Analytic Review of Music and Conflict: Interdisciplinary Perspective

Bryant O. Winbush

Longwood University

The article, *Music and Conflict: Interdisciplinary Perspective* by M J Grant and colleagues gives an insight on a research based study of music and the influence it has on conflicted violence. Grant’s theory is that an interdisciplinary perspective will help build understanding of the associating, influence, and role that music plays in violence (Grant, pg. 183). The study implements different discipline to give readers an understanding of the definition of music, their definition of music, and the common ground among music and different fields of study. This paper will give a brief understanding of the study conducted by Grant and his team, analysis the procedure, methods, and disciplines that was expressed within the study.

The primary discipline fields utilized in the research is identified as social science, but utilize various fields that correlate the cognitive and biological aspect of human musicality (Anthropology, Music propaganda, and sociology) (Grant, pg. 192). The study also outfits the importance of music in a psychological means and the effect it has in the thought process on its audience. Grant aids the reader in building knowledge of “what is music” within the context of the collaborating fields. According to the study, music has many definitions in respect to the discipline field. For example, within propaganda, music is defined as a tool for propaganda itself as a strong motivator for group action in human life. Within the disciples of anthropology and sociology, music is distinctive to human life and language and an implicit social phenomenon with various means of expression. Building common ground through all three disciple, Grant and his team redefines music as a specific but rarely isolated form of human communication and interaction (Grant, pg. 184).

Within the article, it is outlined that music ignites both emotion and behavior and does have direct relation to violence. In addition to associating with violence, the article also gives the positive attributes that music has on emotion and behavior as a therapeutic intervention (Grant, pg. 185). The methodological approach of the study correlates qualitative research from two different historical conflict and violence within the city-states of Africa and the Cold War. In addition to historical approach, the article exploits how the United States amending law underlines the restriction it has when regulating music in respects to violence (Grant, pg. 188). The article concluded that “music is a powerful form of coordinated action, and can strengthen group affiliation in a way that language cannot, and therefore have the potential to migrate underlying conflict” (Grant, pg. 192).

Stated early in the paper the primary discipline of focus is within the field of social science. Grant pulled his research from anthropology, music propaganda, and sociology and made his conjectures on the insights gained from the respected fields. Each discipline holds a foundation that focused on the different characteristics music plays. The reference to the violence of the African city-state, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, are examples of how anthropology is used to give a historical insight of violence through a complex lens (Grant, pg. 185). Because anthologist exploits both primary and secondary source, Grant is able to avoid the assumption of ethnocentricity. Many of the ethnocentric assumptions baselines the fact of mortality of specific ethnicities compared to another.

The sociological feature within the study correlates the influence and background that music has with ethnicity and social reform. It states, music’s main role is to create association and cause emotional effect. (Grant, pg. 186) Ethnicity itself is a means of association with identity of nationality in a way. Sociology supports the fact of the matter that different ethnicities identify with different music, resulting in the different behaviors a certain group of individuals may express as music influences the respective lives. Grant refers to the social influence that correlates with music, by using behavior examples with men and well defined social groups.

Grant makes the assumption that violence is a result of non-censor music, but music can also implement peace of mind and contentment. The violent lyrics inhabit an aggressive personality, which result in violent music increasing hostile feelings (Grant, pg. 187). He references that other research studies supports the fact that the emotional connection that music has, individual behavior is an end result of not the music but the individual’s choice to act upon the music (Grant, pg. 187).

Grants study of music and conflict with respects to a collaborative perspective through different disciplines showcases many characteristics the Repko outlines in the text. Repko illustrates the importance of developing the problem and finding a common ground between disciples utilized in research to make conjectures (Repko, pg.78). Interdisciplinary research focuses on complex problems, assumptions, and understanding of each theory studied throughout research. Grant’s research topic of the correlation of music and violence to say the least is a complex topic. As stated by Grant, there is very little research that generates the overall understanding of music and violence, but there is a general understanding that music provides a sense of purpose and a source of power (Grant, pg. 190).

Focusing on the assumptions that Grant challenged or proposed within his article, he pulls data from different perspectives and from different fields of studies. In order to conduct a thorough research exercising interdisciplinary theory, information must come from various means of perspectives (Repko, pg.61). In addition to various perspectives, Grant does not use bias to present his data, but his qualitative data is developed from primary and secondary sources which allow diversity. Music associated with culture and ethnicity according to Grant’s study, which helps validates his data as being qualitative. Repko defines qualitative data as information that cannot be represented in a number sense but through personal impression (Repko, pg.61).

Taking Grants article and evaluating through the ten steps Repko outlines, there are many similarities within Grants methodical approach to his research and Repko’s outline. There is adequacy of each field of study implemented as a reference to his study, he has developed his own understanding of his research, and Grant communicates his understanding through the article (Repko, pg. 78). His overall approach of his study correlates well with how interdisciplinary research should be conducted. Grant defines music in context with all disciplines in which he refers to through his article, and formulates his own definition that builds a common ground within all respected fields. This alone showcases his understanding of all fields that contribute to his research.

Not only does Grant showcase his understanding of the problem and relates all issue to a feasible plan, but he communicates his knowledge and perspective through a rational intelligence. His balance perspective and insight of understanding music and violence transmits a complex research topic into a general explanation that helps reinforce his audiences’ understanding. It is evident that he has conducted thorough research within each discipline, as he presents the language from the various fields as well as significant events within the disciples that associate with both music and violence.

Despite having many similarities to Repkos ten point outline, Grant’s article does lack in in recommendations. Grant reflects on the overall approach of his research, but does not give insight of some issues he faced while conducting research or future recommendation for a study of this caliber. As this paper is to analyze and gain a better understanding of how interdisciplinary research is conducted as a process, I feel that Grant could better his article by implanting recommendations, and the different approaches he may implement or wanted to implement.

In conclusion, Grants study *Music and Conflict: Interdisciplinary perspective* illustrates and practices the methods and theories being instructed in this class. Reviewing the process and method of Grant’s research has help build knowledge and a deeper perspective of how to conduct research within an interdisciplinary viewpoint. As interdisciplinary research establishes a bigger footprint, there will be a new found knowledge in a general sense as to what Interdisciplinary studies is, and how it can be practice in various fields. Grant’s research utilizes various perspectives and builds a common ground of music with respect to social science. There is little room for improvement for Grants study, but do recommend he give insight of how he and his team may want to change if further research on the topic is conducted in the future.

References

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