Reading Popular Music Festivals through the Lens of Public Sphere

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ABSTRACT

The core idea of Jürgen Habermas public sphere has to do with forming a public made of private individuals who participate in civic dialogue on issues of common interest. A public so formed generates public opinion through the formation of a communicative network. This essay argues that the communicative network of the public sphere which is known to be strengthened by its cultural connects through press and mass media can also be shaped by popular music culture like hip-hop, rock or electronic dance music. A cultural public sphere is comprised of numerous networks of mass and popular culture which help in shaping the participants' articulations of politics, both public and personal. Cultural public sphere marks the entry of affective modes of communication as effectual participation in the politics of everyday life. In this article, the author tries to position the role of popular music cultures in the formation of a public sphere by studying three distinct forms of popular music- hip-hop, rock and electronic dance music. The idea is to understand the role of the communities formed due the affective mode of popular music and the efficacies granted to these social groups in the larger context of a public sphere. Another important dimension of studying these forms of popular music is to understand music festivals as active sites for the realisation of a public sphere. Drawing from Durkheim's idea of how festivals harness within them a 'collective effervescence' which he found to be an integral element to aid in instilling feelings of solidarity in a community, this essays tries to locate the popular music festival sites within the framework of a cultural public sphere by conducting an in depth literature review on how the traditional public sphere is critiqued from the vantage point of a cultural public sphere; how popular culture texts and practices inform these critiques and finally how music festival sites act as public spheres.

Keywords: Affective communication, cultural public sphere, popular culture, popular music, public sphere.

INTRODUCTION

THE HABERMASIAN PUBLIC SPHERE

The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere is essentially a historical work that contextualises its critical enquiry into the rise and fall of the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth century Europe through a sociological perspective. Public sphere thus becomes a complex nexus of space time wherein private bodies form a public to discuss issues of civic concern. The public sphere as a concept was located in conversations and discourse and was never about an actual structured physical place as a social realm though it did operate in certain kinds of spaces (Calhoun, 1992). In Habermas's conceptualisation of public sphere, he draws a clear demarcation between the literary public sphere from the political public sphere in a sense that the former was succeeded by the latter. Usage of reason in the form of rational and critical debates was the quintessence of the eighteenth century public sphere in Habermas's discussion. Habermas talks of the development of a literary public sphere within the private institutes of families where discussions on arts and literature took place founded on the grounds of inclusivity but paradoxically entry was guaranteed by one's social and educational status. Economic changes

fuelled the formation and transformation of the public sphere and the first political public sphere was formed in Britain (Habermas, 1989 [1962]).

In Habermas' work, the eighteenth century European literary public sphere was marked by the key institutions of French salons and London coffee houses where discussions on magazines, periodicals and literary journals took place. It afforded the public the space to critically discuss art and literature, while drawing on the affective resources they had developed within the private institution of family. This later on developed into the political public sphere, where the public reasoning was used critically to oppose State domination to coalesce a civic body (Habermas, 1989 [1962]). Habermas' structural transformation marks the refeudalisation of the public sphere in which his pessimism about the culture industry, commodification of cultural text and adulteration of mass culture is shared by his fellow Frankfurt School scholars (McGuigan, 2005). Refeudalisation is a process identified by Habermas who locates it in the modern social-democratic states, involving a blurring of boundaries between of the State and society, public and private that is to approximate conditions in a manner that elements of the feudal State will be reinforced in the social order (Habermas, 1989 [1962]).

Along the same lines of thoughts like how the youth tends to engage less with political proper as compared to popular culture texts, Jean Baudrillard's (1983) reasoning is that the mass in general tends to be attracted to entertainment than politics which is tagged as sombre. The phenomenon of over-politicising of art in Europe can be traced back to the act of Plato banishing poets on one hand and Shelley calling the community of poets to be unacknowledged legislators (McGuigan, 2005). Although the inexorable gloomy conclusions of Adorno and Horkheimer's work on culture industry where mass culture falls victim to commodification and fetishism (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002), keeps popular culture texts like music at bay from the civic engagements of the public sphere, there have been academic debates on the same. As a result of which counter narratives on the formation of a cultural public sphere (McGuigan, 2005) populated by a counter public (Warner, 2002) and coloured by the affordances extended by popular culture (Hermes, 2006) has been included in the present discourse on the relationship between cultural texts and the public sphere.

Popular culture as a text and practice enhances the nuanced understanding of what constitutes as cultural citizenship and the imperative nature of the public sphere. Citizenship is a key concept in what is abstracted as the public sphere and with the decaying of the fences between private and public; fiction and non-fiction; citizenship cannot be reckoned in isolation of the cultural context within which it operates. Given the fact that the cultural context informs itself from the global industry of popular culture which again is embellished with the media of power and money, an entry point into discussions on how popular culture aids in shaping the role of a citizen within the public sphere is made accessible. This challenges to subvert the hegemonic structures that dictate the dogmatic boundaries of political public sphere proper (Hermes, 2006).
Popular culture becomes an imperative element of the public sphere as it constitutes as an embedded element of everyday life-worlds. Due to the sharing of this common lived world experiences, popular culture thus forms a breeding ground for opportunities of the likes of forming solidarity, communities and bonds that enrich the capabilities of the fans, consumers and audiences to be a participate in a public sphere of mass-media consumption. The underlying question here thus becomes if popular culture can be democratic in its true essence and in its effects. From this rises the pending enquiry into how inclusive is cultural citizenship (Hermes, 2006) and whether it has been freed from its ghosts of "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 2010). Looking at the affordances of popular culture in this context becomes important (Hermes, 2006). Cultural texts like television, pop fiction, pop music bring them a sense of belongingness to a community

both "imagined" (Anderson, 2016) and otherwise thus strengthening the notions of solidarity among the consumers of these texts. Also, through the platforms used to access these cultural texts, the boundaries between the private and the public are fast depleting. Through the love felt towards the artists of popular culture and their texts an impetus to think of the ideals and fears of the present socio-cultural conditions is made available to the community (Hermes, 2006).

Scholarly work can no longer continue to negate the affordances of the affective communication of a cultural public sphere. However, what becomes important to investigate at this point is the nature of the new public spheres formed out of popular culture (Hermes, 2006) like music festivals. Scant literature available tries to throw light on the functioning of such spaces, while most still take the traditional Habermasian route or the Frankfurt School path. This paper is divided into the following sections to visit concepts of what is conceptualised as the cultural public sphere, how the affective communication in public sphere can be emancipating and how festivals can function as sites of public spheres. By visiting these ideas through an in depth analysis of literature on theoretical and empirical work the objective is to understand if Electronic Dance Music (EDM) festivals that emanate from the contemporary global popular culture can grant the members of the community a public sphere.

CULTURAL PUBLIC SPHERE

Before one can delve into any debates or discussions on what may or may not be public sphere, whether political, literary and/or counter, cultural and so on, one must first ask what is meant by "public". First, one must learn to differentiate "the public" which brings with itself a pregnant notion of a social totality from "a public" which could be an implication of a relationship between space and bodies. A public can be in its abstraction a space designed by discourse and formed from relationships with strangers. In order to grasp how public as a term is culturally derived from a utilitarian construct it becomes imperative to problematise the most basic assumptions of what is perceived as public. A public is often inter-textual and exist by the virtue of imagined communities (Warner, 2002). Mostly when media scholars engage in conversations about the public in a media sensitised public sphere, the emphasis is on cognitive elements and the affective elements are disdained as it does not fit into the framework of rationality offered by the Habermasian abstraction of a "public sphere" (McGuigan, 2005).

In this light, the Habermasian public sphere has been revisited by a number of scholars to critique the normative nature of the public sphere offered by him. The normative fixation of Habermas's public sphere tends to be gullible to historic and idealistic underpinnings thus rendering it lacking the autonomy it was supposed to have (Hohendahl, 2002). Habermas's public sphere has been put to task for being a "bourgeois masculinist" (Fraser, 1990) public sphere thus clearly laying out how it was highly exclusive in nature on the grounds of gender and class. From this critique, scholars extended ideas of a proletarian and/or subaltern counter public sphere (Negt, Kluge, & Labanyi, 1988). The conception of the public sphere proper stands to become paradoxical because it fails to theorize the cultural assets of publicness.

What the ideal public sphere of Habermas was lacking can be compensated with an alternate conceptualisation of the public within that space, inclusive of the structural, institutional, and cultural strands of theorization. It is often argued that the category of public is an imagined identity and the relationship it shares with citizenship has deeper roots in the institutes of the State and civic society. Cultural references in this context, thus becomes crucial to reckon with, more crucial than critical rationality because the symbolic public in question here is constructed through the cultural categories in place (Ku, 2000). What was required here was a re-

conceptualisation of the public sphere bearing in mind the affective components of culture. There already existed a literary public sphere in Habermas's historical account, which preceded the political public sphere, which was characterised by critical discussions on arts. The concept of literary public sphere can be expanded into a more inclusive abstraction of what is known as the cultural public sphere where political articulations is contested by bring to the fore affective communication and its various modes (McGuigan, 2005).

Public sphere in itself has to be conceived as something which is simultaneously ideal and real. Cultural public sphere expands it in terms of inclusivity as it encompasses the whole array of media and popular culture. At the stage of conceptualising the public sphere proper, a grievance was expressed for its decline and the blame set on the commodification of mass culture as this alienated civic engagement from alienated from popular struggles with the transformation of the civic public into "amused consumers". Cultural public sphere departs from this take to talk about how popular culture practices were not symbols for detachment but of empowerment and resistance. The critique of Habermas's public sphere is primarily located at the juncture wherein different functions were attributed to the literary public sphere and the political public sphere reducing the first in a sense thus apolitical. The cultural public sphere however operates its political stances through "uncritical populism, radical subversion and critical intervention" (McGuigan, 2005).

Culture is a complex whole which encompasses arts, morals, knowledge, customs, beliefs and any other such human capabilities which are acquired as a result of a person being a part of society (Tylor, 1871). Democracy is interlaced with citizenships and the rights extended towards citizens. Though the Frankfurt school critics swear by the culture industry and deny how any form of popular culture practices and texts can have emancipated affordances (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002), there exist counter narratives which celebrate for instance the role of cinema in democratising aesthetics (Benjamin, [1936/1973a]) and the interactive capabilities of radio as a powerful medium of popular culture (Benjamin, 1973b). Theatrical melodrama in the public sphere has its historical roots in the nineteenth century of dealing with societal issues and moral dilemmas which was then extended as a feature of the twentieth century Hollywood melodrama. Traces of the same can be seen in the genre of soap operas even in the twenty-first century which deal with everyday crises. In this fashion the cultural public sphere tends to deal with the notions of pleasure and pain felt explicitly by a consensual practice of a temporary suspension of disbelief by the audience. By making vehicles for affect, the cultural public facilitates emotions and thoughts which fuel for imagination and humour argumentative fervour that might lead to fruitful consequences of some sort (McGuigan, 2005).

The politics of cultural public sphere may operate in three strands. First is uncritical populism which can be associated with populist cultural studies. Its credibility is derived from contemporary wisdom, conventional in nature and not much from its own intellectual perspicacity. The sphere of assumption within which uncritical populism functions derives its wisdom from ideas of how culturally democratic consumer capitalism is. Within this framework, consumer sovereignty is a given and consumption is considered to be active as opposed to being passive and lacking agency. Uncritical populism's credibility lies in is its sharp contrasting of the abstract notion of an ideal public sphere with a more realistic notion of what the society is actually undergoing as a community. Within uncritical populism examples of how people react to controversies and scandals in the popular culture find space. Finding the very same notions of uncritical populism deplorable, the second is radical subversion problematises the truth claim of how culturally democratic the consumer capitalist society is. It is thus closely associated with global social movements and the cultural practices entailed in the same. Examples of cultural

rallies, raves and road posters in the cultural public sphere substantiate the radical subversion kind of political stance. Combining the notion of addressing what actually exists in the cultural public sphere of uncritical populism with the critical stance of radical subversion; critical intervention forms the third strand. In its true essence the idea is to find an entry point within the cultural public sphere for critical argument of dialogical in nature (McGuigan, 2005).

The extend of critique extended towards his traditional public sphere and other scholars work on the subversive power of popular culture practices and spaces, made Habermas revisit his work which then reflected his appreciation for the feminist perspective and for popular culture affordances (McGuigan, 2005). With respect to how the personal can be public and how intertwined are cultural references to a democratic public sphere, Habermas revised his pessimistic conclusions of his previous work. "The institutional core of the public sphere comprises communicative networks amplified by a cultural complex, a press and, later, mass media; they make it possible for a public of art-enjoying private persons to participate in the reproduction of culture, and for a public of citizens of the state to participate in the social integration mediated by public opinion." (Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action-The Critique of Functionalist Reason, 1987a). Taking this ahead it then becomes imperative to discuss the affective communication within a cultural public sphere in the form popular culture texts and practices that enable the public within to form solidarity and engage in discussions of concern to them.

AFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

With Habermas revisiting his own concept, he had put forth the social theory of communicative action, aiming it to unpack how language and communication can mediate social liberation. However, the theory is not a theory of aesthetics but focuses instead on rationalisation and democratisation of the civil society through the action of institutionalising the communicative competence of the public by highlighting its rationality potential. In this manner, within the communicative competence of conversationalists, the affective modes of communication are not given any space (McCarthy, 1978; McGuigan, Culture and the Public Sphere, 1996). Substantiating the ongoing discussions in the scholarly universe on how public sphere both in its ideal and actual form can never be one-dimensional, a distinction within public communication is presented by Bernhard Peters. Distinctions are drawn between aesthetic, expressive and affective mass media messages and practices and deliberative, argumentional and rational discourses n public and political affairs. These differences spur not only out of the mode adopted in the two forms of public communications but also from what the discussions are about and the faculties of affect and cognition (Rasmussen, 2009).

Cultural public sphere allows the affective modes of discourse to secure for itself a position as the idea of public communication being coloured with rationality only fails to tease out the cultural nuances of the society (McGuigan, 1996, p. 28). Although, while describing communicative action Habermas celebrates what he terms the 'new politics' which informed by popular culture practices, there still seems to a missing link. Logic of art and that of democratic politics vary immensely as art deliberates in aesthetics more than rationality (McGuigan, 1996). Perhaps the salvation lies in realising there cannot be only one pure public sphere but many spaces drawn from the abstraction of an ideal one. There can be the rise of not just one "subaltern counter-public" (Fraser, 1990) but many. Affective mass media messages have always had a vital role in the society while falling at times victim to capitalistic social orders and at times to harsh criticism for being the victim. However, there have been scholars who have from the very beginning seen the

competencies granted by popular cultural mediums like cinema, radio, popular music, internet and many more. Not only did Walter Benjamin ([1936/1973a]) consider cinema to be a democratising agent of aesthetics but Peter Dahlgren (Dahlgren, 1995) considered television to be a rather important site for formation of a cultural public sphere. Television talk shows had an inclusive and participatory framework which opened up venues for interaction to take place on the audience's behalf. Also, Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model (2008) reflects on how the audience has agency to culturally assign meanings to the sign vehicles of television content and this shows that even if the format of a television show may not be technically interactive, an essence of democratic participation surfaces nonetheless. These mass mediums of popular culture are funded on affect more than cognitive rationality and yet public spheres have been formed due to the entry of radio, television and the internet that provide the platform for generating information, facilitating debates and are inherently participative in nature aiding to the strengthening of a democratic society (Kellner, 1995). However, there also exists a need for intellectuals who have the required skills in these mediums especially in the context of cyberspaces (Kellner, 1995).

Taking the same argument ahead, popular music becomes an interesting text to read through the lens of public sphere. Popular music has always been known to bear the mark of the times it belongs to and the essence of the contemporary social politics. Genres like rock, punk, hip-hop have shared their discourse with political activism and social movements (Peddie, 2006). Popular music as believed by Birgit Englert (2008) is hardly ever bereft of politics. Keith Negus's (1997) work locates the embedded politics in musical texts and these elements cannot be studies in vacuum but instead must be looked at in conjunction with the dynamics of influence and power. The ways in which "rhythm, melody and lyrics shape social relations" (Street, 2012) help in teasing out the cultural nuances present within music that both produce and reflect a socio-political order by granting to its audience a common ground for coalescing solidarity (Attali, 1985). Popular music might not always subvert the hegemonic social order but it definitely bears within it the potential to illuminate it and by doing so bring up discursive discourses about the society in the public sphere. Along with providing an active site for participation, music both in the forms of popular and classical bears within itself the capacities to enhance collective identity (Frith, 1996; Frith, 1996). In many ways through the sites of varying forms of popular genres of music and style, the audiences of these cultural texts have felt empowered to form their own subcultures as a symbolic resistance towards the dominant social order (Hebdige, 1979) and thus participated in the production and performances in the subaltern counter public spheres of the cultural public sphere. Bearing in mind, the affordances thus extended by popular music as an affective text, the discussion now enters into the difficult terrain of locating the formation of a public sphere in the space-time of festivals at large and narrows down to focus on music festivals.

THE FESTIVAL SPACE-TIME

Having discussed about the formation of an alternative public sphere and the affective mode of communication that transpires within it, now the focus shifts towards understanding the cultural significance of festivals within the established framework of cultural public sphere. The objective is to bring to the fore a perspective of how festivals function autonomously as social texts through the theoretical approaches present in literature. Durkheim (1995 [1912]) visited the idea of festivals through his work on religion and on how communal identity can emanate by performing rituals within religious festivals. In what he describes as "collective effervescence", the community comes together for the purpose of conducting religious rituals and in order to do so, they communicate on same issues and participate in same actions thus strengthening their own sense of communal solidarity. From Durkheim's work on how religious festivals act as a cohesive force

within a community holding the members together, defining festival as "an event, a social phenomenon, encountered in virtually all human cultures" (Falassi, 1987) falls in perspective. Building on Durkheim's collective effervescence, Milton Singer (1986) , claims how actions can be called "cultural performances" where not only do the religious abstractions and dispositions converge for the believer but also a point where the interaction between them become evident to an observer. For instance, ceremonies during various stages in life encourage individuals to withdraw from the profane, isolated individualistic living to enter a space for collective action.

There however exits a dark side of the moon wherein urban and contemporary festivals are not given the same position as traditional religious festivals in terms of cohesive affordances and social capital. It is believed that by losing its authenticity and conforming to a capitalist form of social order, urban contemporary festivals have lost their significance in the cultural public sphere (Sassatelli, 2011). In order to challenge normative stands of privileging traditional religious festivals, it becomes important to conceive festivals as a site for the process of sociation to take place which in turn aids in sociability function. Sociation in turn helps in assigning sociable meaning to society thus strengthening the forces of cohesion within both homogeneous and heterogeneous communities long after forces of consociation have worn off (Simmel, 1991 [1896]).

Festive sociability in its own essence is known to construct its own form of cultural public sphere within which art and play are employed to express reflexivity (Costa, 2002). Going back to what Jim McGuigan (2005) had proposed in his conceptualisation of a cultural public sphere and the political stances within that space, festivals can be located in critical intervention. Festivals both in the traditional sense and the modern, call for a devoted and vigilant audience that take up the site of the festival and transcend it to a space for critical discussions on not only the popular art form they are there to consume but socio-political issues as well. Unlike other forms of cultural consumption, the basic format of a popular culture festival is such that it allows not only committed fans but new members to have access to the discussions that will take place after the 'cultural show'. In this sense the modern day popular culture festivals still bear within them Durkheim's collective effervescence and come together as a community to transfer the mundane site of cultural consumption into a critically charged site of cultural public sphere. This is how critical intervention takes place in the context of modern day popular culture festivals like music festivals (Fabiani, 2011). As an integral part of social reform, political action and identity formation, popular music can be immensely efficacious in nature (Born & Hesmondhalgh, 2000). When this is combined by what is consumed in terms of global culture and presented at the space time of a music festival, it becomes imperative to deduce the cultural capabilities of these texts as an active site of cultural public sphere through the lens of Jim McGuigan's critical intervention.

DISCUSSION: CAN EDM FESTIVALS BE THE CULTURAL PUBLIC SPHERES OF THE 21ST CENTURY?

"Art is never without consequences" (Brecht, 1978) and thus if this argument is further built, one can find oneself heading towards the realization of how a cultural text, from television soap operas to pop music, is intrinsically political (Storey, 2015). Popular culture can be understood as a site wherein "collective social understandings are created" (Hall, 2009, pp. 122-23). Though there exist many theoretical directions for defining and unpacking the entirety of popular culture, one followed by certain cultural theorists, inspired by the work of Antonio Gramsci, is to look at popular culture as a site for a negotiation between the subaltern resistance and the hegemonic forces of exclusion. Theorising popular culture in this manner tries to undo the reification of pop culture texts as either just mass produced and mass consumed, or adhering to a dominant socio-

power structure or always an oppositional resistance (Storey, 2015). Cultural texts and practices are layered with potentials to be pulled in any direction (Williams, 1963) but what is to be focused on is the cohesive efficacies of these texts and practices (Bennett, 1983). Practices within popular culture like attending music festivals thus create a new form of sociality which in turn provides a platform for encompassing the new age cultural public sphere.

Critiques of the convoluted demarcation between elitist "high" art and mass "low" art exist in the origin and history of popular culture. Popular music is known to be a key cultural expression. We have come a long way unpacking the abstraction of an eighteenth century public sphere, revisiting the cultural critiques of the "masculinist bourgeois public sphere" and seen the dissent evolve into a cultural public sphere equipped not only with political affordances but strengthened by the affective cohesive forces of communal solidarity. Electronic Dance Music (EDM) may seem like a twenty first century phenomenon in the cultural landscape of popular music but as a subculture it existed as an underground music movement in the many parts of United States of America, United Kingdom and West Germany in the late 1960s. These artists practiced various forms of percussive musical genres like house, trance, techno, disco and more back in the 1970-80s under the broader structures of pop and rock and roll. It was not till the 1980s that dance became an intrinsic part of Electronica and the world saw the rise of the Electronic Dance Music as we know it today. Borne of technology as the technology evolved, EDM crawled out of the underground subcultures to call for a global audience.

In the present day context, the various subtypes have been grouped under the umbrella term of EDM which has become a popular cultural phenomenon across the globe. This form of popular music mostly driven by technologically produced beats has many music festivals to its credit which calls for attendance from a straddling number of fans. EDM festivals last for 2-3 days wherein artists, both established and new, perform and the fans meet as a community. Yes, these festivals have not escaped the clutches of the capitalist economy we all live in and swear by. Yet, the repetitive nature of these festivals provides a site for the fans to find for themselves a liminal space time to perform their communal solidarity. The objective of this in depth literature review is to find an entry point into these sites to understand the cultural public sphere aspects of these festivals. Deplorably though, there exists scant scholarly work on how emancipating popular music can be and to add to that music festival sites of a cultural form which lacks any form of authenticity in terms of both production and performance makes the task in even more challenging.

CONCLUSION

A NEW DIRECTION

A huge crowd gathered in an open ground, adrenaline rushing with the beat dropping, bodies bathed in neon lights and the artist performing at the apex draws the spitting image of an EDM festival. The attendees and the members of the Electronic Music Culture are affectionately called tribe and/or tribesmen. There is no denying the ubiquitous elements of Durkheim's collective effervescence and the embedded form of Jim McGuigan's critical intervention about to rupture within the liminal cultural public sphere created by them, festivals. Through the literature studied ideas on how components of affect, a popular music text for example, and the sites of festivals as politically charged have been unraveled. Thus, future research based on the life world experiences of the fans who form a community within the Electronic Music Culture will help in establishing the hermeneutics of this new phenomenon.

Meaning making as a process is undeniably a core element within the framework of a public sphere. Talking about Martin Buber's philosophy, Arnett (1986) tells us how he had

believed, meaning often takes a form when people meet other people in their community and participate in communal events together. Bearing that in mind to the deplorable act of overlooking the huge fan community that is borne of a popular music culture that provides platforms like EDM festivals for the members to come together to shape an efficacious public sphere site, on the basis of a high-low art division quickly falls apart. Arnett (1986) points out how Martin Buber's central theme was based on how dialogue is nourished only within a community for an ''I'' may start a dialogue but it is not merely sufficient to sustain it. Within this rubric it also becomes inevitable to point out how the agency of the members of the fan communities to choose to consume a particular form of culture and then choose to come together based on their mutual preferences gives rise to an emancipated community.

Choice of music constituting popular culture is never born out of vacuum but it is always culturally generated (Hebdige, 1979) and thus, popular music genres "…must be understood within a commercial/cultural process" (Frith, 1996). The technological bearings and with the fans deeming it more as a "way of life" (Audience Insights Group, 2015) than music make EDM all the more interesting a site to explore. With this new form of popular music engulfing one and all, keen attention must be paid to both the culture of production and listening of Electronic Dance Music. Curiosity beckons, and the research gap harks back to it with all its charms and cautions.

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