- Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. Routledge.
- Morrell, E., Duenas, R., Garcia, V., & Lopez, J. (2013). *Critical media pedagogy: Teaching for achievement in city schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Pogonowski, L. (1989). Critical thinking and music listening. *Music Educators Journal*, 76(1), 35-38.
- Webb, M. (2007), Music analysis down the (You) Tube? Exploring the potential of cross-media listening for the music classroom. *British Journal of Music Education* 24(2) 147-164.