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The musical work of serious leisure: Piping with the 78th Fraser Highlanders

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ABSTRACT

Using the concept of serious leisure as a lens, this study investigated musical engagement in a competitive Grade One Canadian Scottish pipe band, the 78th Fraser Highlanders, based in Burlington, Ontario. The 78th Fraser Highlanders are respected in the global piping community for their innovative arrangements and unique repertoire selection. Data was collected over a three-year period in this hybrid ethnographic case study situated in both online and offline contexts. Findings indicate correspondences with other research in the field of serious leisure studies. Themes that emerged from interviews and observation were: 1) centrality of music making, 2) social connectedness, 3) competition/fun, 4) identity and heritage, 5) group dynamics and unique band identity, 6) teaching and learning, and 7) uses of online platforms and social media.

Keywords: *serious leisure, lifelong music learning, vernacular musics, bagpipes, communities of practice, music teaching and learning, identity, heritage, competition, on and offline learning*

Introduction

Bagpipes[1] or pipes are easily the most recognizable symbol of Scotland and the Scottish diaspora. Long associated with the military, civilian pipe and drum bands first became

established in Scotland in the 1870s, and their popularity soon spread to other countries through Scottish immigrants. The first Canadian civilian pipe and drum band—the Sons of Scotland—was founded in Ottawa in 1896, followed by the establishment of similar groups throughout the country where large numbers of Scottish emigrants settled (Walker 2015). Pipe bands' popularity in Canada continues to this day. There are an estimated 240 Scottish pipe bands (SPB) located from Nova Scotia to Vancouver, more than any other country outside of Scotland. Of these, over half are in southern Ontario—there are more civilian SPBs in southern Ontario *per capita* than any other region in Canada.

This investigation is the second in a series of qualitative case studies of music teaching and learning in Canadian Scottish pipe bands (SPBs) in online and offline contexts. The first case study was conducted with a rural Ontario small town Grade Two community pipe band (Waldron and Veblen 2020). This second study examined a highly competitive Grade One Canadian SPB, the 78th Fraser Highlanders, based in Burlington, Ontario.[2] The Frasers are respected in the SPB global community for their innovative, technical piping arrangements and unique repertoire selection. They are one of two Canadian pipe bands to have won the World Pipe Band Championship, the most prestigious event in competitive piping, held yearly in Glasgow, Scotland.[3]

Extreme precision is required for a competitive band in tuning, complex ornamentation, often intricate rhythmic passages as well as extensive repertoire. Pipe band members displayed enthusiasm, intensity and—in the case of the 78th Frasers—dedication to competition and high levels of performance. We were struck by the centrality of music making in band members' lives and thus adopted the theoretical lens of serious leisure to investigate this case study.

Literature Review

The theoretical framework for this study comes from leisure sociology, a subfield of sociology. Perceptions of work and leisure shifted during the 20th century when dramatic changes in working hours resulted in unaccustomed free time. Suddenly, leisure assumed

more importance and became seen as more than surplus time for nonproductive commitments.[4]

Scraton and Watson (2016) note that leisure is increasingly studied within social contexts:

> Leisure research has developed from large-scale national surveys of participation to more micro, individualized accounts of leisure experience. Current research explores the increasingly complex and permeable boundaries between work and leisure . . . with current research emphasizing the body, empowerment and the construction of identity through leisure. (1)

Serious leisure as conceived by Stebbins (2007/2015) is a systematic pursuit in which participants find their place on a spectrum ranging from neophyte, participant, moderate devotee, core devotee, to devotee worker. Participants find leisure activities to be "highly substantial, interesting, and fulfilling" (Stebbins 1992, 3). Over the past five decades, Stebbins has developed a typology he terms the Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP). Three kinds of participants are noted under Serious Leisure: Amateur, Volunteer, and Hobbyist as shown in the SLP typology Figure 1:

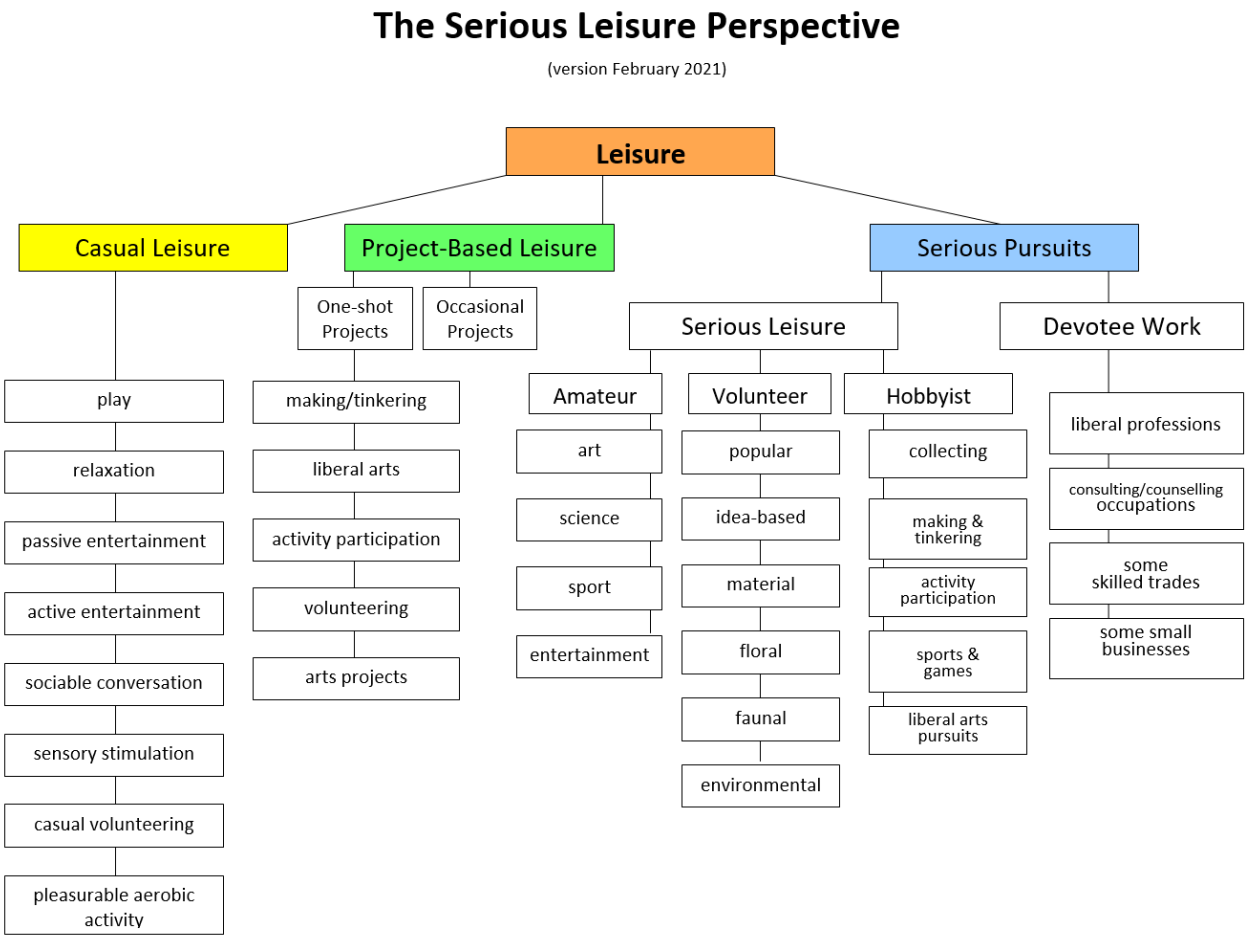

Figure 1. Serious Leisure Perspective. The Serious Leisure Perspective Website. www.seriousleisure.net. Diagram courtesy of Jenna Hartel and inspired by Robbin Stebins.

Notions of serious leisure have engaged researchers of music learning, beginning with Kaplan whose pioneering work on leisure in the 1960s was informed by his own musical life (McCarthy 2017). In 1991, Gates adapted Kaplan's and Stebbin's work to music education (1991); as did Mantie (2022), deepening the connections.

Serious leisure has found resonance with many researchers. Gates (1991) emphasizes that the person undertaking the activity gives it meaning: ". . . [I]n research or in the profession, activities should not be classified generically as survival, work, serious leisure, or play. Bowling is work to some, serious leisure to others, and play to still others." (14).

While the theoretical framework adopted for this research is that of serious leisure, there is much about the lives of any musician that resembles work. There is a common truism that music is played, not worked, and that musical skill and expertise arise as a matter of talent/genius, not due to diligent industry. Miller (2008) considers the common trope about music, leisure, and work:

> The idea that music should appear effortless—that its execution should not require work—has shaped critical and consumer interpretation in a wide variety of historical settings. The trope of effortless music suggests that music is an outgrowth of one's individual genius, heritage, or social identity rather than a product of one's labour. Close attention to the work involved in learning and performing music can expand our understanding of the multiple ways in which music creates value . . . (1)

In their meta-analysis of leisure and well-being, Kuykendall, Tay, and Ng (2015) note that perceptions of intrinsic motivation and freedom are defining characteristics of serious leisure. Dynamics of interactions and social context have also been found to be central to serious leisure pursuits (Kleiber 2020, Lee 2020). Araujo and Rocha (2019) investigated two Brazilian dance groups to find that well-being, hedonism, social connectedness, identity construction, and learning were important factors in their leisure activities. Other research on context in serious leisure has been conducted among dancers ranging from Carolina shag, hip hop by Indigenous dancers in Canada, English morris, Australian line dancing, to American square dancing (Joseph and Southcott 2019, Schneider and McCoy 2018, Henderson and Spracklen 2014, Brown 2007).

Stebbins (1980) considered music an artform that can inspire amateur musicians towards professional standards:

> The durable benefits of this leisure [music] . . . spring from the refusal to remain a player, dabbler, or novice in it. Rather, the activity is transformed into an avocation in which the participant is motivated by seriousness and commitment, as these are expressed both in regimentation (such as practice and rehearsals) and in systematization (such as schedules and organization). (414)

Stebbins (2017) documented the social world of barbershop musicians to find that singers are initially attracted to this hobby for personal expression and development. As they pursue the hobby, they may enjoy organizing and administrative roles:

> As they pursue these goals, they find themselves drawn into a profound serious leisure career embedded in an engaging social world of song and friendship. Here as elsewhere in serious leisure, career advancement along the lines of accumulated skill, knowledge, and experience is a powerful motivator. This sort of personal development and expression motivates people because it is so extraordinarily rewarding. (60)

Cox, Griffin & Hartel (2017) note the embodied nature of music as an artform and information system dependent upon the musician's body. They write:

> Music education also depends on the exchange of various kinds of embodied information. In addition to formal lessons and training, musicians also rely on informal learning, which "involve[es] the noticing and reading of others' bodies in order to work out how to do something: listening, looking and experimenting" (Pettinger 2015, 288) . . . Often, valuable knowledge is passed from teacher to student during lessons and master classes without the use of any formal information sources. (397)

Musical engagement and serious leisure have been documented in older amateur groups such as singers (Joseph and van Nierkerk 2019, Litawa 2018, Stebbins 2017), band members (Goodrich 2019, Dabback, Coffman, and Rohwer 2018, Humphries 2018, Mantie 2012) and collegiate bands (Weren, Kornienko, Hill, and Yee 2017, Mantie 2013). Tong (2019) documents the vibrant social communities of older karaoke singers in Tokyo and Osaka where singers could learn music and forge connections with others: "For regular karaoke participants . . . singing karaoke was an important activity through which they could re-kindle romantic feelings" (129).

Methodology

This research is a hybrid ethnographic qualitative case study, situated in both online and offline contexts. Hybrid ethnography blends ethnographic approaches developed for offline investigations with online ethnographic methods of observation and interviewing via video conferencing software (Przybylski 2021).

Questions for the study were: How do participants teach, learn, and perform in competitive Canadian contexts? What role does competition hold in music learning and teaching and how is it related to identity and meaning in this SPB? Is this music making serious leisure? If so, how? What is the role of competition in serious leisure? What motivates members to compete? What lifestyle choices do members make to become and remain members of this group? How is that related to meaning, identity, and group culture?

Data were descriptively coded, as descriptive coding is an appropriate coding method for ethnographers dealing with interview transcripts, field notes, journals, written Internet texts, UGC (user-generated content), e-mail, artifacts, and video (Saldana 2009). Data was examined through a holistically interpretive lens, while reflecting on images and written texts. Analysis was interpretive and iterative to identify emerging themes. Participants' perspectives were compared with those of the researchers for triangulation of data. Transcripts were cross-checked with one another and with researcher fieldnotes and emails; video recordings from offline and online field sites and member checking ensured research validity. If more information was sought, we conducted brief follow-up interviews. Interview transcripts were carefully read for emerging themes which then were extracted and sorted to use in this article.

We observed the 78th Fraser Highlanders practicing and performing on four different occasions in both offline and online contexts. The first of these took place at the North American Pipe and Drum championships in August 2019 at the Glengarry Highland Games in Maxville, Ontario where the Frasers competed in the Grade One category against two other pipe bands.[5]

The 78th Fraser Highlanders competing at the North American Pipe and Drum Championships, August 2019 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MuEZHPkOlQ&t=137s, retrieved July 5, 2022)

The second observation was a two-day rehearsal in Burlington, Ontario and performance in Hamilton, Ontario. With no time to interview participants during the packed weekend rehearsal, the researchers arranged to interview participants via Zoom in February 2020. Ten members of the 78ths volunteered to participate—nine men and one woman, ages 20-65. Following Salmon's (2014) online interviewing protocols, interviews were approximately one hour to 90 minutes; after data were transcribed and analyzed, participants were interviewed again in July 2020. Secondary interviews were 30-45 minutes in length. One participant was interviewed a third time in March 2021. All interviewed participants were of legal age and requested that we use their real names, not pseudonyms.

Figure 2. 78th Fraser Highlanders. Full band rehearsal on chanters, Burlington, Ontario, November 2019.

Although the research team had originally planned to observe the practices and competitions following the two-day rehearsal we had observed in February, 2020, our research plans were changed due to COVID-19. The Frasers, using a variety of software applications, pivoted their rehearsals online. Online rehearsals took place every other Sunday from 10:00–11:30 a.m., through Pipe Major Doug MacRae's Zoom room. We observed and recorded two online rehearsals in March 2021 and June 2021.

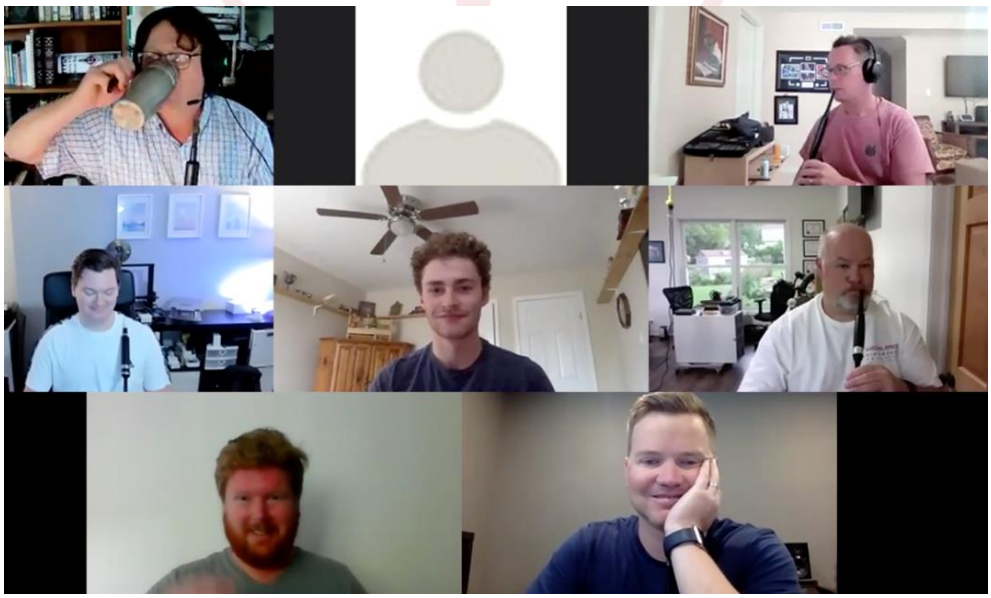

Figure 3. 78th Fraser Highlanders. Zoom rehearsal, June 2021.

Findings

Themes that emerged from interviews and observations were: 1) centrality of music making, 2) social connectedness, 3) competition/fun, 4) identity and heritage, 5) group dynamics and unique band identity, 6) teaching and learning, and 7) uses of online platforms and social media. While the first six themes find correspondence with other research as seen in the literature review; other studies have found an additional category of wellness (both mental and physical health), which doesn't feature in this study (Araujo and Rocha 2019, Tong 2019, Humphries 2018, Kuusi and Haukola 2017). Our research identified online platforms and social media which other studies have not.

Centrality of music making to members

Members of the 78th Fraser Highlanders are, for the most part, younger people with demanding careers and family obligations. These musicians organize their days and weeks around music making: rehearsals, competitions, performances, personal daily practice, and often, teaching commitments. Band practices are held every weekend in Burlington, Ontario with members commuting from Winnipeg, Michigan, New York, and Ontario. Competitions and events such as a Robbie Burns night punctuate the year while summers are taken up with weekend Highland games.

The Frasers begin the yearly round of competitions at highland games throughout Ontario and neighboring states beginning in April with intense weekends that forge a strong team. Every August the band competes at the World Pipe Band Championships held in Glasgow, Scotland, an event open only to top ranked groups. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated online practices and a temporary halt to the usual events, but these are now resuming as possible.

Figure 4. Members of the 78th Fraser Highlanders celebrating in the beer tent after competing at the North American Pipe and Drum Band Championships, August 2019.

Music making is central to these busy lives. Conor Cooper describes his week teaching and practicing in addition to his demanding job: "I work Monday through Friday . . . teach and play Monday and Wednesday nights, but then during my lunch hour . . . I'll just take twenty minutes for lunch and then spend forty minutes playing pipes."

In addition to time commitments, there are costs involved. The band, unlike some others, must find its own funding. Pipe Major Doug MacRae comments that the band is totally self-funded and run by the band. He notes: "Band dues covers reeds, drumheads, disposable equipment. It covers our membership to the societies that we play in, entries into contests—essentially, it's program operations of the band. One of the main things that it does as well though is provides a cash flow for the band. "

Members typically join the group having a history with other bands. Ryan Hicks, who joined the Frasers in 2012, commutes from Detroit for practice weekly. He recounts bands he's played in: "Anover Pipes & Drums (in Michigan) . . . Windsor Police . . . Detroit

Caledonian, which was just a small local band. And then City of Chicago . . . I would take the bus from Detroit to Chicago almost every week.

Social connectedness

Study participants unanimously agreed that the relationships and interactions were something they valued as members of the 78th Fraser Highlanders. Chris Johnson comments: "The community in the band is really good." Conor Cooper describes the band as being like "a second family . . . Obviously, it is a musical community, it is a social community, but it's also a networking." Caleb Thibodeau describes his summer commitments: "I'm going on vacation with 15 or 30 of my best friends and we go every year. It's great." He describes time playing with the Frasers as valuable for meeting others.

Competition/fun

The Frasers are a work hard, play hard band with a highly competitive edge. "It's social, musical, and competition," notes Bruce MacLean. "Those are the three things that drive the whole . . . and without any one of those three it doesn't work." However, MacLean notes that personal ego can be very detrimental in a pipe band. Fun was a frequent theme. "The Frasers are a bit unique . . . extremely identifiable, just because of the pedigree expectations, but also the social nature" says Caleb Thibodeau. He continues: "I'll be honest . . . a lot of us in the band never skip a party for practice . . . we love it."

While some pipe bands emphasize social and group activities, the Frasers are set up as a competitive band. Ryan Hicks says of competition: "How do I feel about the competitions? I think it's great . . . we go for the top prize." Doug MacRae comments: "Our enjoyment comes from winning . . . But . . . I think camaraderie certainly trumps the rivalry outside the bands . . . Competition I would absolutely suggest comes from within the individuals. They're there to be competitive and then they enjoy it too, right?" Chris Johnson stresses that the competition is a valued component for this group:

> If you don't play [your bagpipe] from Sunday to Sunday . . . you're a problem . . . If that's what you're looking for, go join a social club—which a lot of pipe bands are, it's just a social club where they play some music too. For myself, it's to win a world championship. It's to compete at a world level. And to find enough like-minded individuals that are willing to try to attain that goal as well.

Jamie Sawyer describes the approach taken to make this band successful: "It's pretty complex . . . Doug's big on repetitions. So that way if your mind wanders, you go into [muscle memory] . . . What's really valued in our organization is foot soldiers." Sawyer continues: "Our thing is like we're going for a world title. It's that vision and drive that helps us. Our band's claim to fame is we are the first non-Scottish band to ever win the world championships."

Other band members have another take on competition, showing a range of opinions about its importance. Taylor Page describes her growth as a professional competitor and stance towards competition: "I'm very competitive with myself . . . [I] try and impart that on my students as well. We take everything as a learning experience how it flows, and we move forward. You never want to let the emotions get too far deep into it." Conor Cooper majored in music at university on tuba, then pursued an Artist's Diploma in music performance: "When I got out of university and back into piping, and even to this day, I consider myself more of a music performer than a competitor."

Identity and heritage

One emergent theme is that of identity and heritage. Band members identify strongly with their music, instrument, and affiliations. Cultural heritage takes the form of pride in Scottish or Irish roots and in being Canadian. Conor Cooper came from a Scottish family but not a musical one. However, he was fascinated by bagpipes from an early age: "My grandma has always said, when I was younger, and I would go to her house . . . I always loved bagpipes and Scottish things, kilts, and everything. And she used to say she'd make me a play set of bagpipes out of a plastic grocery bag . . . and I would march around the house."

Cultural aspects of identity are essential to some members while some are connected through music or dance. Some players are the first musicians in their family. While some claim a pan-Celtic connection, others embrace a hybrid identity. Ryan Hicks is proud of his Irish roots as the sole piper in his family. "You'll notice as you keep talking to people, there's a lot of multi-generation families who are involved in this because their dad was, and their granddad was, and their great granddad was" says Taylor Page. Bruce MacLean's family is from the Hebrides, and he remembers family members playing music and singing in Scots Gaelic.

Instruments are also passed down through the family. Jamie Sawyer has two sets of prized bagpipes as well as his regular performing set. One is from his uncle: "Henderson's and silver and ivory . . . the Rolls Royce of bagpipes." The other set is also a Henderson's: "played in World War I by a Canadian battalion and I have pictures of the young man who played them in battle. I have engravings on them saying who donated them to the military."

In addition to family roots, the band members have friendships with pipers they will meet in Scotland once a year for the World Bagpipe Championships (the Worlds). The competitions bring all parts of this diaspora together. Taylor Page describes being part of the event:

> We experience the biggest sense of community at Worlds . . . hundreds of bands from all over the world: Africa, Australia, New Zealand, all over Europe, all over North America—South America even. That's your tribe. Everyone's in that weird hobby and even if you're competing against people the day before, you see them at the bar that night.

When the band goes to other countries, Canadian identity is also part of the cultural mix. Caleb Thibodeau comments: "At the level and the competitive sense, there is an identity, sure. Everyone knows we're already Canadian . . . but it's more, maybe the band's identity that sticks out."

Living musical traditions, such as those found in piping communities, are sites for negotiation as conserving elements meet innovations. Chris Johnson comments on the conservative elements that are less pronounced in the diaspora traditions: "Out into the colonies . . . [You] tended to kind of do your own thing within your own organization; so

more free thinking." Taylor Page remarks that tenor drumming can incorporate innovation through regional styles: "It's that free spirit mentality, that creative energy and certain thought leaders in certain regions have taken up this certain kind of style. I pride myself in hoping that the Frasers have influenced the provincial style, that regional Ontario style."

Group dynamics and unique band identity

Band members commented on the unique aspects of the Frasers. Chris Johnson notes that the band isn't part of a local scene: "We're too geographically diverse . . . we don't play parades . . . but at the Highland games, we're the top of the heap." Ryan Hicks describes the dynamic of the band: "The 78th Frasers plays the best music, just very musical."

Conor Cooper agrees: "One of the things I love . . . is that we have the common goal of the music. We also have, usually, the common relationship of Scottish heritage. Then outside of that, we have just the diversity of people's careers and their families and their personal lives, which I find is super fascinating." Chris Johnson stresses that the band structure encourages collaboration and innovation: "When we're doing musical selection, it is by committee. If you have something you'd like to suggest . . . put it in and they weigh it and when we're putting together [in] a medley it's different ideas and different collaboratives."

The band composes and arranges medleys in house. "It's a totally open forum," observes Caleb Thibodeau. Thibodeau mentions former band member Donald Thompson who composed a piece called "Journey to Skye" which was a piping in 1987.[6] The Frasers were the first and have continued to offer new compositions with intriguing meters and other innovations. Conor Cooper adds: "The Frasers have always been known as very boundary-pushing. They've always done some cool stuff with different percussion and even dancers—introducing Highland dancers."

Caleb Thibodeau is one of the composers: "I am part of the team . . . trying to push this repertoire. Because I would love to have an identity . . . very distinct and I've been able to do that somewhat because some of the music that the band plays is what I've written."

Conor Cooper has also brought tunes to the Frasers and talks of the collaborative process, emphasizing that the leadership fosters creativity: "Doug is actually very receptive to that, which I think is smart, it's a great sort of leadership style in utilising the personnel you have."

Taylor Page talks about the creative aspects of snare drumming which contribute a rhythmic kick to the group. Page points out that changes in tenor drumming in the recent past have:

> spawned this complete reinvention of the instrument which means it's very modern—it's got its roots in . . . old school British Army tradition but it's actually a very, very modern instrument, which means that there is . . . unbridled creativity that doesn't have too many rules attached to it. We're part of the finely tuned machine. So, I think that sort of progression is really important, again, to that creativity process, but it's also allowed tenor drumming to actually have a seat at the table in the grand scheme of things.

Teaching and learning

Learning

All respondents noted that their initiation into the bagpipe world began at an early age. Frequently a family member played pipes, drums, or danced. In addition to taking pipe lessons in the 1960s, Bruce MacLean accessed family music:

> I was also sort of learning by osmosis this whole time from my family life, particularly my grandmother . . . used to milk cows . . . singing [in Scots Gaelic] at the same time . . . she played the piano as well. And she played it . . . the Cape Breton style where it's actually note for note like the bagpipe, the notes are. Or the violin notes. And so . . . all this stuff was going in my ears. And then I would go to my piping lessons: I know that tune.

Ryan Hicks remembers being attracted to the bagpipes as a young boy maybe four or five years of age:

> My family has strong Irish roots . . . and we went to, like St. Patrick's Day events and I just remember hearing bagpipes and I remember seeing this piper and I was in complete awe. I told my parents that I want to play and my parents, they found a teacher. You start out on a practice chanter, like I said. It maybe takes four or five years . . . and then once you accumulate, I guess, a certain number of tunes . . . then you get on the pipes.

Caleb Thibodeau started at a young age indirectly though his grandfather who, while not a player was: "largely involved with the legion and similar organisations growing up. Whether it was being around the parades or the sort of the ceremonies and that type of things, [I] sort of had an exposure." He began free local lessons in 2006 at age 12 through the Windsor Police pipe band as a drummer and then began pipe tuition before practices. Thibodeau integrated his music theory learning from school to what he was taught through the bands, but he acknowledges that he took the initiative for much of his learning:

> I would go home and figure out the notions for myself, because I was in music theory. And then I would go from there, in terms of playing—just by reading more detailed. And as my non-piping music career progressed, especially through university, music theory portion got far more complex than what you would typically see in piping. So, in that way it was always very easy for me to write music or to transcribe, or to just start reading.

As a young boy Chris Johnson went along to band practices with his father who was a drummer and his uncle who was a piper. He began playing pipes by ear although he learned music theory in his 20s:

> If I heard it, I could repeat it, and a lot of drummers still do that today; they learn through repetition. You know, you don't have a music stand. You can play the notes on the page, but can you express the notes on the page? And that's where the singing comes in or listening to somebody else play, you get their style. And the same thing applies to pipe bands if you carry on that thought; each pipe band, the pipe major has his own style. And I've played in easily every Grade 1 band in Ontario and each one has its own style.

Conor Cooper began group lessons at age 7 at a local Legion band. It was free, save for a deposit on the chanter and book: "It wasn't long after that. I think it was about a year and a half I was on chanter, and then it was a transition to pipes. It was about a year and a half to two years after that, that I was doing, like, local festival parades and stuff, just in the Brighton area."

Pathways to becoming an excellent piper are multiple. Ryan Hicks describes the teaching approach that his teacher Terry Bradley used:

> He would have exercises, finger work exercises and I would sit there for hours, you know, and I would go through, and I would [recite] A, B, C, D, E, F,

> high G, high A, you know? I would go through. I would write. And then I would play them on my practice chanter. And just through that I would just memorize the scale, you know, of the bagpipe. But it's funny because I play these scales every day.

Hicks explains that although he began playing at age seven, he still begins his fundamental scales and exercises every morning with a metronome. He adds: "And orally too, with singing; pipers, we always sing tunes or sing the—he would sing the scale, you know, G, A, or hmm, hmm, hmm, you know, hum it or chanter it, right, chanter it?" When playing Ryan Hicks may focus on the leader's fingers or: "I find that I can concentrate my best if I pick a point. You know, it's a mental game. I mean, we practice and practice and practice all the time, at home and then in a band, but . . . you have to have the mental preparation, and I just find if I stare at a point that's how I get my 100% focus."

The amount of music and complexity of ornamentation as well as the precision required to play perfectly in time and in tune is quite demanding. The Frasers require members to work through a thick binder of music, to audio record themselves and upload for review and critique, and to memorize everything thoroughly. Musicians evolve their own strategies to accomplish these goals, knowing that each weekly practice challenges their focus and musicianship. Ryan Hicks who sightreads easily begins work on the competitive pieces first: "I just hammered through it. I just memorized it, chunked it." The other parts of the repertoire which include standard marching tunes can be refreshed. Hicks finds that when he turns from his practice chanter to playing the pipes: "it goes back to focus and concentration."

Teaching

Several band members described how they teach. Taylor Page encourages students to analyze, experiment, and take chances: "We start the creative process very early because my end goal is to make me obsolete. I don't want to teach somebody for 15 years. I don't want them to be so reliant on me that they can't think for themselves."

Taylor Page began playing tenor drums in 2007, teaching in 2011, then became serious in 2013. After work Taylor Page teaches 10 to 15 hours a week online with three quarters of her students in the United States. Page describes the way the teaching is structured: "I teach an hour-long segment and we break it up 20/40/60. So, 20 minutes for flourishing/visual skill, 20 minutes for rhythm playing skill and then 20 minutes where we slap it all together in some way, shape or form. I make people write their own stuff and bring their own ideas to the table very early on."

Chris Johnson describes the first steps he takes with younger students:

> Basically, I'll take a little kid's hand and I'll draw little dots on her fingers . . . the ones with the dots on them are the ones that need to go over the holes . . . you start with the basics. Once you learn the scales then you have to work on transition which is top end and bottom end because when you first learn how to play, you'll make what's called the crossing noise. You teach them to play . . . a very simple tune . . . and then you start adding the execution or embellishments. During that whole process, you want to teach them how to write it down, where the notes are . . . you've got to do that early on and get that in there and then once it's there, it's inbred.

Part of Conor Cooper's job with the part-time reserves is teaching music to cadets. Cooper says that for him teaching is a way of giving back and the instructor-student relationship is the way each generation learns: "There's always that instructor-student relationship. And then also, personally for me, because everything I learned was literally just given to me, right, like I said, I didn't have to pay for anything, it was all volunteers that taught me . . . Giving back the way I learned, so I feel it's been this way for years."

Conor Cooper describes the way he learns as being by rote. Cooper's preferred learning style has caused him to recognize different learning modalities. He uses a combination of teaching strategies: "Especially when you're teaching younger students, like cadets, there's a lot of different factors going into that. Attention spans, capabilities and all this kind of stuff, so you really have to kind of play and see, okay, what is this student going to learn? Like, how are they going to learn the best, and how can I try and facilitate that?" Conor Cooper notes that he teaches notation and theory and that he sees this as becoming part of piping and drumming qualifications:

> I'm a big supporter of proper music theory instruction. Pipers notoriously—and drummers—notoriously do not know music theory. They don't know how to write the music they play, they simply . . . And there are some incredibly, incredibly talented and gifted players in Canada and Scotland, that have openly admitted—these are grade one players, like, some of the best bands in Scotland—they don't know how to write their music.

Cooper describes the theory workshops he is instigating in the Pipers Society of Ontario to be held along with amateur solo competitions. He describes how the Scottish-based Piping and Drumming Qualification Board (PDQB) has initiated a syllabus. Each level of the syllabus addresses performance, instrument maintenance and theory/history components. Pipers may undergo the tests to pass each qualification which may be put on a resume. At present, Ontario pipers don't have rigorous and systematic programs for theory. However, Cooper feels the PDQB is a positive step and wants to help create this structure in Canada.

Uses of online platforms and social media

YouTube is a source of information and learning for some band members. Chris Johnson checks out YouTube to see what other bands are doing: "I don't use it to learn a tune per se, but I do use it to see what the other bands are up to because it is a real-time, real-world thing now, right?" He cautions that social media can create potential problems when private conversations enter the public domain. Johnson contends that social media creates an international forum: "If you won the North American championship . . . they didn't care in Scotland. Now it's changed; they're listening and they're watching and they're seeing what's going on and it actually factors into some of the stuff. Judges would never admit to that, but I guarantee you they're listening."

Jamie Sawyer agrees that the piping world has become more available online: "Doug says, and I like it, is we are playing against the world on YouTube. Like there are people in Scotland watching us. Well because part of what we're doing is online, offline, how they converge and how social media has influenced what it is that people are doing."

Conor Cooper describes how he uses YouTube for teaching and learning: "When I learn tunes, I always listen to [tunes on YouTube], and I always like to hear a tune in its entirety. It's the way my brain thinks, I like to see it in the entirety, then I start to break it up. So that's my memorisation, how I memorise tunes." Cooper continues that he uses video and audio recording in his teaching for consistency and accuracy:

> As far as teaching using technology, I'm always kind of skeptical and a bit uneasy about YouTube, because there's a lot of people on there that are showing very improper techniques . . . But . . . if I'm teaching a tune, a very basic tune, you have your phone with you—video and audio-record me playing the tune, then I play it nice and slow, and I kind of stretch my fingers, and so when they go home, they can watch it and be, like, that's what it looks like and that's what it sounds like, right, so they're kind of getting a combination. And then they have that for themselves, like, they can keep that for as long as they want.

While some pipers use YouTube infrequently or not at all, others are enthusiastic. Taylor Page characterizes herself as one of the first generation of pipers influenced by social media. She draws on this source to study others: "I take a lot of inspiration from my peers. I love watching other people teach. I think it's fascinating . . . watching those videos gave me the sort of inspiration to try new things." Page is creating an online commercial video tutorial for Grade 5 drummers.

Discussion

Study results proved intriguing, surprising the research team in several ways. Both researchers have extensive experiences with school music education as well as related Celtic musics; one researcher also had a long career as a school band director. Although grounded in the research literature before beginning the study, both investigators had assumptions regarding what they would observe in pipe band teaching and learning prior to the investigation.

Instrumental ensembles: Similar pedagogical strategies

First, there were unexpected similarities between pipe band and modern concert band/orchestra pedagogical strategies, which the pipers developed independently of instrumental ensemble training. For example, the researcher who had been a band director was surprised to see the group practicing with a large portable metronome—of the type used in marching and concert bands—which the Frasers used in the same way, i.e., to keep time when the pipers both worked together and individually, on piping technique using their chanters. With the metronome on and subdivisions clicking, Pipe Major Doug MacRae led the pipers' practicing technique on their chanters,[7] while all sat in a circle. He went through tunes methodically in ways that would be recognizable as solid pedagogical ensemble music learning and teaching strategies employed by school band and/or orchestra directors. These included Doug playing the tune with the group while they silently tongued and fingered along, going around the circle and playing the tune one by one (with all those not playing continuing to silently finger and tongue), with Doug giving constructive feedback throughout, and singing the tune individually with proper ornamentation.[8] The metronome remained "on," beating and instilling a steady tempo throughout the practice.

It was a given that tunes would be memorized—again, much like competitive marching bands—with the expectation that tunes would be getting better and as close to perfection as possible by competition season. The Frasers did not use the metronome when playing on their full sets of pipes—too loud even for a field metronome—nor when they rehearsed as a full band with the drum corps, as they (the drum corps) are responsible for time keeping.

Second, the Frasers used every kind of technological support available to them—electronic tuners, various types of software for both communication and music learning and teaching, and video conferencing platforms (Zoom) in addition to the metronome. Because they were already making good use of various software, hardware, and video conferencing technologies, pivoting to online rehearsals when COVID-19 hit was relatively easy for the group—although all lamented not being able to practice and perform in person.

Last, because Scottish bagpipe music is meticulously notated when written out in manuscript, both researchers expected that there would be more learning "from the page" than learning "by ear" as well as through observation, but this proved not to be the case. Members routinely sang the tune individually to themselves and each other with strict correct ornamentation as part of the learning process. As they played, the pipers watched each other's hands, mirroring movement and tone hole placement. Indeed, the level of music literacy in terms of reading written Western notation fluently varied from member to member of the 78ths. Although all expressed that knowledge of Western music theory was valuable, fluency in the same was not a prerequisite for playing at the high level expected of members.

Instrumental ensembles: Unexpected democratic and collaborative practices

The most intriguing cultural difference—in terms of accepted practice in large instrumental ensembles such as wind bands, orchestras, and other pipe and drum bands—was how democratic the Frasers were regarding repertoire and tune arranging. The group has a proud history of innovation in the piping world, beginning in 1987 when they won their first Grade One championship at the Worlds. The Frasers were also the first non-Scottish pipe band to do so. They accomplished that by programming and arranging unique and new piping tunes; literally "breaking the mold" as to what pipe bands can and cannot do to win competitions.

Based on their reputation for excellence and innovation, the Frasers have attracted pipers who enjoy composing new tunes, which is much encouraged by all the members, but particularly by the band's upper administration. Anyone can bring a tune forth. The group then decides which tunes to incorporate in their competition routines; additionally, they also do all their arrangements as a group. Thus, giving active voice to musical decisions is ingrained in the band's culture. Based on established wind band and orchestra ensemble practices as well as our previous pipe band investigations, this was an unexpected and refreshing finding for the research team. The group hierarchy, like all civilian pipe bands, is

based directly on and in military tradition—yet the Frasers are democratic and collaborative in their musical decision-making processes.

Conclusion

Premised on the notion of free will, serious leisure is defined as the systematic pursuit of a leisure time activity which the individual finds deeply fulfilling. In this hybrid ethnographic case study, we consider music making as serious leisure through a case study of a competitive Canadian Scottish pipe band. Interviews and observations yielded seven themes: 1) centrality of music making, 2) social connectedness, 3) competition/fun, 4) identity and heritage, 5) group dynamics and unique band identity, 6) teaching and learning, and 7) uses of online platforms and social media. The first six of these themes find correspondence with other research in serious leisure scholarship, while the seventh category of online platforms and social media is not addressed in other studies.

These interconnected themes weave throughout participant perceptions. Members of the 78th Fraser Highlanders devote significant energy and expense to playing bagpipes or drums as a leisure activity. Members have family and work obligations; they don't consider their band activities as work. Close friendships as well as global connections are created even as music making is highly competitive and fun. Band members voiced a strong sense of identity as a specific kind of musician and as a member of this group. Cultural heritage takes the form of being Canadian and pride in Scottish or Irish roots (although this background is not a prerequisite). As well, the Frasers are proud of their unique band identity and reputation for innovation. Initiation into the world of pipe bands begins early, often linked to family or a deep connection to the sound and pageantry of pipes and drums.

Unlike other formalized music education systems, Canadian Scottish pipe bands exist through community venues with local bands providing instruction to young players. Players progress through the ranks, learning while playing and performing within a group setting. Members described multiple preferred learning styles as they gained literacy and technical skills. Several people expressed their desire to give back to this community through teaching and the variety of ways in which they teach. Finally, the 78th Fraser Highlanders

use social media to communicate, teach, learn, and create. By necessity the band pivoted to online practices during COVID.

While this study is of one group within the community, it offers music educators a model of lifelong music learning. This and other research in serious leisure highlights the significance of individual choice in music making. Each musician in this case study has chosen to play of their own accord. Significantly, the music itself is part of a diasporic living tradition with deep meaning to performers and audiences. While performance in a pipe band demands extreme precision, there is flexibility in ways in which individuals learn, teach, and create. Correspondences here to formal school-based music education exist, as discussed, but there are also differences such as collaborative group dynamics and democratic decision making.

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[1] Great War Pipe or Piob Mor, to distinguish them from the Scottish small pipes, or other types of bagpipes.

[2] 78th Fraser Highlanders: https://www.78thfrasers.net/

[3] Canceled in 2021 and 2022 due to COVID-19.

[4] Average working hours have been roughly halved over the past 150 years for most workers from approximately 3,000 hours a year in 1870 to 1,800 hours in 2018 for North Americans (Giattino, Ortez-Ospina & Roser 2013). When Henry Ford established an 8-hour day Monday through Friday workweek for his employees in 1922, he declared to the New York Times that: "It is time to rid ourselves of the notion that leisure for workmen is either 'lost time' or a class privilege." https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/ford-factory-workers-get-40-hour-week

[5] They had initially been declared the first place Grade One winners of the North American Piping Championship—a title that the band has won 12 times—only to find out later that they had come in second place to the City of Dunedin due to a judging error.

[6] Thompson was a jazz musician who created "Journey to Skye" for bagpipes. This piece put the band on the map in their 1987 recording "Live in Ireland."

[7] When practicing in groups, pipers learn tunes on chanters only—i.e., without the three drones—due to noise issues.

[8] This is known as *canntaireachd* – a vocable system in Scots piping which assists in learning and memorizing the tune being taught with correct inflections, notes, and ornaments (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pibroch).