Kandi for Social Justice? Yes, Please! Electronic Dance Music (EDM), Queer Culture & PLUR

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What is Electronic Dance Music (EDM)?

What do you feel this type of music/culture is?
Is EDM a culture and a community?

- Is EDM a culture and a community or just a music genre?
- You decide!
- PLUR (Peace, Love, Unity, & Respect)
- Kandi-how this works
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5chX2ve9cnM
- Electric Daisy Carnival, one of the largest EDM Festivals-annual each June in Las Vegas, NV
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icDEYGe7o4U
Conversation!!

• What do you think of Kandi?
• What do you think of PLUR?
• How might we use these ideas on our campuses?
• What other music cultures have important values that we can bring into our work on our campuses?
#Orlando #PULSE We Honor You!!

- Largest mass shooting in United States History
- Perpetrated against Queer People Of Color (Do not discuss this without mentioning this!!!) Latino/Latina Night
  - Remember those who were stolen from us!!
- DJs help us to dance with the angels...remember these angels and hold them in your heart in PLUR at EDM related events so that their memory and impact will live on FOREVER!!
- Watch the video to learn who we are missing and all of the accomplishments that will no longer be, but can be within each of you in their honor and for PLUR for EVERYONE!!
  - EDM is a culture and can be our REVOLUTION!!!! We can change the world!!!
    - Give to their families
  - Keep our safe spaces and community havens and Queer spaces free from violence
    - If you see something, Say something!!!
Electronic Dance Music (EDM)

Electronic dance music (also known as EDM, electronic dance, dance music, club music, or simply dance) is a broad range of percussive electronic music genres produced largely for nightclubs, raves, and festivals. Produced for playback by disc jockeys (DJs), EDM is generally used in the context of a live mix, where a DJ creates a seamless selection of tracks by segueing from one recording to the next.

By the early 2010s the term "electronic dance music" and the initialism "EDM" was being pushed by the U.S. music industry and music press in what was largely an effort to re-brand U.S. rave culture. In the UK, "dance music" or "dance" are more common terms for EDM. In this context, EDM does not refer to a specific genre, but serves as an umbrella term for several commercially-popular genres, including techno, house, trance, hardstyle, drum and bass, dubstep, trap, Jersey club and their respective subgenres.

Retrieved From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_dance_music 11/14/15
How popular is EDM?

• Electronic Dance Music (EDM) is taking the world by storm. “...The fastest growing genre of music is a big deal, to the tune of $6.2 billion a year....” (McCarthy 2015).

• “...”Wake Me Up,” by Avicii....became Spotify’s most-streamed song ever in 2014, and to date has been streamed more than 355 million times across all media... (Terdiman 2015).
How does EDM matter?

• “...dance music...really does sound different...As sound, it can be compared with any of the great ‘revolutions’ in popular music: like them, it followed the cycle of innovation from the avant-garde into the mainstream, and like these other trends, it can be related both to structural social change, and to new social-sexual movements, identities and practices...” (Bradby 1993).
How might EDM affect learning?

• A question that has not yet been asked, however; many compare EDM to electronic classical music and you will see why later in this presentation

• “In 2004, researchers conducted a study that presented the effect of Mozart’s music on learning….the effect demonstrated that there may be an important relationship between certain types of music (e.g. classical) and learning (Jackson & Tluaka, 2004). (Harmon, Troester, Pickwick, Pelosi, 2008).”
How might EDM affect learning?

• One study involving college students showed a correlation between how awake they felt and their preference for music or silence....results indicated a positive effect while listening to Mozart (Jones, West, & Estell, 2006)....this effect has become known as the Mozart effect, which proposes that listening to Mozart can increase spatial abilities...the proposed increase in the construction of alpha waves may result in positive learning ability.....(Harmon, Troester, Pickwick, Pelosi, 2008).”

• The Mozart effect-(Jones, West, & Estell, 2006).
How might EDM affect learning?

• “Many other studies have shown that easy listening, such as classical or instrumental soundtracks can promote cognitive performance (Wilson, 2006).”

• “…..upsurge in the technology of music playing devices has made a phenomenon out of listening to music while participating in daily activities…”

• “…..Music is a common part of our everyday routine…” (Harmon, Troester, Pickwick, Pelosi, 2008)
Associated Research

• “...Through a qualitative, phenomenological investigation, the hip hop culture was found to have a positive impact on the collegiate experiences of undergraduates, specifically as it related to socialization, personal expression through language and clothing, goals, and cultural appreciation of college students...”

(Wessel & Wallaert, 2011)
• “...The collegiate environment offers an opportunity for students to explore different lifestyles, personality traits, and beliefs (Loxley & Whiteley, 1986), and these experiences often define the type of persons they become (Astin & Antonio, 2000).”

• “...Students are introduced to various cultures in college that often can be differentiated into subgroups sharing distinctive values, attitudes, and norms (Kuh, 1995).”


(Wessel & Wallaert, 2011)
Why is EDM important?

• “...I actually consider EDM as the classical music of the future. It’s a genre that transcends race, gender and age. It’s capable of making people feel something and want to dance without having to understand a specific cultural reference or language for the lyric...” (Godzik 2013)

• In the field of Student Affairs, we are well aware of the idea that learning and development for our students happens both inside and outside of the classroom, so we need to educate ourselves about EDM culture which may be an enormous part of many of our students’ lived experiences. (Kosar 2015)
Conversation!

- How does music and music culture matter in social justice in our world?
- Knowing what you know so far about EDM, how might you use this music culture for promoting social justice on your campus?
- What types of music cultures might fit the best on your campus to promote social justice?
What do you notice about the music?

- How does the music make you feel?
- What do you notice about the music?
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhYzULazdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhYzULazdQ)
- How does this differ from other music?
- Why do you feel this is one of the largest genres of music right now?
What is a drop?

• Listen...you will feel it....
• Two of the BEST EVER!!!
• Morgan Page (my FAV DJ)
• Above & Beyond with Fan (Push The Button)
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ywpgBWVGp0
What’s different about EDM?

• EDM music often has mostly electronic and/or organic sound with or without vocals, but you will notice if you listen to a great deal of this music, that genders are almost never mentioned in the lyrics. “...The cultural scientist Birgit Richard states that the club, especially the dance floor, offers the opportunity for free zones and expression without restraint...– the uniformity of movements corresponding to the loops and beats of the music as well as being cut off from the outside world – as a positive way of finding a new or alternative social order, and an alternative way of communication for gender...” (Mayer 2009).
“Equality on all levels and tolerance are basic values that the club and music scene has always supported.” Why is that so? Well, presumably because most of the music scenes that founded today’s dance music genres—disco, garage, house, etc.—were closely connected with marginalized groups, including gays and lesbians, trans*people, racial and ethnic minorities”-Luis-Manuel Garcia
Why should we know the history?

• “We’re currently experiencing a total mainstreaming of dance music in America...many of these newcomers are straight/white kids who are very far removed from the LGBT community, despite fist-pumping by the millions to a music that was born from gay people of color....many of the newcomers are drawn into the music for life, and I think it’s important that we highlight the role that the gay community played and that we educate new fans of dance music to the ideals of the community, equality and diversity that were so crucial to dance music’s DNA from the beginning...”-Luis Manuel Garcia
Do you know who this is?
Who is our EDM founding Godmother?

- Wendy Carlos
  - Musical prodigy who started playing piano by the age of 6
  - By the age of 10 had her first original composition “A Trio for Clarinet, Accordion, and Piano”
  - Attended and graduated with an M.A. in Music from Colombia University

- She won a Westinghouse Award for a home built computer at age 14
Our EDM Founding Godmother

- Carlos studied with pioneers of electronic music like Vladimir Ussachevsky, Otto Luening, and Jack Beeson
- She won three Grammy awards for the electronically constructed “Switched on Bach” album - this was the catalyst to introduce most of the world to the beauty of electronic music and resulted in its evolving popularity
- This album was the first of its kind, a reimagining of well-known Bach music entirely produced with synthesizers.
- At 22, she first learned about transgender identity at Colombia University when she was a student there
- By 1968 she had begun her transition
- With the success of Switched on Bach, she was able to complete her transition in 1972
- [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msNi7Rj0WnQ&list=PLcR-763koxrLtLLl0dZygD95S84piwUDt3)
Our EDM Founding Godmother

- She went on to produce music for such well known soundtracks as:
  - A Clockwork Orange
  - Walt Disney’s Tron
  - The Shining
  - And more…
Our EDM Founding Godmother

• She helped make electronic music possible by exposing the world to a then little-known product, the Moog synthesizer

• She met Robert Moog

• Because of her background in both physics and music she was asked to collaborate on the development of the Moog synthesizer

• She suggested adding touch sensitivity to the keyboard to give the sound more dynamics and musicality

• In 1966 she was gifted one of the few synthesizers then in existence, and with her production partner Rachel Elkind, created *Switched-On Bach*
Our EDM Founding Godmother

• At the age of 39, Wendy decided to announce herself in a Playboy interview, “I was about five or six... I remember being convinced I was a little girl, much preferring long hair and girls’ clothes, and not knowing why my parents didn’t see it clearly” -

• Wendy later said that she regretted the Playboy article and did not feel that it properly represented her. She continues to refrain from discussing this aspect of her life any further
Our EDM Founding Godmother

• “Wendy Carlos’s unique musical mind has inspired many LGBT artists who will be performing at San Diego Pride Music Festival. Many may not know, but she is responsible for taking Electronic Music mainstream long before Skrillex, Martin Garrix, Deorro, and “EDM” were even born.”-AAE Staff

• “Long Before the LGBT community began to receive more positive public acceptance, long before Caitlyn Jenner came out in a very public way, Wendy did it. She did it in a time when the obstacles the community faced were much greater than they are today. While there is still much work to do, Wendy helped pave the way for people to become more accepting….Her contributions to both the LGBT and electronic music communities should never be forgotten.”-Alexander Dias
• Why do we not know who Wendy Carlos is?
• What do you think are the reasons that we do not know who Wendy is?
• What other important people in music and music cultures do we not know about?
• Why does this matter?
History of EDM

• Beginning of the 1970s-in NYC queer people of color (primarily of African-American and Latin-Caribbean ancestry) and many straight-but-not-narrow allies came together and created music with a mix of soul, funk and Latin music with a driving four-four kick drum pattern, this became some of the roots of disco

• Later in the 1970s—disco gained popularity and developed a larger presence, gradually this music attracted a larger audience of white, straight, middle-class people

• Later 70s was the time of some of the best-known disco artists such as: Donna Summer, Chic, The Bee Gees, KC And The Sunshine Band, etc.
History of EDM

• Disco began to collapse toward the end of the 70s and anti-disco backlash began to take over in America

• The anti-disco slogan “Disco Sucks” was made available on T Shirts, Bumper Stickers, Buttons, and more, but this was not just a metaphor in the 70s, it was a half-spoken homophobic slur aimed at disco music and its’ fans

• Disco’s downfall did not happen overnight, but sales fell and continued to taper off into the 80s

• Outside of the US disco stuck around and dovetailed with 80s dance-pop, new wave and industrial music

• The disco collapse hit nightclubs especially hard and the few clubs that managed to remain open went on to form the “underground” of the post-disco era
History of EDM

• In NYC, Paradise Garage was the most well-known of the clubs that were able to remain open and they catered to an audience that was primarily queer, black, and/or Latin-Caribbean.

• Larry Levan was the club’s resident DJ-maintained a loyal following of dancers by developing a distinctive sound that would later be dubbed “garage.”

• Depending on who (and how) you ask, garage was either a precursor, a parallel or a sub-style of house music.

• This music featured a mix of disco, R&B, soul and funk, with a focus on gospel-inspired vocals.
History of EDM

• Clubs like Paradise Garage, The Saint, and Zanzibar kept the post-disco tradition alive in NYC and NJ throughout the 80s
• Newer clubs like Sound Factory and Twilo brought club culture into the 90s
• Most histories of Chicago House began with Frankie Knuckles, a disco DJ from NYC who played records with Larry Levan at the Continental Baths, a gay bathhouse in downtown Manhattan
History of EDM

• Chicago’s house sound was developed for and in the city’s primarily queer and black clubs, mixing older disco....with funk, hip-hop and European electro-pop

• In contrast to NYC’s garage heavier gospel and soul influenced music, Chicago house drew deeply from funk music with a more high-energy “jacking” sound that featured driving percussion and higher tempos

• In the late 80s house music took a harder and darker turn....Djs and producers began to experiment with overdriven squelching sounds of the Roland TR-303 synthesizer-gritty and psychadelic sub-style came to be known as “acid house”
History or EDM

• Disco music didn’t really die in Chicago….it just went back underground into the queer dance scene and returned as stripped-down, jacking, raw house music

• European synth pop, electronic rock, electro funk, and futurism developed a futuristic sounding style of dance music that drew heavily from electronic funk, relied more heavily on synthesizers, instead of acoustic samples and stripped away the warmer textures and gospel/soul vocal samples of house music

• Techno then started to emerge in Detroit and many of Detroit’s techno legends got their start frequenting (and often sneaking into) venues where an older generation of gay, black DJs were combining disco with new sounds of house and garage
History of EDM

• The older generations of primarily gay DJs continued to play at local parties well into the early 2000’s in Detroit—although most of them have either retired or passed on by now

• Segregation of gay and straight nightlife was especially sharp between 1988 and 1992 when the AIDS crisis was at its peak and anti-gay legislation was being passed by the conservative government of the time

• In 1988, UK’s rave scene blossomed and soon went international

• At the end of the 80s, rave in the UK had become a primarily straight, white, middle and working class affair

• By the beginning of the 90s the first rave events were being organized in NYC (Storm Rave) and Toronto (Exodus)
History of EDM

• Due to Chicago house extreme success in Europe, the first generation of house DJs were becoming incredibly busy with overseas bookings

• A younger generation of Chicago DJs carried forth the torch into the midwest rave scene

• By the time electronic dance music became a global phenomenon, rave events were attracting a crowd that was mostly young, white, middle-class, suburban and predominantly straight
History of EDM

• Some of the Queer Underground parts of the history that are often left out when discussing the history of EDM
  • Drag balls-history of ballroom culture, a mixture of music, dance, performance, art, fashion and personal reinvention
  • At the heart of the drag ball, a combination of beauty pageant, fashion runway, and dance competition is rotted historically among marginalized and transgender communities
  • Ball culture can be traced back as far as the Harlem Renaissance of the 1930s
  • Drag balls have been both a living archive of the post-disco era....they have influenced dance culture far beyond the usual circuit of night clubs
History of EDM

• Circuit Parties
  • Circuit parties are large-scale, corporate–sponsored mega-events held in massive locations and have been populated mostly by affluent and predominantly white gay men
  • They grew out of tea dances and seasonal parties which have been taking place in locations such as Fire Island, Provincetown, and other gay resorts and locations
  • The sound of “the circuit” was originally early house music, but later in the 90s evolved into hard house, tribal house, and trance music
  • Some writers have described circuit parties as “gay raves”
  • However circuit parties distinguish themselves from raves by their exclusive focus on particular sexual identities, and their levels of professionalism and commercialization
History of EDM

• Deep House in Midtown Manhattan
  • The city’s techno clubs seemed to be “oppressively white and straight, and male dominated”
  • However; in house scenes in Manhattan, disco, queerness, racial diversity and gender diversity were more blatant
  • A lot of the DJs at these clubs, drag balls, and some of the parties mentioned raised a great deal of funding for important organizations and gave back to their communities
  • “Thaemiltz’s work as both a critic and music maker reminds us that much of dance music’s utopianism comes from a place of struggle, injustice and desperation….As she says during the spoken-word into to the album, “House isn’t so much a sound as a situation.””
History of EDM

- There is a lot more that can be told regarding sexuality, gender, and other marginalized communities in relation to dance music culture from now into the present.
- We should try to keep records of how the music has evolved and is evolving into the future.
- We want to be sure that our roots are known and not erased now and in the future.
- Many DJs, producers, and promoters have been sensing a decrease in sexual diversity and openness in club culture, but this has a great deal to do with the genre having been largely mainstreamed.
What are my ideas about EDM?

• I would in fact argue that those who are EDM music lovers and consider themselves part of this evolving culture, whether of majority or marginal communities, have a more open understanding of gender, sexuality and race. Taking this even further, I would venture to say that EDM lovers are part of the movement of Social Justice and work to make our world a more equitable and just society for all. (Kosar 2015).

• What are yours?! 😊
EDM & Substance Use

• Important to recognize and be aware of substance use and abuse within the EDM community and at EDM events
• Although this is prevalent in EDM culture, not everyone partakes of substances when they are part of EDM culture or attending EDM events
• For many who attend—“Music is their drug”
• As educators, we should be promoting the idea of “music being the drug” for our students and that you do not need to partake of drugs to be a part of EDM culture or when attending EDM events
• We should also be knowledgeable about the types of substances at these events and the effects so that we can assist and educate our students

Dear Music,

You’ve always been the one constant in my life. I grew up out in the country in Vermont, and you were the force that provided the momentum for everything.

You got me excited, you kept me focused and you provided a ticket from a small town to the big stage. I never imagined I’d be able to make and play music for a living while traveling around the world.

Whenever I picked up an instrument, I could feel it in my blood – a calling to make music and share it with others. The call was deafening, and you made it clear you wouldn’t be ignored.

So I am writing to say thank you for everything you’ve provided. We’re just getting started...

Love,

Morgan
What are the DJs saying about EDM & Social Justice?

• EDM could be a bridge for social justice and social change
• Since the majority are mostly creating the music and are fans of the music and culture
• Music is the Revolution—Carl Cox
Future Directions & Applications

• Teaching history of EDM to all students/people, but specifically to majority folks when possible-personal connection to social justice, may alter beliefs

• Kandi events-PLUR-promoting, Peace, Love, Unity, Respect, how might this play out on your campus?

• Studying relationship of learning and music/EDM specific to determine positive benefits and correlations

• Exploring the relationship of EDM subculture and student collegiate experience (i.e. sense of belonging & mattering) (Schlossberg, Astin, etc.)
Thank You and in PLUR!!!
• Thank you to NASPA for having me here to share EDM, Queer Culture, & Social Justice with all of you!!!😊
  • I am honored to be here!! Again!!! Thank YOU NASPA!!!😊
  • Please stay in touch and let me know how you might be using EDM on your campus?
  • Also....let me know about music and music culture research that you are engaged in!
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