

Social observations for why teach music?

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Abstract: This account focuses on the value of music and music education as a social praxis. With that in mind, it explores five interrelated topics and the criteria for their praxies. First, what music “is”; then an analysis of individual music lessons; next, the challenges of general and classroom music; fourthly, issues involving ensembles; and finally, the reasons for choosing a career in music education. Frequent references to new praxial theories of music are assumed to be familiar in recent scholarship, and the value of music and music education is offered as a reminder of the importance, in each case, of music education as focused on musicing, not on aesthetic abstractions and premises. This is a survey of the impact of theory, of whatever vintage, and its relevance to praxis, not an examination of new research which is best explored in the sister journal ACT. And the theory addressed is well positioned to impact praxis, for those who look beyond status quo practices.

Keywords: Praxis, music education, curriculum theory, music lessons, general music, music ensembles, and music education careers.

Introduction¹

The overall issue addressed here is the socially relevant aspects as to why it is important to teach music in schools. And of the reasons to commit to advancing music in society via public school music education. It may seem unusual to ask readers who are in-service and prospective music teachers about Why Teach Music? However, it seeks to identify some of the important issues that are at stake not always thoroughly examined enough in terms of social, pedagogical and curricular problems, not that they can easily be separated.

This analysis is offered in behalf of several of the focal points of the TOPICS agenda: not as new findings: that is not what this journal is about. In fact, instead, keeping with the TOPICS agenda, what theory has contributed to the best of contemporary praxis—much of which has not profited from existing theory—shall be shown. However, those who assume that what is explained is what they think they are teaching, shall be questioned by examples of alternatives. The focus is, then, the relation of theory and praxis, and the contribution of praxis to theory. If some points seem not to be “new” to some readers, they hopefully will be to others. It seems likely that many readers, especially pre-service teachers, will not have considered many of these observations about the status of music education. These “observations” are one of the focal points of TOPICS, corresponding at least to the “O” in the TOPICS agenda. But, in truth, all of the focal points are in play:

T = various *topics* of interest to practitioners

O = *observations* argued towards “action for change” in praxis

P = *policies*, principles, and procedures relevant to implementing change.

I = *innovations* that promise to make a notable, positive difference in the everyday praxis of music teachers in all fields, at all levels

C = *curriculum* theory and studies now typically missing in the scholarly literature

S = *strategies* from current praxis for improving instruction, evaluation, teacher accountability, student assessment, and the like (but not methodolatry and related ‘how to’ rhetoric)

Music teachers too often take for granted what they teach and why they are teaching it—why school music education is important to people and society. They take as their unexamined context that music’s value in life and school is aesthetic. It is difficult for them not to assume this, since this has been the prevailing premise of their undergraduate (and often in-service graduate studies) and, often based on personal history, the reasons they became teachers. Much of what is offered here, for pre- and in-service teachers, are observations and applications of what we already know and have learned from previous theorizing—especially praxial theory with its pragmatic emphasis on life-long results for students. The problem is,

however well respected these praxial theories may be in the abstract, they are not often observed in praxis across the profession.

Unfortunately, students, administrators, and taxpayers do not necessarily accept music teachers' assumptions for the benefits of music as “aesthetically” beneficial. This topic has been examined again and again in the literature, and a notable result, in many places, is the lack of taxpayer or government recognition and support for music education. This article will survey and analyze five key issues that *praxial theory* suggests needs to be constantly examined and articulated, especially over time as schools and musics change: what music **is**, teaching it in individual lessons, in general (classroom) music classes and ensembles, and options concerning the attraction of music education as a career. The praxial theory involved is seen in the analysis of each of the situations of music education: their needs and their presumed benefits.



Music

To begin with, and a guiding feature of the discussion to follow, is the very basic question of what music **is**. This question is not looking for a formal definition but for a thoughtful clarification as to what is to be taught and, most importantly, to what pragmatic ends. A typical answer in the assumptions of many teachers—based on their collegiate experience—leans towards music as a *fine art* that is said to exist to supposedly promote aesthetic experience and consists of a museum-like repository of “Great Works” (or worse, contemporary imitations²) that are performed to ‘transmit our cultural heritage’ and that are enjoyed mainly in rare moments of leisure.

However, what is taught, why, and how it is taught will be considerably different if music is seen more broadly as a living *social practice* that is down-to-earth; that is a central ingredient in the social fabric of any society and in the lives of individuals actively engaged in the many forms of *musicing* (Elliot 1995; Small 1998 spells it *musicking*).³ And where *music appreciation* is thus seen empirically in the ways people actually *use* music in their *daily lives*,

thereby both transmitting culture (the past) and transforming society (the future). As Christopher Small notes, “music is first and foremost action [i.e., praxis] . . . in which all those present are involved and for whose nature and quality, success or failure, everyone present bears some responsibility (Small 1998, 9–10).” In other words, music is deeply social in its genesis, impacts, and meanings and variables according to the needs it serves!

Turning to scholarship in the social sciences instead of the speculations of aesthetics, there can be no doubt that “music in human life” (Kaemmer 1993), “music in everyday life” (DeNora 2000), “music as social text” (Shepherd 1991), “musical life in a changing society” (Blaukopf 1992), and “ethnicity, identity and music” (Stokes 1997) are among the many social values that far exceed the usual understanding of music as fine art and high culture⁴—that music’s profundity is its importance and richness for daily living—and is seen exactly in its ever-present importance to the life well-lived every day by ordinary people. Music is so omnipresent that sometimes we can’t avoid it (e.g., Christmas season) and more and more it is heard ‘on the go’ with mobile devices. Thus there can be no question that music is far more important than just an occasional leisure-time pursuit. Consider, for example, its role in religion, ceremony, socializing, nationhood, ethnicity, identity, self-actualization, and the like (see, e.g., Kaemmer 1993).

Yet music teachers often either fail to notice this pervasive importance, or seem intent on countering mass and popular musics with what they instead consider to be “good music” (see, in contrast, Strinati 1995, 1-50; Carroll 1998; Gramit 2002, 63-92 in support of the values of popular and vernacular musics). The focus on “good music”—though often “school music” literature—too often, too often has the effect of isolating musical study to the school years or the individual lesson or next concert with carryover to adult life being minimal, if any at all. In contrast, then, the praxial “goodness” of music is properly measured by the pragmatic criterion of what it is “good for” in people’s lives and how well it serves good ends that are always social.

Individual (studio) lessons

Students of all ages usually have varied reasons for studying an instrument, some not as advantageous as others. For instance, since the rise of the bourgeois class in the 18th–19th centuries, being able to perform (usually on piano or voice) has been seen as a social grace—or at least, along with literature and the other arts, a sign of good breeding and classy status. Homes today (many fewer than years ago when every middle class home had a piano where family *divertissement* was centered—thus “divertimento”) have replaced *hausmusik* with TV and computer games. Nonetheless, keeping with the bourgeois (middle class) ethos of the 18th century and later children are thus often prompted by their parents to take music lessons on that basis alone, even though this parental motivation is too often ineffective. Teachers should, therefore, work to promote the personal *musical* rewards to be gained through study. Advocates of “no pain-no gain” pedagogy will find students failing to experience most of the benefits and pleasures that studying music has to offer. This is not new advice, but it is rarely observed in praxis. The result is an enormous number of students who quit lessons due to the lack of musical pleasures of practicing and interests in the literature assigned.

Music teachers also can run afoul of other pedagogical practices that often work against promoting the dispositions, attitudes, and skills needed to support lifelong involvement (and motivated practicing). For example, some teachers treat lessons as though each student will or might seek conservatory training—this despite the fact that professional careers are limited to a very few high achievers and are very competitive. A related problem assumes that students will (or want to) engage in “presentational” *solo recitals* rather than in various kinds of “participatory” performances that promote *social* music-making (Turino 2008, 23–65); or the many forms of chamber music available in society (e.g., garage bands, “barbershop” singing). A lesson predicated on nurturing a presentational recitalist is all too likely to bypass many of the musical pleasures that keep most students actively performing as adults and that contribute to the musical life of society. For example, the pedagogy of Robert

Pace (e.g., 1988) demonstrates a useful distinction between, for example, a *music* lesson and a *piano* lesson. The purpose of the latter is to promote the former, not an end-in-itself. Thus, in addition to classics, students learn to improvise, use lead-sheets, accompany, compose, sight-read, listen, and play by ear. They become broadly educated “musicians” with musicianship skills that enable and dispose them to continue to practice and to play as amateurs for their own musical pleasures and with others. And any who aspire to professional careers easily gain acceptance to advanced study—often in advance of others who have had less ear training.

Another difficulty arises when technique is drilled as an end-in-itself via scales and exercises intended to promote technical facility, but that lack musical value and thus interest to students. The “discipline” of such study is often off-putting for many students who are mainly motivated by making music *per se*. When they cannot connect the gains from such purported discipline to the increased musical rewards of their performing, their practicing and progress suffers. As no less an artist than pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim points out:

I studied with my father till I was about seventeen. . . . My father had an obsession about wanting things to be natural. I was brought up on the fundamental principle that there is no division between musical and technical problems. This was an integral part of his philosophy. I was never made to practice scales or arpeggios . . . [only] the pieces themselves. A principle that was hammered into me early, and which I still adhere to, is never to play any note mechanically. My father’s teaching was based on the belief that there are enough scales in Mozart’s concertos. (Quoted in Booth 1999, 88).

Thus, the issue is not whether technique is important: it certainly is! The problem is focusing on technique mechanically, as an end-in-itself, which is counterproductive for most students. When well-chosen literature “practices” technique in *authentic* musical contexts, then students directly understand the connection of technique to their increased musical pleasures. The connection between technical skill and improved rewards is perfectly clear to

student athletes who willingly focus on skills in their practice sessions; but it too often is not clear to student musicians.

A teacher's insistence on isolated skill drills falls on *deaf ears* if students do not experience the musical rewards of the promised progress from technical study; and thus negatively suffer the teacher's claims of value for such practicing, or ignore it in their daily practicing—or (more often) quit! Conservatories and university schools of music are filled with the very few students who have submitted to such rigor; the remainder of those who have studied have eschewed any further engagement with practicing or performing. Their teachers (a fate many gravitated to rather than engage in the competition of music performance as a career), often visit on students the same regime that helped them to elite levels, with little thought to what is lost in the name of discipline and technique over performance that is at levels that suit and reward lifelong amateurism (Regelski 2007).

Ironically, seeking the pleasures of music also often govern *bad* practicing habits: students thus play too quickly in order to enjoy the music at tempo. They are not particularly bothered by errors or sloppy technique and just stop and begin again (over and over at each problem area), without really correcting (or even identifying) the technical or musical problem at stake. Of course the selection of repertory is important in this regard, too. Technique should be derived from an apt selection of repertory and students must enjoy the music they are practicing and thus appreciate that the technique at stake has direct, positive consequences for their musical pleasures. Then they understand the need for practicing with a *musical goal* in mind, not just repeating passages or filling assigned practice time.

Quality of practice is more important than quantity. And given the busy lives of students (and adult students), efficient and effective practicing is an important key to practicing at all! *Practicing is itself a skill that needs to be taught and improved, not just assigned.* For example, consider the pedagogical praxis of teachers who, *during each lesson*, have the student identify a short passage that needs attention. The student then practices it

for 2-3 minutes while the teacher observes the student's strategy (or lack thereof) and then gives advice for making the practicing more effective.

The music chosen for study becomes critical if a student's motivation for study and practicing is *inner-directed* by the music's interests to them rather than *other-directed* by parents, teachers, or competition. Inner directed students don't practice just to fill assigned minutes, or so they don't embarrass themselves in the next lesson, or simply to avoid being scolded by the teacher: they practice to actively seek to enjoy their "work" and thus their musical pleasures. Teachers who understand this at least give students some choice of repertory—often by demonstrating it for them with the intent of influencing their choices, but also of *aurally modeling* the desired musical outcome. Such an aural intention and image is a basis for helping students identify problems in the first place and for wanting to overcome them. This is an advantage of pedagogies where students practice with excellent aural models in mind (i.e., in their ear). Multiple models can also be provided via recordings; where students listen to range of interesting options and choose new literature on that basis; while the models also inform their independent musicianship and artistry. Such listening, of course, is itself a model for lifelong pleasures, even for those who do not continue to perform as adults. Teachers who offer a choice (from a range of styles, genres) should not be surprised when students are more accomplished with the music *they* chose than what the teacher chose for them!

Differences in the musical satisfactions afforded by certain performance media have not always been well-thought out by beginning students or their parents, or taken into consideration by teachers. First of all, unlike standard orchestral instruments (or voice study), other media (e.g., piano, accordion, guitar, banjo) are musically self-sufficient, requiring no accompaniment; thus practicing is more musically satisfying than practicing an isolated part. Secondly, practicing certain instruments can annoy neighbors and thus must be scheduled at certain hours rather than done when motivated or convenient. Thirdly, students who do not

get to perform their solos with piano or other accompaniment are simply missing much of what the music has to offer holistically. Teachers thus benefit students when they develop their piano skills so that they can accompany students in their lessons. This can importantly affect student motivation.

This problem also raises questions about solo versus social (i.e., participatory) performance where central pleasures are provided simply by making music with others—whether or not publicly performed. Take, for example, the three mothers who got together twice a week for several hours to play all the music they could find for piano, flute, and oboe—while their babies rested in the bedroom. Students who are oriented to the values and virtues of chamber music (of all kinds) learn from the first about “music as social life” (Turino 2008; also see Booth 1999) in ways that are motivating and rewarding. Models for engaging young students in chamber musics exist (Eskelinen & Jääskeläinen 2000; 2008) and deserve far more attention from teachers. Arrangements are easily made. First of all, the prospect of rehearsing and playing with others motivates students to be more responsible with their own practicing. And, of course, the pleasures of chamber combinations (in various genres, duets, trios) are readily accessible outside of school and throughout life without the scheduling problems for adults created by large ensembles.

Finally, not as a technological or universal curricular solution, teachers who have not explored ever-evolving music technology as part of their general offering miss out with their students on the many attractions such musicing holds for students. MIDI-instruments, for example, can be practiced any time and hold forth creative possibilities not readily available with acoustic instruments. Accompanying software that “follows” the soloist adds an important dimension to students’ musical pleasures and makes possible a life of performing at home. Composing software educates students’ musical thinking and inner-ear, and familiarizes them with the kinds of decisions that occupy composers and that performers profit from considering. Performing their own compositions for peers and audiences also

motivates practice. Play-lists of literature that samples styles, genres, performances (etc.), can be offered to them for MP3 and other listening modes. These educate students' musicianship and artistry—and, importantly, they model listening as a valuable form of lifelong musicing of its own. Producing each student's personal CD of music when "mastered" (i.e., before moving on to new literature) inspires practice and impresses parents and grandparents—a musical equivalent of art projects that are displayed on refrigerator doors. And it represents a short-term goal for the student, not to mention something 'tangible' about which they can feel a sense of accomplishment. Attention to such benefits of media in a class does not commit the teacher to a universal technological perspective (though, that's exactly what is the problem with the universal focus on technique on traditional instruments), only to using what resources exist to advance curricular intentions. Recordings of literature (as performed by professionals, but also by previous students) can be major factor in rewarding interest, as can creating or performing wind arrangements of, say, Bach's literature.

The "good life" lived in key ways through musicing is thus a first major answer to the main question of "Why music should be taught in schools and why individuals should choose to teach it?" The "good life" in question is a life enlivened through musicing. When musical study has a "shelf life" of only the school years and thus falls short of motivating the kind of lifelong learning and appreciation seen in the uses to which music is typically put in living the "good life," much of what music has to offer has been lost. Teaching that focuses on promoting favorable dispositions and musical independence for *meaningfully-chosen musicing in adult life* makes a contribution to the students and to the music world at large, in all its diversity. Teaching predicated on narrow premises or limiting traditions is best re-thought, then, in terms of just how important, just how pervasive music *already* is in people's lives. Thus, the music world at large will grow and will profoundly influence individuals and society. Music teachers are thus best focused on a *value added* criterion of what they, through their teaching, have contributed to that music world and to individual students' musical lives. Teaching that

fails to advance the importance of life-long musical “amateurism” (Booth 1999) is self-defeating and futile.

School Music Education

To review, earlier music was described as a *social practice*, not as an “imaginary museum of musical works” (Goehr 1992), a collection contemplated only on rare occasions of leisure time. Its importance to most people thus comes not from its *rarity* but from its very *abundant* daily contributions to the quality of their lives. Musicing of all kinds is, then, a central *resource* “that can be harnessed in and for imagination, awareness, consciousness, action, for all manner of social formation” (DeNora 2000, 24); a means by which individuals “produce their social situations and themselves *as selves*” (6). The result is an abundance of “musics,” each of which arises, from the first, in connection with different socio-personal conditions or needs that bring it into being, to begin with. Any music, and this or that praxis, remains tied to those originating sources and needs, and it continues to serve current practices and to promote its own evolution.

Regardless of the society, music is such a natural part of human life and so central in people’s everyday lives that we might wonder what purposes are served by teaching it in schools? In that regard, it is a lot like language. By the time children begin school, both the verbal language and musical language of their environment have profoundly educated them inductively. Musically, they “understand” the system of tonality into which they have been born. Schooling aspires to build on this previously informal, inductive learning in order to promote even greater facility and to offer more outlets for personal and social agency.

The inclusion of formal music instruction in schools has been rationalized on many grounds and has attempted to serve a variety of often noble-sounding and often non-musical ideological purposes,⁵ usually advanced on the basis of aesthetic theorizing about 18th and 19th century “classics.” While the history of music education reads differently in each country, several variables are constant. What follows is a history of ideas, not given to the appetite for

“recent” research. History is updated, but what follows is a precis of accepted *cultural history* to date (which doesn’t change quickly) but is now well appreciated among music educationalists.

First, the 18th century Enlightenment resulted in the systematic study of music that would lead to “a more highly cultivated society” (Gramit 2002, 94; see also 121–22). Secondly, the Enlightenment’s new scientific ideal was to analyze an object of study into its parts and label them: *to name was to know*. Thus was music transformed from a social practice to a *discipline*—both in the sense of a discipline of study, and a discipline of the mind and body as described by Foucault (see, e.g., Gramit 2002, 106–07) that became the “music appreciation” movement in schools (McCarthy 1997) and elsewhere (e.g., music journalism); and that was tied to the “sacralization” of culture by aesthetic theorizing (Levine 1988, 85–168; Shiner 2001, 187–224) and to the creation of a hierarchy of “high” and “low” art (Gramit 2002, 27–62; Levine 1988). Teaching music “concepts,” data, and terminology and “facts” from music history and theory as *background knowledge* for the cultivation of *good musical taste* (Gramit 2002, 104) was the consequence, a practice that continues in classrooms today. Third, initial efforts are often focused on teaching singing (Gramit 2002, 96). Then, with gaining interest in instrumental music—“pure” music without words, with its ideologies of *aesthetic formalism* and *absolute music* (i.e., “for itself”)—gained supremacy in the musical hierarchy in the early 19th century (Gramit 2002, 121–22). Being educated musically “required a cultivation that inevitably excluded by far the greater portion of the people (124)” despite the efforts by schools and concert associations at *audience development* (Levine 1988, 178–198). This, too, remains a problem in many societies, with audiences for the classics greying and dwindling, especially where not subsidized by governments. (As of this writing [2016] several major symphony orchestras in the USA are on strike or otherwise starved of funds from the reduced sales of tickets). Finally, *school music is but one musical praxis* in the wider music-world, but it too often exists as an island of its own, cut off from the vibrant musicing going on outside the school room and day.

Music as a social praxis is constrained by various aspects of formal schooling, which is itself a social practice. Traditional (functionalist) social theory sees schools as *transmitting* “approved culture” and *reproducing* the socioeconomic and political status quo. In contrast, *transformation* models (e.g., critical theory, symbolic interactionism) see schools as places where learning is *constructed* (not reproduced) and, thus, as places where meaning is *made* (not passed-on, ready-made). Many of the practices associated with schooling thus often have profound social implications. For example, students are trained (or tamed) to follow authority—principals (headmasters) and teachers, of course, but also the organization of the school day into subjects, periods, moving from class to class according to the demands of the clock, and so on. Many social critics worry that such results lead more to obedient workers and compliant citizens than to educating minds and promoting social progress.

In particular, the organization of schooling according to formal academic disciplines has had a profound impact. To begin with, what *is* included in schooling has the imprimatur of scholars, education administrations, and political leaders: it is the “approved” knowledge mentioned earlier. However, students nonetheless actually **learn** that what is *not* included is *not approved*! This so-called *hidden curriculum*⁶ thus teaches *inadvertently* what society does **not** value (along with learning the various controlling and socializing routines, mentioned earlier, that are not the direct focus of instruction but that students learn to obey). Furthermore, these subjects are taught as “introductions” to the academic disciplines as though for their own sake, rather than for their pragmatic usefulness to students and society. This leads, of course, to the complaints of many students that school is “merely academic” and pragmatically irrelevant.

It is important to note in this connection that the Academy in ancient Athens was where Plato’s Idealism taught that ideas or concepts (Idealism) were more “real” than their physical counterparts in the empirical world (i.e., Realism). Complaints by students today that schooling is “merely academic” reflect the continuation—over these hundreds of years—of this Idealist tradition, as well as the accompanying scholastic rationale that studying the

various subjects “exercises” and “disciplines” the mind, even if what is studied is not otherwise very useful in itself to most graduates. In the USA, student’s requirements for “general education” studies in collegiate music departments are usually seen by music students as taking time *away* from practicing and rehearsing. Ultimately, with *mandatory universal schooling*, a rivalry arises as to which subjects get included in schools. Given the knowledge explosion associated with computers and technology, this competition has resulted in some important changes in schooling, often at the expense of certain traditions. There is an increasing danger, then, that the inclusion of school music in schools is at risk from the rapid expansion of the range of other school studies. This threat is seen where school music is reduced greatly, where musically un-or under-trained teachers are assigned to teach music, and where music studies are increasingly relegated to the sidelines as elective rather than required study.

General (classroom) music

“General” music, as it is widely known, stems from the educational theory of being “generally well-educated”—the implicit goal of universal schooling in most countries. Thus, it is predicated on *required* music study in the *general education* of *all* students. Unfortunately, this concept is not well-understood by music teachers who often mistake it as meaning “music in general”—a little of this, an introduction to that, a superficial sampling of “activities” for “experiencing” concepts about the traditional “elements of music” and other such abstractions.

This is perhaps all the more a problem where it is known as elementary school “classroom” music. In that tradition, as mentioned earlier, elementary school instruction in singing was widely introduced in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In many places today it is still the primary focus of general music classes. However, singing involves three interdependent skills: vocal production, pitch matching, and reading notation. When the

beginner (of any age) is confronted with all three at once, the last two frequently conflict and reading music vocally is difficult when the student cannot vocally match pitch easily. And each skill requires a good deal of individual attention that is often difficult to provide in classroom instruction. In Japan, the two skill-sets get socially separated: before entering school, most children learn to match pitch and a repertory of action songs on the playgrounds of their apartment houses (called “mansions”). Thus the emphasis in school is on music reading, which—in the best systems—is taught by learning to play recorders and by learning new songs from notation.

Various solfeggio practices are employed with varying degrees of success around the world, yet all depend on pitch-matching as the first step. Where there is plenty of singing in the home, church, and community, the skill is easily learned and reinforced (e.g., Japan). Where it is not (e.g., the USA), many neither learn to match pitch nor to read music, despite usually 7+ years of school singing. This is sad; we always have our vocal instrument with us all the time and singing is one of the most rewarding of all performance media, as is shown in countries with strong choir traditions (e.g., Estonia) and where karaoke is popular (e.g., Japan; on singing see Regelski 2004, 190–212).

With the rise of the disciplines of musicology and music theory after the Enlightenment and, from the first, their orientation to aesthetics and intellectual ideas, came a reevaluation of instrumental music “which reversed the long-standing hierarchy that figured vocal music, both in sacred genres and in opera, as superior to instrumental” (Gramit 2002, 121). While singing continued as a primary focus in general music classes—and probably remains so today in most places—listening newly became a curricular goal, particularly with the rise of the public concert, the invention of recording, and the arrival of recording technologies in schools. Thus cultivating listening “comprehension” and “good taste” served as the basis for the music appreciation and “music education as aesthetic education” trends in many countries.

It is not unusual, then, to see singing along with listening, moving, and ‘creative activities’ in general music classes. These activities seem to be more oriented toward educating listening ‘appreciation’ than to promoting musicianship or creativity, however. Or at least, any criteria of musical skill development (musicianship) are decidedly secondary, if involved at all; and composing as a personal musical pastime often seems not to be not a focus. Any and all musical “activities” (as teachers tend to call them) are seen as *automatically* educative on the assumption that they are *inevitably aesthetic* and thus, somehow, someday, will advance students’ aesthetic responsiveness as listeners. There is simply no evidence that this is the case.

So, there is often a decided superficiality to much that goes on in classes under the teacher’s supervision, as an assumption that musical “activities” have been automatically aesthetic and therefore beneficial. And often curriculum requirements for music are fulfilled simply by occasionally including any musical activities in the school day. The “Arts in General Education” banner, for example, rationalizes the main value of music and art education as good for teaching *other subjects*, thereby sacrificing what art and music have to offer in themselves. And, in many countries, music educators try to legitimate general music activities as influencing the development of the brain’s cognitive functioning—the dubious “Mozart Effect” claims that music makes students smarter. And, supporters seem to have lost sight of the reasons—smarter brains or not—that music exists to begin with: as a vital *social practice*, carried out via an expanding array of media, by people from all walks of life. That is one important answer to “Why is music taught in schools?”!

If school music education is to be relevant to the life well-lived, it needs to build bridges to the music-world outside of school. Lessons claiming to “inform” appreciative ‘aesthetic’ listening do not have this impact; graduates’ free musical choices remain largely unaffected. The alternative of teaching popular musics comes to mind. However, if such music is already popular and appreciated, what is gained or improved?—especially if teaching

mainly has students “covering” popular rock pieces; or if rock history and theory are taught via the music appreciation paradigm as though “background” to *properly informed* listening. Yuck! Rock and “pop” musics are also social practices and, divorced from their praxial conditions (by the classroom context), superficiality looms large when they become the main focus of school music curriculums.

Studying musical practices common in a society or nation is an option. Despite their ubiquity, understanding the pivotal role of music in common social practices can advance more meaningful participation and appreciation. For example, without getting into the details of religious praxis, religious music takes many forms according to different religions. Religious practices can be studied for the ways in which music is a pivotal factor, not as entertainment during the service but as prayer that appeals to parishioners and focuses then on the religious meanings at stake. Worth notice and study are common practices, such as music for weddings and other events, celebrations (holidays), ethnic identification, socializing (parties, dinners, sing-alongs), and more. Which musical traits are suitable for certain uses? Why? What do differences between musics that serve similar functions (e.g., weddings, funerals) tell us about cultural differences in those functions and who practices them, and why? What events are traditionally marked by certain kinds of music? Which kinds of musics are suitable to their social uses, and why or how-so? Answering these questions, leading thoughtful study can lead students to a realization of a key role of music in their lives.

Music journalism, collecting recordings, dancing (of “practiced” kinds), creating focused playlists (etc.), can also profit from curricular attention. For example, lists that feature the important role of music in aerobics (DeNora 2000, 89-102) or that energize sports performance (i.e., “music as a prosthetic technology of the body . . . that extends what the body can do” [DeNora 2000, 102-03])—for use for use during jogging, cross-country skiing, even to enhance work (DeNora 2000, 103-08) and for social agency (e.g., parties, dinners, caroling).

Performance that holds forth possibilities for a life of amateur musicing can be stressed (see Regelski 2007). “Recreational” and ethnic instruments typical for a region or

country can be introduced at an entry level—everything from guitars, to electronic keyboards, to locally popular instruments (e.g., dulcimers, banjo, and guitar) and MIDI-instruments (see Knappenberger 2016).

However, perhaps there is no greater source of resources than the music applications (apps) for smart phones, pads, and notebooks. These are already widely used and offer an unimaginable range of musicing for performing, listening, and composing. “Everyone can make music,” inventor and entrepreneur Ge Wang believes, “and everyone should” (quoted in Walker 2011). For example (at present, 2015), his app “Ocarina” converts the iPhone into a flutelike instrument. It also has “a representation of the globe, with dots that light up to show where in the world someone was playing the app at that moment. With a tap, you can listen. It is also possible to arrange a duet with an Ocarina user thousands of miles away” (Walker 2011). Other apps let you compose music (in whatever style), upload it to an Internet site where others also “work” with the material, with the original composer taking inspiration from these contributions in finalizing the composition. Still other composition software exists for creating, say, soundtracks for videos, or for free-standing compositions. Others provide a multi-media experience where the user creates and organizes sounds, and accompanying abstract visuals react delightfully with the music. And you can now play the guitar on your cellphone. The possibilities are limitless and growing exponentially by the day. However, these are not a universal cure, as so many teachers give into, because the musics involved do not usually lead to either continued applications (a smart-phone ensemble: do any exist outside of school?) or a growth in musicianship that serves long-lasting enthusiasm for musicing.

Students of course, are already involved with this technology, but can be turned on to new apps in class, perhaps with *cross-peer coaching*, as interest and ability in an app spreads through a class. And many students already own these “instruments” and, after experiencing their pleasures, others will want to acquire them. As our understanding of “music” expands

from the imaginary *museum* of “works” to a *living art* that enhances everyday life, so do the countless possibilities for meaningful musicing. The technologies of the past (instruments and recordings) certainly remain relevant, but the musical future is happening today and general music classes are ideally suited to tapping into this future. Failure to do so may well risk the continued existence of general music in schools (see Gouzouasis & Bakan 2011).

Ensembles

The question at stake of why music should be taught in schools and for what reason is *not* raised here to answer the ever-growing urgency to engage in more advocacy of music education in schools. The need is to reconsider some of the taken for granted assumptions that often lead to unsuccessful teaching; to students who don’t practice or quit lessons or ensembles; and, perhaps worst of all, to music teaching that does not result in making a musical difference in the actions and choices of students outside of and after graduation from school. In other words, the question goes directly to how to *avoid* the need for advocacy!

We have already seen that musicing is among the most important of all the social practices that sustain any society and culture—and not just high culture. As *praxis*, then, music fills everyday life with meaning: or, more precisely, various musics are put to “use” in the living of life, and such uses—i.e., the choices made for engaging in various musical practices—are *empirical evidence* of “music appreciation.” Even attending concerts of classical music is imbued with a wealth of social elements that are central to the experience—everything from the semiotics of the space (e.g., hearing jazz in a church, or religious texts in a secular concert hall), to audience behavior (e.g., clapping, intermission discussions, dress codes) and the “interactional synchrony” (Benzon 2001, 42) through which emotions and meanings are coordinated and attuned to by audiences. Such *affective synergy* exists even when we are listening at home to the music that we like in common with others—i.e., the musical “taste publics” to which we belong.

Understood in such terms, music is a primary source of *sociality*—of all kinds—and, thus, is a key contribution to the health and well-being of society. It is among the social practices that bring people together, and its various styles create sub-cultures that even more particularly focus on sociality through music. Music is basic to the life well-lived at all socioeconomic levels of society, whether it is concert music for just listening, or dance music, or music for ethnic celebration, or worship, or a host of other central human practices in which music is central. It is a grave curricular mistake, then, to narrow the impact of music education only to the school years when, among the most important needs is to extend music's social role and value throughout the web of life.

Sadly, the trend is often in the opposite direction. More and more advocacy is needed to legitimate music education in schools and in many countries. Furthermore, for example, a survey in Germany (*The Local*, Dec. 7, 2012) shows a decline of home music making of 30% in 4 years, down to only 17.7%—this in a country otherwise renowned for its active musical life. Some reasons for this have been explored earlier. Elsewhere, but particularly in the USA, the focus is on ensembles, perhaps the major concern of music teachers in presenting their efforts to the public and to other music teachers—an important social variable. Of concern, then, is curriculum and pedagogy that can *fail* to prepare or incline ensemble members to continue making music throughout life—an *action ideal* that is worth advancing. As with any action ideal (e.g., good health, good friend), there is no utopian goal that can ever be reached once and for all. But it serves as a direction for improvement of music education curriculum and pedagogy and, thus, of music's role in society, that should be clearly tied to how and how often people use music to enhance their daily lives.

Large ensembles

Large ensembles have typically been the major feature of school-based music education. They certainly fulfill the sociality for students that music affords—although sometimes non-musical socializing (talking) can get in the way of rehearsing! Such ensembles also acquaint students

with a literature they wouldn't otherwise encounter that is experienced powerfully as personal and embodied: they "feel" it. *Collective intentionality* is at also at work that, under the best of circumstances, has each member focused on a shared musical goal or result. Such intentionality is the "about-ness" of an action, what (individually or collectively) it is focused on bringing about, or is "good for." When students' intentionality is not focused on *musical* results and learning, the growth of musicianship is negatively affected. When the intentionality is only focused on presenting the next concert, skills and dispositions are not learned that are conducive to participation after graduation or in circumstances where there are no concerts—recreational performance at home (see, e.g. *The Local*, Dec. 20, 2012), or in community and social groups (chamber musics of various kinds).

Typically, however, school ensembles are engaged in "presentational music" (see Turino 2008)—that is, music to be performed for audiences that, aside from being listeners, are not otherwise involved. This need to "present" music to an audience thus requires considerable rehearsal time and focused practice, even unfortunately, drill: criteria that can lead some students to opt out of participation. "Participatory music" (Turino 2008), in contrast, has as its goal the *participation* (in some form, if only clapping or playing/singing along/dancing) of those present. There are, of course, some participatory benefits for students developmentally that are associated with presentational practices, but the audience/ensemble distinction is central: The music needs to be rehearsed to a standard that the audience finds interesting, competent, and rewarding. The focus, then, is on the *performance* and on each member's contribution to the end-result—the concert—*not on the social values of participation* leading to it.

This is not the most fruitful educational environment for individual students to develop the skills and dispositions needed to sustain a fulfilling life of *personal* music making. One problem, of course, is that it is pedagogically difficult to attend to the development of individual skills (music reading, technique, dispositions for the future, etc.) in large groups. As result, performing X-years of concert literature often does not typically result in advancing the

musicianship and *musical independence* needed to make music in other contexts or at other times in the future. There's also the problem that, while ensemble participants experience the "whole" aurally, they are engaged only with one part of that whole. Depending on the type of ensemble and the part in question (3rd trombone, 2nd soprano, etc.) this obviously has several potential liabilities for promoting student's skills and musical motivations.

First, practicing one's part alone at home (or even in a sectional rehearsal) lacks holistic context and is often not fully musically satisfying and thus can lead to less than effective musical results. Consequently, the growth of the students' musicianship is jeopardized, as is their individual contribution to the musical whole. Secondly, the various parts often have different musical benefits and interests: Some parts are clearly less musically rewarding or challenging than others. Thus, when a section is inactive for many measures, students' attention often strays to socializing. Thirdly, and perhaps most worrisome, individuals can "hide" behind "leaders" or within their sections. They may enjoy the overall musical result, but as "followers" they don't acquire the skills possessed by section leaders. This assumes, of course, that the leaders really are musically competent to lead. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, and some 'leaders' are over-confident in their skills and end up leading their sections astray (Zadig, 2011).

This is why, with large ensembles, the *averaging effects of large numbers* usually produces an overall musical result that is better than the abilities of most *individuals* in it. This leads to the educational misappraisal by teachers, even audiences, that the ability of individual performers is as good as the collective result—which is rarely the case. (In contrast, as discussed below, chamber ensembles with one or two persons per part have little place to "hide," and each performer must make a competent contribution to the result.) And, finally, students are deprived of the opportunity to make—and thus learn to make—decisions and musical choices on their own if the teacher/director is making all the musical decisions. This also has negative consequences for *musical independence* that, if students are to be

musically active elsewhere and at other times in life, should be a major praxial goal of teacher/directors.

These disadvantages can be minimized by careful selection of the literature to be performed. Firstly, does it promote musicianship skills that can be used in future circumstances (including, but not restricted to, future performances of the ensemble in question)? Do all parts present significant musical challenges of the type that contribute to each student's musicianship, or are some parts rewarding in this sense while others are less interesting? Does the literature acquaint students with musics that will inform their future performing and listening choices? How much rehearsing will it take before the students can begin to enjoy the *music* rather than struggle, collectively or individually, with their parts? If the results become musical and musically satisfying only as the concert approaches, the long-term benefits are likely to be small. Music well-chosen in terms of the present abilities of the ensemble can be more musically satisfying. And educationally productive.

I've used the term "teacher/director" to stress that, in schools at least, a rehearsal should do more than just focus on notation and interpretation. The teacher/director needs to plan for rehearsal techniques and learning experiences that advance the musicianship of each individual in the ensemble—not just for the next concert. The chosen literature facilitates such a curriculum of promoting musicianship, but it is not musically or educationally sufficient to warrant being the curriculum on its own—especially given complaints about its musical quality from musicians. So, the number of concerts a year is not a *curriculum* for life-long engagement with music by graduates! Furthermore, a range of literature needs to be sampled if students are to be acquainted with a breadth of musical styles and challenges.

Chamber ensembles from within large ensembles

In addition to offering various chamber groups that exist on their own merits (i.e., duets, trios, and the like, especially where a school cannot offer a full range of large ensembles), such as for the few string students few who can be benefited by small string ensembles—duets,

trios—that are typically overlooked, one useful teaching practice is to form (or encourage to form) chamber groups from among the members of the large ensemble. These groups (with one or two students per part) can select their own literature and rehearse largely on their own. The teacher then acts as an occasional “coach,” but the students make most musical decisions and apply musical criteria with only occasional input (and correction) from the teacher. Intermittently, the rehearsal period of the large group can reserve some time for short recitals by such groups where the rest of the large ensemble is then the *audience*, thus promoting *listening* skills and motivating their own interests along similar lines. Concerts can feature performances by these chamber groups, thereby providing variety and reducing the total number of large group works needed to present a full concert program.⁷

Considered in reverse, were it not for the emphasis on traditional large ensembles, mounting an ensemble program would best be based on range of bountiful small, chamber ensembles of various kinds, coached by the teacher (or the most advanced students) sampling a wide array of literature. These groups, then, are assembled several times a week for performance of large ensemble literature where they bring all the skills of reading, and musicianship, to bear, with fewer rehearsals needed, to produce excellent musical results—with the benefits for the future students as adults of the pleasures of the chamber ensembles! When this kind of pedagogy is employed, the teacher/director will surely find that the competencies that students have developed in their chamber praxis will improve their contributions to the large ensemble, thus making its progress more efficient and effective. For example, one teacher gave up his scheduled 5 day a week choir rehearsal to 3 times a week voice/class groups of 12 singers in a variety of solo and chamber literature and music reading of that literature; and in only two of the remaining weekly rehearsals, as expected, the chorus was immeasurably more efficient and effective in learning new music. They didn’t need the lost rehearsal time because they had progressed as individual musicians.

Most importantly, such experience, as part of praxial theory, will have modeled a kind of musicing they can enjoy as adults. (Busy adults are far more likely to be able to find or make time for such small groups: Problems of agreeing on rehearsal times for large ensembles often exclude many prospective participants.) Thus the pleasures of such small group musicing can contribute to the dispositions of members to continue with such musics. When these groups sample an array of different musics, members are also becoming educated as listeners. Because their individual parts are more exposed than in the large ensemble, they are more inclined to improve their competence and are more likely to be musically rewarded by their input to the musical whole. Thus, their musicianship and dispositions for performing are both advanced.

Ensembles, large or small, acquaint students with musics they would otherwise miss. But the worrisome tendency is for their musicing participation to cease upon leaving school. Benefit that is only experienced during the school years is totally missing in such a program of presenting concerts and claiming that a lasting music education is happening. If ensemble teachers/directors are to contribute to a good life through music, ensembles must be more than merely school-based social *activities*. They need to facilitate and motivate the intentionality that shows appreciation through the lifelong incorporation of music in the lives of their members.

Music Teaching as a Profession

As an important reminder, earlier music has been advanced as *praxis*—as a central and vital *social practice*. Thus, importantly, it is much more than simply a collection of ‘works’ for passive contemplation. Instead, in all its diverse genres and types, it is a major source of active sociality. Thus, its importance to teachers and students goes well beyond *sounding forms* of any moment, to include the many *social practices* in which the role of music is a key ingredient: Take away the music and the practice either ceases to exist or is changed radically.

For example, all that's needed for dancing is a drum beat, but without the rest of the music the experience is vastly different.

One result of this this praxial view has been to focus on music as a “doing” and, thus, to the coining of the term “musicing” (or “musicking” that emphasizes the social dimension) to stress its active role in creating identity, community, and sociality. Thus, once again, appreciation is not a state of mind dependent on acquiring or understanding background knowledge: it is an *empirical* matter of how, when, where, why, and how often individuals engage in musicing in order to enrich their lives. Appreciation, then, is properly seen in the musical choices people make for music in their lives (Regelski 2006a). A corollary of this principle is the need for music education to make a lasting difference in the lives of students outside of school and as adults (Regelski 2005). This pragmatic criterion rejects claims that experiences of musical schooling *automatically* result in an “aesthetic education”—whatever that means in terms of practical results—that somehow, sometime has lasting value for students.

Regarding music as a vital human praxis naturally leads, as well, to regarding *music teaching* as an important social praxis. As praxis, teaching music involves, therefore, much more than just routine competence with “what works” methods. Instead, teaching takes on a social and thus ethical responsibility (Regelski 2012a). As praxis, then, teaching exists to serve the needs of students and, by extension, musical society. Failure to have such an impact or, worse, bringing about negative results, amounts to mal-praxis (i.e., professional malpractice). This ethical responsibility makes a decision to become a teacher—in our case, of music—particularly consequential. Do candidates aspire to a good life of teaching music (Regelski 2012b), to advance the cause of “good music,” to promote whatever “appreciation” means to them, or simply as a pleasant way of making a living via music?

Considerable experience over many years of teacher preparation has revealed a range of motives students often give for “Why teach music “ and for seeking careers in music

education. Most appear reasonable at first. However, predictable pit-falls that bear serious examination often get overlooked by prospective teachers of music. This can lead to problems that compromise good teaching and its personal and professional rewards.

When asked their reasons for entering the music teaching profession, a frequent answer of first-year students told me when asked is “to share music with students.” That sounds simple and positive. But what if the supposed “sharing” doesn’t easily take place—for example, when students don’t practice or misbehave? It also often assumes that the music in question is the notes on the page. Such teaching easily results in teaching students to merely translate notation into sound. Or again, to a piano lesson for example, that becomes skill-drill rather than a *music lesson* via the piano. And does “sharing” simply mean *that* simply engaging students in musical activities necessarily amounts to an effective *music education*? What, beyond the fun and interest of such moments of musical sharing, would constitute a pragmatic *value added* (Regelski 2006b) to each student’s musical lives? Routinized sharing can amount to mechanical teaching, going through the motions, a musical “recess period” that focuses more on what the *teacher* does rather than on what the *students* are able to *do musically*—at all (newly), better, more frequently, or with greater reward—as a result of teaching! If we compare sharing music to sharing love, then the action ideal implies much more than is typically considered by music teachers whose love of music is not automatically shared with students by the lessons they offer!

Another common answer about choosing a career is “because I’m good at music and have a lot to offer.” Without doubt, music teachers must be musically accomplished; but they must also have other competencies central to teaching effectiveness, such as knowledge of how students learn and develop. And, in fact, some music teachers, especially those who were “naturals,” don’t know how to cope when students do not learn as easily as they did—which is all too common. This motive for teaching can also run afoul of either a negative outlook about, or giving up on students who are not as musically motivated as the teacher was at that same

age. And it is a reality that all teachers love their subjects more than students naturally do. Thus, some teachers make their subjects into “work” for students. Remember? And that is a challenge for music teachers as well.

Some teaching candidates have enjoyed their own school music experiences—often unrelated to musicing outside of the school—and simply want to continue with such musical pursuits as teachers. Such teachers view, “school music” as its own self-sufficient musical praxis, a musical end in itself they want to continue to enjoy. They don’t realize—or wish to consider—that most of their peers when they were in school did *not* respond in the same positive way to the same teaching. Or that the increasingly jeopardized status of school music reveals an *advocacy crisis* that has the public, school officials, and others calling into question its value and continued existence.

Similarly, the expressed goal of some prospective teachers to want to be “just like” a favorite music teacher can fail to note that not all of their favored teacher’s students thrived; that all students did not favor or profit from that teacher. This motivation can thus overlook the criteria for having favored a music teacher. Being a “good teacher” is not unlike being a “good person”: it is a complicated matter and not one that easily submits to imitation. Yet the observation is common that “teachers teach the way they were taught” and, as a result, teaching is a very conservative profession: change is often glacial. Combine that tendency with “conservatory” influences on music teachers (passed on by their musical training), and it is all too easy for some teachers to gravitate to the most motivated or best students. Such music teachers are like the doctor who complains that the patients are sick, or the pilot who anticipates only good weather.

Music teachers often “do” their subjects semi-professionally outside of school, unlike most other teachers. In fact, the preponderance of their training is focused on becoming a musician (i.e., performer). However, the mistaken assumption (learned from their music professors) is that a good musician is automatically a good teacher (thus justified by their

pretense as pedagogues). This can lead to the problem where music teachers “perform” their ensembles like an organist performs the organ pipes. Their focus, then, is more on the musical results for *themselves*, rather than the educational benefits for ensemble members. They take for granted that the experience of performing music is *automatically aesthetic and therefore educative*. However, for many students such experiences are regarded as school-based social activities, and any carry-over to life outside of school and as adults is thus typically missing.

Another variable is the so-called psychological “need for achievement” (nAch)—the need to be recognized as being good at something. This often explains why youth get involved in various activities—music, sports, hobbies—during the school years. But as a motivation for a life of musicing, it fades in importance with the arrival of adult life and responsibilities to be a good provider or good parent.

As trained musicians, some music teachers are tempted to *protect music from students!* They are thus quick to be rid of those students whose contribution to the optimum musical result is problematic—instead of redoubling their efforts with such students. They can tend to treat their students as proto-musicians in the same way they were during their university musical training and demand the same kind of dedication to musical excellence. Competition (for seating, with other ensembles, for solos, with other schools) often becomes an end-in-itself, made all the more notable by the fact that music teachers’ efforts are often public in a way that most other teaching is not. This can be a reason why chamber groups that are not conducted in public by the teacher typically have a negligible role in most school music programs, even though their musical and educational benefits are many. That is unfortunate; such groups promote a disposition for the performing that is much easier to find or make time for in adult life than is the case with large ensembles.

Many teachers rely on competition to motivate practicing. Yet the effects of competition can be negative for individual students, especially those with tentative or weak self-concepts. Nonetheless, once the conditions of competition are missing—notably, after graduation from school—motivation to continue practicing and performing disappears. Such

teachers are also more likely to resort to various questionable means, such as embarrassment, to motivate students. This, of course, is a problem owing to the predictably unstable nature of many students' during the youth and adolescent years.

Some teachers enter music teaching simply because they excel musically. On this basis they "settle" into a musical career as teachers. However, while this can sometimes be reasonable, the question that has been raised over the years remains one of, "Do we teach music or students?" There's no reason that the answer needs to be either/or; clearly both can and should be served. But if the main focus is on the benefits for the teacher's musical interests, it becomes too easy to ignore the students' musical needs and benefits.

There are several more potential problems with this disposition, aside from the ethical implications. The first arises when students enter music in order to pursue a musical career, but don't want to subject themselves to the fierce competition and risks musicians face in the marketplace for jobs. The second involves parents who, similarly, realize that musical careers are risky, agree to support their child to study music only on the condition of becoming a music teacher. In both instances of entering the profession, it is all too easy for such graduates to regard teaching merely as their *job*—a means of making a living—rather than as a *mission* to which they are called as teachers. This can also lead to the not uncommon situation of musicians who have not thrived as professionals and who "fall back" on music teaching as a way of making their living. Despite their musical skills, this often does not result in advancing students' musical growth.

A related problem can be the attraction to teaching as a *lifestyle*. It is stable, generates a decent standard of living and usually allows teachers to spend more time with their families. However, and again, while this kind of vision can seem reasonable, it can lead teachers to ignore students' needs rather than their own. Then, such teachers (of any subject—everyone has experienced at least one) operate on auto-pilot, or as though working on assembly line. The quality of *their own lives* is their focus and getting through each day and school year with

the fewest problems is their immediate goal—not the future well-being of their students, musical and otherwise. Many burn out and too many stay in teaching.

Perhaps the antithesis of such a disposition is, in my experience, the rare prospective music teacher who simply enjoys working with young people and also enjoys music and has musical and people skills. Their disposition is far less likely to result in the problems mentioned earlier because it focuses on the students while not ignoring the self-interests of the teacher. A similar motivation for entering music teaching—although altogether very rare in my experience—is the desire expressed to be *better* than those music teachers the candidate had in school. These individuals often realize that they succeeded musically despite poor teaching but that their peers were not so lucky. They aspire to become teachers because of a commitment to teaching excellence—not just of offering instruction, but of promoting notable and rewarding musical learning. Unfortunately, both dispositions can be confronted and confounded by the many everyday problems of schooling as an institution. But such teachers often find that meeting and overcoming such challenges is itself one of the rewards of good teaching.

Summary and Provocation

No doubt, the typical prospective music teacher has multiple motivations. However, failure to consider the kinds of possibilities raised here is a likely reason for burn-out or for ineffective teaching—or both! Prospective teachers can be benefited, then, from being forewarned of the various problems that can arise after they begin their careers, and then are prepared for the shock of disappointment of unpleasant realities they had not previously considered. It is to the benefit of both teachers and students that the important praxis of music is advanced by teaching praxis that is effective and musically rewarding for both students and teachers.

The answer to the question of why anyone should be interested in teaching music in schools is thus profoundly loaded with values, the potential of which too often goes unnoticed

by music teachers. Some prospective teachers may have initial impressions. But most others who have participated in school ensembles as a social activity don't notice the lack of musical difference made in their lives going forward. Upon graduation their interest ceases. The answer to this important question can't be provided in this survey, but it resides in belief that music is socially important, that it is a major factor in the life well-lived, and that music teachers have an obligation to bring music into the lives of students in a way that wouldn't be the case without their efforts. Anything less risks ethical problems of "using" students to the teacher's own musical interests.

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¹ This study is an elaboration of 4 short articles on the topic of "Why Teach Music?" originally published in the *Finnish Journal of Music Education* (2012–2013), here extended for international readers, especially in- and pre-service teachers. .

² Imitations, since school-based literature usually falls far short of artistic and aesthetic merit. Aesthetes are the first to denounce that the literature of school music performance ensembles falls short of the aesthetic merit they extol.

³ Some critics want to debate the primacy of Elliott versus Small. They can do so in their own research. The point here is that both agree that music is a verb form: something *done* for a musico-social purpose. Small's spelling stresses "musick" as understood as praxis in ages long ago, and Elliott's stresses "music" as a collective noun, emphasizing multiple praxies. The differences beyond spelling can be entertained (Small, emphasizing somewhat more the social dimensions of practice, and Elliott a bit more concerned with this or that praxis as a community of musicians may understand the differences of musical praxis). However, the important variable for both is that "music" is newly considered as a verb form—a "doing." Thus the emphasis is not on what music "means" but what it "does" personally and socially. I leave it to others than in this TOPICS framework to debate the differences; or, frankly, what difference it makes theoretically or practically. It seems to me that, by definition, this or that musical praxis—say of jazz or heavy metal—is always a result of the social variables of a community of practitioners that brought it into being to begin with and sustain its development. I prefer to accentuate those social variables, as against any claim against pure, absolute, music.

⁴ These and other references are not just “old” but “classical” in establishing the theoretical and praxial historical framework of what is to be described. They come from music history, the history of ideas, the philosophy of music, and are backed by important publications in cultural history and cultural studies. They, in fact, exceed the taken for granted assumptions usually marshalled to qualify music and music education—usually according to aesthetic ideology—as a product of the 18th century Enlightenment and its flowering in the 19th century. The history of ideas in philosophy goes back to the early Greeks and remains current in its relevance, despite the expectations of those who expect research to provide “the latest” findings. TOPICS is not, according to its stated criteria, devoted to the “latest” research to thinking that is currently relevant. Posed another way, praxis as informing theory is a source of confirmation or critique and advances theory for those who follow. This article attempts to show the bases of good praxis in theory and to contribute those findings to others. It fits all of the T.O.P.I.C.S. criteria covered in this journal.

⁵ Discipline, cooperation, team-work, aesthetic this and that, and, of course, as a social activity to be “good at” in school. The list goes on and on.

⁶ This term seems to be a problem for some. It is a standard term for learning that is not intended in what is taught but learned despite other aims. In music, students *learn* that their favored musics are not approved by the virtue of not being in the accepted curriculum. But much more is involved: response to bells for the change of classes and much more of the routines of schooling are argued to be in effect of more lasting impression than the overt curriculum. Students learn to be manipulated by school protocols as preparation for their lives as workers. It was amazing to me that some reviewers had no idea what this term refers to. All the more I worry that teachers (and preservice teachers) they teach don’t have a clue. For details of what some music education readers and reviewers don’t seem to know about this very important theory for teaching praxis see Kathleen Bennett de Marrais and Margaret D. LeCompte (1998: 13–14, 244–247) The theory points out a major problem in schooling, the long-term effects of effect or impressions students get from the content—what is offered or not—and the ‘training’ involved in the routines or regimen of their schooling.

⁷ Beware: a former student, obviously new to her position who followed this advice of having chamber groups in her first Christmas Concert was criticized by her male colleagues in a city school system for being unable to “put on a full band concert” without out the “padding” of the chamber groups. Change comes hard.

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