

# Advocacy Articles (Artigos de defesa)

ISME

International Association for Music Education

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# 1: Music Education as a Powerful Stimulus for Brain Plasticity

Eckart Altenmüller<sup>1</sup>

There is general agreement that music is an important value “in itself”, providing joy, feeling for aesthetic values and a unique means to explore and to express emotions. During the last decade, however, music educators have become increasingly interested in understanding “secondary” effects of music education, especially on brain activation patterns and brain networks. Evidence from neurobiological research, demonstrating that music education causes remarkable central nervous adaptations has fueled this interest. In short, music making turns out to be the behavior, which probably most effectively induces short- and long-term brain plasticity.

Neural plasticity permits the adaptation of the brain to environmental factors that cannot be anticipated by genetic programming. The neural and behavioral changes attributed to plasticity have been observed on different time scales, ranging from several minutes to the whole life-time of the individual. Very different processes are likely to support plastic changes at the extremes of this time-line. Accordingly, experience-driven neuroplasticity has been explained by both the improvement and de novo growth of new dendrites, synapses, and neurons and the disinhibition or inhibition of pre-existing lateral connections between neurons by sensory input. The former mechanism entails structural changes at the microscopic and macroscopic level, whereas the latter can be achieved by strengthening or inhibiting pre-existing synaptic connections in the spirit of Hebbian learning. Sometimes even more rapid changes of brain responses occurring in the order of milliseconds have been discussed under the heading of neural plasticity. These are likely due to attentional modulation of neural circuits, however, and should be distinguished from true plastic changes.

Research into brain plasticity due to music education is still in its infancy, but already many of the animal findings have found their parallels in studies on musicians. At one extreme, years of musical experience, especially in those musicians who begin training early on, might lead to an increase in gray and white matter volume in several brain regions. In professional pianists and violinists for example having started with their training before age 7, the anterior portion of the corpus callosum – the most important interhemispheric connection - is larger compared to non-musicians or to musicians with later onset of practice. Since both violin and piano require subtle bimanual coordination, this phenomenon seems to reflect a specific training-induced structural adaptation, due to either more pronounced myelination of the axons or to preservation of axons which otherwise are subject to the normal developmental loss of nerve fibers, the so called apoptotic process. A similar enlargement of brain areas has been demonstrated for sensory-motor areas, for the posterior portion of temporal lobe and for the cerebellar hemispheres.

These anatomical alterations appear to be confined to a critical period. The fact that in several of the studies a correlation was found between the extent of the anatomical differences and the age at which the musical training commenced strongly argues against the possibility that these differences are pre-existing and the cause for rather than the result of practicing music. Further research employing advanced imaging techniques such as MR-spectroscopy and diffusion tensor imaging, and the extension of studies beyond the conventional cross-sectional design, are needed to investigate the underlying neurophysiological changes. At the other extreme, several minutes of training can induce changes in the recruitment of motor cortex areas or establish auditory-sensorimotor coupling. Some of the other findings discussed here probably require training on the order of months to several years, and it is currently unclear what neural processes support this behavioral plasticity.

The investigations convincingly demonstrate the utility of the musician’s brain as a model for neural plasticity and have thus set the stage for further research. A list of some of the questions that need to be tackled includes: What are the training parameters that lead to successful learning and

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plasticity? Can these parameters be exploited in musical education or to enhance learning in other domains? What is the role of genes in determining auditory neural plasticity in musicians? What is the range of structural regularities that can be extracted from the auditory input in an automatic, pre-attentive fashion? As making music undoubtedly requires intense self monitoring and error detection and correction, are there any plastic changes in the executive brain systems that are responsible for performance monitoring?

Finally, one has to bear in mind that music can elicit powerful emotional reactions. Strong emotional responses to music leading to shivers down the spine and changes in heart rate are accompanied by the activation of a brain network that includes the ventral striatum, midbrain, amygdala, orbitofrontal cortex and ventral medial prefrontal cortex — areas that are thought to be involved in reward, emotion and motivation. Further research will show whether activity in these areas is also directly involved in mediating neural plasticity.

It seems plausible that an increase in cortical neuronal connectivity or in gray matter density might improve general cognitive abilities. Many complex mental processes rely crucially on the rapidity of cognitive operations and on the amount of processing resources involved. Surprisingly, “hard data” proving transfer-effects of musical abilities on other cognitive domains are rare. Although there are several reports demonstrating a positive correlation between musical aptitude and intelligence in school children, it is still unclear whether this is a mere coincidence (for instance due to socio-economical backgrounds, allowing families with better financial resources to educate children more sophisticatedly, to afford expensive musical instruments and to enable the children to take music lessons) or whether there is a causal relationship. In my opinion, the most convincing transfer effects can be found in the domain what might be called “emotional intelligence”. Music education for example improves the ability to decode affective states in spoken language. In summary, although there is ample evidence that music education modifies our “mind-machine”, I suspect that we have not yet found the right tests or not done the necessary studies for demonstrating the (probably enormous) long term impact of music education for daily life in reasoning and feeling.

## 2: Brief Comments on Music Education Advocacy

Wayne Bowman<sup>2</sup>

*What are we doing when we advance advocacy arguments for music?*

*What are music's values?*

*To what educational ends are music's meanings and values suited?*

*What are we doing when we advance advocacy arguments for music?*

1. We need to remember that advocacy is a political undertaking, not a philosophical one. That means, among other things, that answers to questions about music's nature and value may not necessarily serve the ends of advocacy: it is entirely possible, in fact, for philosophical truths to undermine what advocacy seeks to achieve. The advocate has clear ends in mind and is primarily concerned to persuade others to his/her point of view. These ends thus restrict and proscribe at the outset the means to be deployed and the range of conclusions deemed admissible. They rule out from the beginning questions, procedures, and observations that may be at odds with the advocate's purposes. In advocacy, what counts is persuasion. In philosophical endeavours, on the other hand, the point is validity or truth, quite apart from any preordained end. A potential danger with the anything-goes strategies of advocacy is that we make promises on which we cannot deliver. Another is that we commit ourselves to things on which we may be able to deliver but should not. These dangers are all the more worrisome if we turn over responsibility to professional persuaders, whose interest in the aims of our instructional efforts is subsidiary to their interest in winning resources, time, recognition, or whatever else is perceived to be at stake.

2. Claims to musical value are not claims to educational value. Therefore, establishing that music is important or valued is at most half the argument that is required when attempting to justify its place in school curricula. Establishing that music is a ubiquitous phenomenon, and involved in all manner of human endeavours only states the obvious. It is music education, not music, that faces a legitimization crisis.

3. Every single one of our claims to music's educational value is contingent. Music's capacity to achieve educational ends, indeed music's power itself, always depends: upon (a) how, (b) by whom, (c) for whom, and (d) under what circumstances we engage in the processes of (e) musicking and (f) teaching. All our ambitious claims for music depend upon extenuating circumstances and contextual variables, circumstances and variables our bold claims must acknowledge because they are things over which we often have relatively little control. Music education may, under certain circumstances, indeed affect desirable educational ends. In the wrong hands, or under the different circumstances, its power might affect precisely the opposite. In short, neither music nor music instruction is unconditionally good. It all depends.

4. The need to advocate strenuously for music education is frequently due to musical or educational failings. Conversely, where the power and value of music and of educational endeavours are evident to people, it is seldom necessary to mount advocacy campaigns. Music's meaning and potency in people's lives is what drives support for educational endeavours, not noble sounding promises.

5. Advocacy is typically conservative, in that it takes as its object the defense or justification of "what is." Put differently, advocacy efforts generally focus on convincing people of the need to support (or support more adequately) the status quo. Where change is needed, this is not necessarily a desirable state of affairs.

### What are music's values?

6. Music's values are radically diverse and multiple, perhaps innumerable. They cannot be ranked hierarchically except with regard to that for which they are valuable. Nor can they be

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separated into categories “musical” and “extra-musical,” good and bad, except in relation to human ends. Meaning and value are functions of use, which is to say they are always constituted by and relative to use. The value question, then, is a question about how music works in the human world, and how those potential “workings” relate to ends desired by people concerned. This means that such issues are always socio-political, always potentially contested.

7. To say music’s value is intrinsic or inherent is to claim it is self evident: that it somehow exists without any connections to anything else. But all value is human value, and human value is value-for something. The appeal to a musical value that JUST IS, is a kind of sleight of hand – an attempt to pre-empt other kinds of value claims by establishing a value that precedes human use. Music has no value unless we confer it, just as is true of all other values. This observation need not compromise music advocacy, but it does indeed ground it in human action and in the uses to which music lends itself.

8. The preceding two claims follow from the fact that music, and therefore its meaning and value, is constructed anew by each musicking person. It follows that these are inextricably grounded in and emergent from experience. Such experience, furthermore, is always socioculturally situated – which is to say it is socially constructed. These facts both suggest important qualifications upon any claim we might wish to mount on music’s behalf and point to a range of significant claims that are often neglected.

9. To say musical experience, meaning, and value are socially constructed is not, please note, to say these are socially determined. The relationship between the individual and culture is dialectical and reflexive in nature.

10. To say musical experience, meaning, and value are socially constructed is not to deny that these do not have a biological basis as well. But human bodies are minded bodies, and embodied minds are always also sociocultural phenomena.

11. These preceding observations surely point toward understandings of music as a phenomenon that is unique and uniquely important, in virtue of its location at the nexus of mind and body, individual and social, action and understanding. Music’s status as intelligent action and our richest potential source of participatory consciousness (Keil, 1994) should comprise the core of efforts to explain and justify music’s presence in the context of education.

### **To what educational ends are music’s meanings and values suited?**

12. Again, that depends: upon one’s understanding of “education” and the kind of ends it properly implicates; upon the music in question; upon the range of sociocultural values it potentially invokes; and so on. In no way does this negate the process of advocacy. However, it does alter and qualify in important ways what we understand advocacy to be and how we go about it.

13. Among the educational ends we might wish to consider are the following: transmission of cultural heritage; the creation and maintenance of cultural vitality; enabling access to experiences and understandings that are not commonly accessible through informal means; imparting critical awareness that gives people more power and control over their lives; imparting appreciation for embodied and emergent cognition, and the severe limitations of disembodied knowledge; creating personal and collective identities; the development of tolerance, cooperation, and ethical frames for action; rendering the familiar unfamiliar; developing expertise and fluency in valued realms of human endeavour; and so on. This list, it should be clear, is potentially endless: if music’s values are radically diverse and multiple, the aims of education are no less so.

14. The point to be borne in mind is that each such educational claim carries with it a broad range of personal and professional obligations: for none of these things happen necessarily or automatically, just because students have been involved in activities we regard as musical and educational. Deciding what courses of action are appropriate in light of local circumstances, present needs and resources, and the unpredictability of educational outcomes lies at the heart of what it means to be a professional music educator.

15. Because of all that has been said here, the best source of valid and reliable advocacy arguments is the qualified professional whose charge it is to deliver “the goods.”



### 3: Road Rage and Musical Community

Nicholas Cook, FBA<sup>3</sup>

Hands up anybody who has never felt a touch of road rage, doesn't even know what it's about! Without hopefully being worse-tempered than the next person I think I'm at least qualified to say where it comes from. On the one hand you're taking part in a social interaction: someone sits on your tail, infringing your personal space, pushing you to go faster even though you're already exceeding the speed limit, and you read the way they position their car in relation to yours with all the finesse which which you read a minute gesture or a cocked eyebrow in conversation. But of course it isn't conversation, and both you and the other driver are enclosed in a metal box, cut off from anyone outside it, isolated from one another. The result is the elimination of the constant stream of communication that takes place alongside, or behind, the overt content of a face-to-face interaction—the gestures, scratching, shifting of body weight, modifications of vocal tone, and other almost imperceptible means through which people nuance what they are saying, inform one another of their feelings, and respond to one another in such a way as to make conversation the shared experience that it is. This is the reciprocal relationship that the sociologist Alfred Schutz called 'mutual tuning-in', and which he saw as the 'indispensable condition of all possible communication'. Road rage shows what happens when the mutual tuning-in relationship is disrupted. And because it represents the way in which people are cut off from one another even when there are people all around, isolated in the midst of congestion, it's a potent symbol of the alienation that is all too characteristic of today's rationalized, post-industrial society.

Schutz coined the term 'mutual tuning-in' in the course of an essay published in 1951 and called 'Making music together'. For him, making music together involves the sharing of 'inner time', that is to say time as experienced rather than time as measured by the movement of the clock—the kind of time that ticks so slowly when you're waiting anxiously for news from the hospital, and all too fast when you're enjoying yourself. We might normally refer to it as 'subjective' time. But Schutz's point is that when people make music together they are all inhabiting the same time, and so he defines the mutual tuning-in relationship as a 'sharing of the other's flux of experiences in inner time': this is not subjectivity but intersubjectivity, and indeed it was Schutz who popularized this concept as a middle way between objectivity and subjectivity. And he saw musical listeners as equal participants in this intersubjective experience, sharing the same experience of time as the performers: whether in intimate surroundings or in a large concert hall, he said, 'performer and listener are "tuned-in" to one another, are living together through the same flux, are growing older together while the musical process lasts'.

Schutz didn't mean to say that it is only in music that you find this kind of shared subjectivity; on the contrary, he said, 'we find the same features in marching together, dancing together, making love together'. But he had good reason to choose music as his exemplar for such communal activity, because of the way in which it renders the processes of face-to-face interaction directly perceptible. I can explain what I mean by asking how the members of a string quartet play together. One way it might work is if everybody played to the same standardized values. What I mean by this is that everybody would play in the same tempo, make their crotchets twice as long as their quavers, and so forth. This would be rather like a car assembly line, where workers screw together components which fit because they have been manufactured to standard dimensions. But of course, no string quartet plays together like that. No string quartet adheres to exactly the same tempo throughout and makes all its crotchets twice as long as its quavers; as Schutz would put it, they make music together in inner, subjective time, not in the external, clock time where one thing can be exactly twice as long as another. Saying what string quartets do do is harder, however, and the reason is that exact values of timing, intonation, and so forth are negotiated between the performers in real time. There are no standard values, just these notes played just so in this context. String quartets rehearse,

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of course, which means that they agree on the general way in which they will shape their interpretation—the climaxes and the way they will be built, the balancing of contrapuntal passages, and so forth. But it's not as if each player's performance becomes so fixed, so overlearned, that they could just as well perform wearing headphones and hearing only a click track. That would be very like the situation of the drivers enclosed in their metal boxes with the rage building up inside them because they cannot communicate properly. Instead, making music together means constantly listening to everyone else, constantly accommodating your performance to theirs, being sensitive to other people's states of mind, knowing when to follow and when to lead.

In short, making music together is an enactment of human community, and the sound of music is the sound of community in action. Put this way, music becomes a kind of escape route from the real world of traffic congestion and road rage, a kind of workout for the soul, a utopia where for once we can interact fully and satisfyingly with others in the way that is so often denied to us in everyday life—and as I said, you don't need to be actually playing in order to participate in the intersubjectivity of music, you become a member of the musical community just by listening. That would surely be sufficient justification for music. Yet it is not all that music has to offer. I want to claim that music is not just an escape from the world but a way of learning how to be in the world. Participation in music is like a flight simulator for social life: listening to others, developing your sensitivity to them, experiencing different relationships with them as the musical lines interact with one another—all these constitute a kind of crash course in interpersonal relationships. Melody, accompaniment, homophony, counterpoint, heterophony and fugue all embody different ways of relating to other people, but it is those values of timing and intonation and balance that can only be negotiated in the real time of performance which lie at the heart of music's socializing function. Music presents interpersonal relationships in their most abstract, stripped-down form, and to learn the ways of music is therefore to learn the repertory of social relationships and the knowledge of how to apply them if we are to function as successful social beings. That is why a musical education is not just an education for music but an education for life.

So should the mandatory penalty for road rage be twelve months in a string quartet? Well, maybe not, though it would be hard to think of a more intensive kind of community service. I don't want to over-egg my case by casting music as a panacea for all social evils. Music, after all, is only music. But, as music, it holds out perhaps the clearest, the most intelligible promise we have of a better world—and maybe, just maybe, it is the shortest route to one.

## 4: The Functions of Music in Education

Elliot Eisner<sup>4</sup>

For those who work in the arts either as creators of an art or as teachers who try to foster the benefits of art to those in schools, the trip has always been uphill. The arts have suffered from a stereotype that regards them as more ornamental than essential, more emotional than reflective, closer to the rim of educational purposes than to its core. Those concerned with the arts and who assign them an important value in education are more often than not looking in from outside the window.

It is true, of course, that schools offer a modicum of arts activities to their students, but this offering is seldom considered a central part of the school's program. There are, sometimes, protestations from policymakers that arts are at the core of education, but the reality is that they are more often at the margin.

Just how does one make a case for the arts in education? One might ask why one has to make a case for a form of human practice that is as old as humans themselves. Nevertheless, cases do need to be made and, even more, the politics of curricular choice need to be addressed if the arts are to secure more than eloquent testimony.

There are, I think, a myriad of reasons why music of all the arts should have a central place in school programs. I will, however, describe three reasons for music's important role in education. The first of these pertains to what can be regarded as its cognitive contributions, the second to what music enables one to express or know, and the third pertains to the kind of experience that music makes possible.

Distinctions such as the type I have made are necessary to be able to speak about most anything. Yet, in reality, to the extent to which we can know it, the distinctions meld and fuse, they melt and blend into each other. I am painfully aware of that. Nevertheless, for purposes of clarification, I return to the distinctions between what is mental, or cognitive, what resides in matters of meaning, and finally, in what is experiential.

Experience in music as a performer, especially but not only, makes it possible for students to have what might be called musical ideas. Musical ideas are notions expressed in music and organized in ways that reflect the choices that the maker selects. Thinking musically means thinking within the constraints and affordances of patterned sound and, more recently, in silences as well. The medium is auditory and the practices that give it shape are cognitive. We learn to hear and to notice. We learn how to organize sound so that what it expresses will not take the impress of literal or even metaphorical description. In this process, we learn to think. The thinking that we learn to do is thinking within music. As I indicated, music in its perception and especially in its creation, requires us to think musically about what we attend to.

Insofar as music makes such demands on those who experience it, music is a vehicle for developing the mind. But it is a way of developing the mind musically, not necessarily generally. There may be transfer involved in some aspects of musical thought but that is not the hook on which I would hang my hat. Intelligence in music is expressed musically. Music education is a way to foster such intelligence.

With respect to matters of meaning, the role of music in enabling humans to express what cannot be said is, and has been, exemplified throughout the ages. One has only to think about the uses of music in the ceremonies that followed 9/11 to recognize that humans have a profoundly deep need to embrace the arts, all of them, when they need to express what cannot be articulated in language. Music is a way of sharing and indeed experiencing the deepest aspects of our interior landscape. They give us access to forms of life that express what has been compressed into musical thought. Such thinking shapes feeling and gives feeling a presence in the public world. If music did not achieve such an outcome, I do not think its place in human history would have been so

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enduring. The irony, of course, is that although music has been essential in our most important moments - - when we bury and when we marry - - in the context of schools, it is taken for granted, very often as a kind of divertimento. It is much more than that.

The third function of music pertains to the quality of life that music makes possible. Music, at rock bottom, is a source of intrinsically valued experience. We go to the concert hall to be moved, to be touched, to undergo forms of life that have their own, non-instrumental rewards. A life without such experience is one which is flat, dry as toast, emotionally drained. Music, in short, is a way of reminding us what it is to be alive.

The contributions, therefore, of music in the context of education is at once cognitive, meaningful, and experiential. Music develops ways of thinking, it provides forms of significance that will take no other form, and it yields forms of experience that are, at their best, deeply treasured. I believe that such contributions represent profoundly significant justifications for the place of music in schools. Indeed, such justifications when they are realized often pale what many other fields given more attention, more time, and more significance have to offer. Perhaps one day not only music but all of the arts will be recognized for their potentially important contributions for helping our children realize their humanity.

## 5: Music Education and Advocacy

David J. Elliott<sup>5</sup>

My father was an amateur jazz pianist who played every night at home after his daily work and at sing-along parties with our neighbors on Saturday nights. He also composed songs for his own satisfaction and for the delight of his friends. I loved the sounds he played, improvised and composed. The joy that swirled around his music making at our musical get-togethers was infectious and transforming. I wanted to be like him; I wanted to be able to do what he did. So, after starting me out with informal jazz piano lessons, he sent me to study with a professional jazz pianist who taught at a local community music school. I was six-years-old. Soon I began to play at our musical gatherings, surrounded by supportive adults who sang and played along.

Although my elementary school did not offer a music program, I was often called upon to “provide the music” at many school and community functions, which gave me a strong identity among my peers and teachers as “the musician.” During my middle and secondary school years I was taught by two excellent artist-teachers who worked diligently to involve my peers and I in all forms of music making and listening. Because of them, I became involved in band and jazz band groups as a performer, arranger, composer, conductor, and a novice teacher of my peers. These varied experiences allowed me to take leadership roles in my school music programs and in many community music groups, including my own professional dance band. And so it was that I began my tertiary music studies with a rich and joyful foundation of musical experiences and a deep commitment to music and music education.

### Advocacy in Context

My point in relating my personal story is to suggest that, although verbal statements about the values of music education are necessary and fundamental forms of advocacy, the most powerful means of making our case are the processes and social settings of musical particip-action that yield deep satisfactions for participants of all ages and ability levels. For example, a parent engaged in joyful music making and listening usually means a child engaged in music making and listening. A school principal, politician, or CEO involved in joyful singing, playing, or composing tends to work hard to support school music education. So, in addition to teaching our students, I believe we need to find more and various ways to provide satisfying musical experiences for our students’ parents, their friends, other teachers in our schools, and policymakers in our communities. Alternatively, we need to consider ways to help establish community music groups and school-community partnerships that provide opportunities for parents, colleagues, educational leaders, and corporate bosses to engage in joyful music making and listening and to witness our teaching expertise in action.

That said, it is imperative to consider scholarly views about the values of music and music education as a basis for evaluating advocacy statements and, perhaps, as material for advocacy statements. Our ISME Advocacy project is an excellent example. Still, we must always keep in mind that advocacy and scholarship are fundamentally different. Sometimes advocacy statements line up with scholarly research, but very often they do not. This is because advocacy is about marketing and selling music education to obtain various kinds of support. Philosophy (for example) is about critical thinking and rigorous foundation building, which advocates often dismiss impatiently as boring or long-winded because “advocating” is about the “short, fast sell.” In fact, advocacy statements often “dumb down” our values and aims by means of simplistic “sound bites” or t-shirt slogans tailored to fit the latest educational or societal crisis. These “pop” forms of advocacy have the potential to mislead and/or disappoint parents, colleagues, and potential supporters, and to demoralize excellent music teachers. In short, without a clear sense of our professional values, we run the risk of misrepresenting our profession and/or skewing our curricula

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5 Professor, New York University

to match short-term goals dictated by questionable research, or the latest government edicts.

This is why it's so important to approach advocacy cautiously and critically, and to teach future music educators to do the same. How? We employ music education philosophy, psychology, sociology (and so forth) to help us critically examine and formulate our professional aims, goals, objectives, curriculum content, teaching strategies, and assessment procedures. Because these fields pivot on rigorous thinking, we should go to them to develop valid and reliable statements about the nature and value of music education.

With these thoughts in mind, I offer the following perspectives on several (but not all) values of music education, which I then connect to education in general.

### **Several Values of Music Education**

On one hand, what music educators do is similar to what all teachers do because thinking and knowing lie at the heart of all educational efforts. Teachers in every subject area focus on the outcomes of student thinking in relation to domain-specific standards of accuracy, appropriateness and originality. At the same time, what music educators do is unique because developing musicianship and listenership is a matter of teaching multidimensional forms of artistic-cultural-bodily thinking that engage all aspects of our being in relation to auditory-social events.

Developing our students' musicianship and listenership through performing, improvising, composing, arranging, conducting, moving and listening gives our students the skills and understandings they need to participate in creating musical-cultural expressions of emotions, musical representations of people, places and things, and musical expressions of cultural and personal values. This range of opportunities for self-expression and creativity offers our students numerous ways of giving artistic-cultural form to their powers of feeling, thinking, knowing, valuing, evaluating, and believing, which in turn engage other listeners' emotions, interests, and understandings.

Of course, each different musical style-community (or practice) is also significant because the musical works produced by its music makers and listeners play important roles as unifying social artifacts. That is, cherished musical works are crucial to establishing, defining, delineating, and preserving a sense of community and self-identity for individuals and their social groups. Musical works and musical practices constitute and are constituted by their social contexts.

It follows from this that teaching and learning a variety of musics comprehensively (as music cultures) is an important form of inter-cultural education. When we initiate, induct, and guide our students in unfamiliar musics through active music making, students can engage in self-reflections and personal reconstructions of their relationships, assumptions and preferences about other people, cultures and other ways of thinking and valuing. In these ways, inducting learners into unfamiliar musical styles links the central values of music education to the broader goals of humanistic education. Since schools today are concerned with preparing students for life in pluralistic societies, and since schools in most countries are more culturally diverse than ever, it stands to reason that schools should support the rich and enjoyable inter-cultural learning experiences that school music programs can provide.

By engaging in these forms of musical particip-action under the guidance of a professional music educator, music students (of all ages) can experience the most profound values of music and music education: self-growth, self-knowledge, self-esteem, and the emotional experiences of enjoyment or "flow" that accompany these forms of growth, empowerment and transformation. How do these forms of self-growth and optimal experience occur? Stated plainly, as music teachers develop (a) students' musicianship-listenership in matching balance with (b) the challenges and meanings presented by a musical work, students achieve self-knowledge, enjoyment and self-esteem. Musical forms of self-growth and enjoyment are unique because music making and music listening involve musical "products" (works, or challenges) and auditory-cognitive-social processes that are distinct from those required for any other endeavor. Musical flow experiences are unique because artistically-and-culturally produced and processed sound is the sine qua non of music. In other words, the conditions of musical flow experiences are specific to musicing and music

listening. Accordingly, the conscious contents of musical experiences -- their cognitive and affective qualities, the way they feel while they last, their short- and long-term effects -- differ from other forms of experience, including other kinds of artistic experience.

## **Music Education and General Education**

How do the values of music education connect with education and advocacy in general? The most essential, long-term task facing our profession involves enrolling parents, colleagues, administrators, policy makers, and politicians in the quest to make our schools more educational. By more educational I mean that our schools should aim to develop students as people, not just job-fillers for today's marketplace mindset. As many scholars have insisted in different words, education is for life: education ought to be conceived for life as a whole, not just for one aspect of life, such as work. Put another way, much more is involved in the full and beneficial "development" of a child than the acquisition of literacy in the simple sense of job skills and academic knowledge, or the so-called basics. What more? Worldwide, human cultures past and present pursue a common set of "life goals" or "life values" including happiness, enjoyment, self-growth, self-knowledge, freedom, fellowship, and self-esteem, for oneself and for others. These life goals are so basic to human beings that people seldom ask, "Why do you want happiness, enjoyment, self-growth, wisdom, freedom, fellowship, and self-esteem?"

Schooling should enable learners to achieve life goals in school and beyond school, in working life, family life and social life. If so, then music education should have a secure place in the school curriculum from kindergarten through secondary school because musicianship-listenership is achievable by all students and because musical skills and understandings can be developed early in life, thereby giving most children early access to the life goals of self-growth, self-knowledge, enjoyment, flow, and the happiness that arises from being involved with others in musical ways of life.

In summary, music education is a unique and major source of many fundamental life goals. By actively supporting the aims of music education, school systems increase the likelihood that students will learn to make a life as well as a living both inside and outside school.

## **Advocacy Revisited**

Why is advocacy a necessary part of our professional work? A major reason is the huge difference between education and schooling. On one hand, most Western nations make strong rhetorical commitments to providing a balanced curriculum for the whole child, which they state in official educational policy documents and curriculum guides. In reality, however, public school systems in most countries are becoming more and more focused on "testing" students in a narrow range of "academic" subjects using mechanistic measurement devices. Why? Many scholars suggest that this movement (sometimes called "Educational Reform") is part of a global effort by corporations and "marketplace educators" to shape and "manage" schools according to the needs and values of "marketplace capitalism." (This is an old story tracing back to the industrial model of the "school-as-factory" that exists to produce future factory workers). Educators have always been under pressure from the business world to devote more time and resources to the production of students-as-job-fillers by means of academic-vocational studies alone. This pressure has become more intense in the last fifteen years with the advance of globalization, which requires "standardization" in all realms of life, including schooling. Clearly, however, corporate leaders and marketplace educators are not concerned (at all) with enabling our students to make a life as well as a living.

Broadly speaking, then, we need to advocate on behalf of music education and arts education because what we do professionally is deeply connected with the need to protect and sustain the right of children to receive a balanced and comprehensive education, which means a school curriculum that makes a central place for the life values we can provide through systematic music teaching and learning.

And so, to conclude, I return to a major theme. Long before I studied advocacy statements or scholarly discussions about the nature and value of music, I experienced the powers of music through music making and music listening in my childhood and adolescent years. I believe this holds true for many people, including most music educators. If so, then our concept of “advocacy” must include but go beyond words. I think we must employ our skills and understandings as musicians, teachers and community leaders to empower our students, colleagues, supervisors, politicians, and communities with the musical skills and understanding they need to experience the potency of musical experiences and to “make a life in music” to the extent they desire. Our future strength and security depends on our ability to combine our best words about music education with our best actions aimed at wider and more varied approaches to extending music instruction inside and outside schools. We must engage more and more people of all ages, in all walks of life, in the joys of musical particip-action.

## 6: Belonging, Being, and Promoting Music in Education

J. Terry Gates

Music teachers have great influence at the community level. No other group of musicians has the motivation, the knowledge, and the "reach" in advocacy terms that music teachers have through the community's children and young people. In communities where music is diverse, strong, and vibrant, there is often a music teacher guiding the way. We should seek out these colleagues and study their approaches. And we should honor them. These colleagues are insightful about music in their community's culture and intelligent about how they use their knowledge of music from other places and times to expand the community's musical resources. What ideas make this possible for everyone to do?

This essay is about the personal and cultural values that support intelligent music advocacy. It is intended to encourage all music teachers to strengthen the musical life of their own communities by looking briefly and frankly at what we know about belonging to a social group and being individually human through music.

### Some basic ideas

Music is one of the permanent, pervasive features of being human. People will always find and create music that contributes effectively to the quality of their individual and collective lives - in daily living and in the cultural rituals that are important to maintaining their societies. Weak music is easily discarded and replaced by other music when the resources don't support the need; and people everywhere have found free or inexpensive resources for making interesting, effective and satisfying music on their own.

Besides music, such things as language and quantification (number systems) are also pervasive. The specifics of language, number, and music are diverse from place to place, and they change over time in the same place. But their importance is never in doubt. The detailed characteristics of specific languages, number systems, and musical traditions become cultural markers, evidence that someone belongs to a social or ethnic group. People "belong" by claiming possession of specific cultural markers, learning to use them both naturally (simply by growing up and living in the culture) and through schooling.

Education is also a permanent part of human life, like music, number, and language. And, here, we need to define education: Education is any deliberate attempt to guide the learning of another person, regardless of where or with whom this activity occurs. Schools are special places where education can occur, and where attempts both to guide and accelerate learning are deliberate and systematic. Schooling is a special kind of education, in this definition.

Learning, however, occurs both in and beyond schools - we learn on our own as well as through the deliberate attempts of others to accelerate and guide our learning. Musical learning occurs with and without schooling. Teaching occurs not only by professional teachers but also by family members, peers and others.

Belonging to a social group is critical to most humans. Belonging depends upon one's learning in and of the group's culture. It is the need to belong that accelerates an individual's learning of their culture's materials and processes, including the group's musical culture. In both informal and formal ways, the social group uses its culture to educate its members, and the group's leaders (including family caregivers) know how important the culture is to social unity, integration, and control.

Music belongs in the education of children and young people for the same reasons that language and number do - to expand and solidify each person's sense of belonging to the social group and contributing to the culture on which the society depends for its claim to uniqueness and unity.



## **Being and belonging in the information age**

The information age is here, and it places new demands on the time-tested ideas above. More than ever before, people have access to the musical traditions of societies other than their own, and policy makers are concerned that music is beginning to lose its power to unify people within a society and separate them from other groups. Because people have almost unlimited access to what others value musically, they can also absorb the realization that it is human to create and to preserve music. This helps us to look past our differences because we now can know that valuing music is something that people from all societies do. Actions based on people's need for music bind us in a global village of musical people. We sense this now.

When societies were isolated from each other, schooling could be used to preserve the boundaries between societies and to certify that the graduates of the school were members of the society that supports the school. But, because we are in the information age, people now have the resources to "hear into" another person's value system through the music valued by these other people. Children sense that this is increasingly important and interesting to do. Children of the 21st century still need to take full possession of and to contribute effectively to their own musical cultures - to belong. In the information age they can also understand that other children have the same need, too.

## **Security in being and belonging**

Here is where music teachers can focus much of their efforts. Schooling is about belonging. For most people, belonging to a specific society through its culture is what schools promote and what a broad education is all about. If a person's possession of a "home" musical culture is secure - if one's sense of belonging is strong - then a willingness to tolerate difference increases. This security is increased even more if a person effectively contributes to the diverse "home" musical culture. Through deliberate schooling in music, we can strengthen each child's contributions to the "home" culture and, in addition, to value diversity and understand it as human rather than to fear difference.

Most of the recent philosophical literature about music is about being through music, and readers can easily find such writings. That literature reminds us that a life simply includes music if it is to be more fully human.

Becoming mature, being whole, feeling fulfilled, being "wide-awake" or fully in touch with one's environment, expanding one's cognitive and physical capacities, becoming more effective and confident, expressing one's insights and affective states through music - all of these and more rely on music and other resources to contribute to an individual's sense of being. If a person were alone, making music on an island, music still provides these kinds of personal benefits.

Being fully human, however, is inherently social - we are genetically social animals. As individuals we act on our sociality in many ways, including musical ones. We "compare notes" musically by revealing our musical insights, and by sharing and receiving personal musical resources and benefits like those above we integrate our lives with the lives of other individuals. We grow from this, not only as individuals, but also as part of a collective through which our individual powers become magnified. We need other people, and being human is ultimately a matter also of belonging. Being and belonging are reciprocal, inseparable states; they are yin and yang in human life.

## **So ... what's the problem?**

If music is ubiquitous, and if we know that music is basic to being human, and if the information age is changing schooling in music, what can support teachers who need to be music advocates? And what general ideas, therefore, would help them be effective?

Advocates generally sense that there is a gap or a problem in a current set of conditions and they have an idea about how that gap could be filled or the problem solved. Conventional music advocacy (including much government-sponsored music teaching) is about providing advantages for some specific set of defined traditions with "approved" examples and "best" practices. This is

understandable. Advocates logically must focus on music more narrowly than ordinary people do in their musical lives. Music's general importance is not promoted by most advocates, partly because it is assumed and partly because music advocates have to focus their efforts on specific goals rather than general ones so that their claims to success have validity.

To most music advocates the "gap" in resources seems artificial. A governing body is attempting to create an artificial culture, or is trying to preserve one that is no longer meaningful. In some parts of the world, "school music" is seen as artificial; in other parts, the musical walls of the school are (gratefully) more permeable. As we have noted above, at the grassroots, people are very good at closing any artificial gaps they see in their musical lives, and policy makers who have attempted to control musical diversity too much have been replaced sooner or later.

The mistake most music advocates usually make is to attach their proposals for improving a community's musical resources to one or two favored musical traditions, rather than to musical expertise in general. Music advocates take up the cause of a few musical traditions in opposition to the rest in order to show others that they are reaching their goals. This is an attempt to control and simplify, rather than liberate and diversify.

An advocacy program that seeks to limit musical options may have some short-term successes. But, because people (including our students) are human beings, and because they need music that contributes both to being and belonging, they will find and create musical options for themselves with or without schools, governing bodies, or music teachers if necessary.

As music teachers, we can be more powerful advocates for the community resources if we focus our advocacy on support for musical expertise in our students - effective skills, expanded cognitive capacities, well-considered values, and vibrant musical experiences. The first priority of music teachers is to create in our students a personal musical expertise that is powerful, liberating, creative, and mature so that they can contribute to their own musical cultures. The second is to be advocates for what our students need in order to make that happen, and in the current age, this includes musical diversity.

As advocates, music teachers should no longer worry whether music is important and wonderful: We should merely assume it and draw strength from that realization. Then, we can move the next generation into the rich musical life within and beyond their time and place, teaching our students powerfully and improving their communities' musical resources because our students need good resources to grow musically. If we do this well, the future will be more musical wherever we are. Our students will grow to be parents and community leaders who will create healthy musical lives in their families and the communities of the future.

## 7: Children Need Music

Wilfried Gruhn<sup>6</sup>

1. From a neurobiological point of view the early years of childhood are crucial for the development of synaptic connections in the brain. This is reflected in simple terms by the German proverb "Was Hänschen nicht lernt, lernt Hans nimmermehr" (what Johnny doesn't learn, won't learn John any more").

2. However, we must not overestimate the first years (as John Bruer has mentioned in his book "The Myth of the First Three Years, 1999). It is not that John stops learning at an older age. Humans never finish their learning process. It is impossible to abstain from learning (we cannot not learn) because of the structural plasticity of the brain. However, it is much easier to learn during the flexible developmental phase of the brain. Therefore, the most important faculties (as upright position, verbal speech, logic thinking, abstract formal operations etc.) are developed during the first years of life.

3. Learning is based upon the plasticity of the brain which is most powerful in the early years, however, it keeps going over the entire life span. From a human, neurobiological, educational and ethic perspective early childhood education is important. Families and pre-schools (kindergartens) are the first and most crucial agents to present a stimulating enriched environment for learning.

4. Brain development is basically determined by its genetic disposition, but its individual structure depends on its use. The brain develops according to how we use it. All experiences are stored in the brain and influence its neural structure.

5. Recent findings in animal research have demonstrated that emotional deprivation and loss of social contact negatively effect the deep structure (limbic system, amygdala) of the brain. This has promoted "neuro-didactics" because of the obvious impact of neurobiological processes on teaching and learning. Afflictions such as hyperkinetic and attention deficit syndrome (ADS) refer to a possible interaction of emotional care and brain development.

6. This supports the social and educational demand on policy makers to strengthen families for their educational duties so that they can offer the best possible learning environment for infants. Pre-schools and schools can only support, but not replace parental care. Music learning as any other learning needs individual social interaction and informal guidance.

7. Music plays an important role at that early age. In its own unique way, musical practice activates rhythmic processes. The experience of time and space in childhood is different from that of adults. Children explore time and space by body weight and flow of movement whereas adults count and measure. Therefore, it is obvious and reasonable that children need music as a means of rhythmic repetition and structured movement. And they respond to music very sensibly.

8. Music stimulates the growth of brain structures and connects many activated brain areas. Musical practice calls for fine motor coordination, and enhances the phonological loop. It is not a question of whether music is processed in the right or left brain hemisphere, because music fosters a strong interconnectivity and coherence of both hemispheres. As shown by the treatment of cochlear implant children, music functions as a highly differentiated stimulation for the underdeveloped auditory cortex.

9. Research on music aptitude has demonstrated that every human being is born with a certain level of musical potential which holds its highest degree right after birth and can never exceed this level. Without any informal environmental stimulation a child's musical potential will decrease and finally disappear. Therefore, it is extremely important to expose the brain to various musical stimuli so that it can develop musical representations. The learning window for the musical brain opens at a very early age. Parents and educators should aim to develop each child's given potential.

10. Music learning already starts at a prenatal stage (as Kodály mentioned: Music education starts nine months before birth – of the mother!) and continues informally after birth depending on

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parental musical activities. Children learn music as they do with language, i.e. they do not start with grammar and theory, but with practice. They develop knowing-how before knowing-about. Action knowledge represents the most robust representation of musical knowledge. The vital need for music facilitates learning by practical approaches. Music, then, becomes a natural means of communication and expression.

11. In view of the above, an international umbrella organization such as ISME is extremely important. It shares the responsibility of humans to provide all children with the best possible education corresponding to general human conditions and individual cultural properties. Exchange and interaction of different cultures can be seen as the best way to prevent the clash of cultures and to establish a peaceful symbiosis of people in the global world. The most powerful neural networks and behavioural attitudes are developed during childhood. A general acquisition of knowledge of the surrounding world (which is called "Weltwissen" and "Welterfahrung" by Donata Elschenbroich) governs our feelings and thoughts, our practice and knowledge. Music education plays its particular role in children's education. It fulfils an ethic doctrine to support and develop a given potential to the best possible extent.

## 8: The Power of Music

Susan Hallam<sup>7</sup>

In 2000, I was commissioned by the Performing Right Society in the UK to undertake a review of research entitled 'The Value of Music'. The purpose of the review was to provide hard evidence of the effects of music to be used as a resource for musicians working in a range of areas who needed to justify funding for a variety of musical activities. The necessity for such a resource had become apparent as the place of music in the school curriculum, the provision of instrumental music lessons, funding for community music and the arts in general had come under threat from policy makers. On completion of the review it became apparent that the proposed title was inadequate to reflect the immense impact of music in our lives and the final document was entitled 'The Power of Music'. It is available on the World Wide Web at [www.thepowerofmusic.co.uk](http://www.thepowerofmusic.co.uk). This advocacy statement is based, in part, on the findings of that review but also on my own experiences as a professional performing musician, a music educator, and a researcher into learning and performance in music. Outlined below are some of the key areas where music benefits humankind beyond its value in providing pleasure, stimulation and solace.

Individual skill development - Making music utilises a great many skills and elicits a wide range of responses, more perhaps than any other human activity. Participating in making music requires the development of aural, intellectual, physical, emotional, communication and musical skills in addition to high levels of commitment, motivation and organisation. The immediate time frame within which music is performed also elicits very high levels of concentration.

Responses to music - The responses of human beings to music go beyond 'sound'. Music can be experienced physiologically (e.g. changes in heart rate); through movement; through mood and emotion; and cognitively (through knowledge and memories, which may be personal, or related to the music itself, e.g. its style or period). The fact that music is processed multiply and has physical, emotional and cognitive effects may be the key to its power.

The functions of music in society - Music has an important role to play in the functioning of society and has had for many thousands of years. No human culture appears to be without music. Singing, in particular, seems to be universal. Music is invariably expressed in relation to religion, celebrations and dance. It forms a part of all major occasions and celebrations, including weddings, funerals, pageants, rites of passage and festivals. It is also involved in the human preoccupation with seeking altered states of consciousness as part of ritual, individual day dreaming, prayer, meditation or drug use.

Communication - In most cultures, music serves to assist in the process of increasing communication and enabling people to function together more effectively. It provides a means of expressing a wide variety of human feelings, love, sadness and a sense of belonging which people sometimes find difficult to verbalise. Making music and sharing its meanings within a culture or particular environment leads to cohesion and the strengthening of social unity. It can be a powerful means of maintaining the continuity and stability of societies through folk music and songs which give accounts of myths and legends and record important events.

The anti-establishment role of music – Music can allow the expression of an identity which is counter to societal norms. In some cases, it can be a powerful tool for change. It can play an important role in unifying and exemplifying solidarity in those who are challenging societal norms and practices.

Music in our everyday lives - Throughout the 20th century, the development of the electronic media revolutionised access to and use of music. We can turn on the radio, play a CD or tape, or listen to music on video or TV with very little effort. Prior to these developments, music was only accessible for most people if they made it themselves or attended particular religious or social events. Now, people 'consume' music at an enormous rate. It has become an integral part of our

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everyday lives in a way which would have been unthinkable 100 years ago.

Music in art - In addition to the value of music as an art form in its own right, music has always played an important role in the theatre, TV, films and video. Many great cinematic moments appear meaningless without the accompanying music.

The music industry - Music is a substantial economic generator of income in most developed countries employing many thousands of people. To sustain this requires a supply of musicians, not only to perform, but to undertake those many tasks behind the scenes which nevertheless require high levels of musical expertise.

Music and medicine – Music has been used to support health education, reduce anxiety and pain in medicine and dentistry, increase relaxation, improve recovery rates, stimulate the immune system, support rehabilitation after brain damage, help children with progressive neuromuscular disorders, improve co-ordination and difficulties in movement, reduce the negative effects of Alzheimer's disease, tend the complex physical and spiritual needs of the dying, and help people work through grief and depression.

The effects of music on early development - Music can support the development of gross and fine motor activities, language skills, some aspects of somato-sensory co-ordination, some cognitive behaviours, and encourage sucking and promote weight gain in babies, particularly those born prematurely or underweight. Musical interactions between mother and baby help develop bonds of communication and facilitate speech development.

Personal and social development - There are demonstrable positive effects of involvement with music on childrens' personal and social development, particularly for low ability, disaffected pupils and those of low economic status. There is also some evidence that involvement in music can increase social inclusion.

Music for all - Increasingly musical opportunities are being created to enhance the quality of the lives of those who have aural impairments, learning difficulties, and autism. Music has also been used to support the learning of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Music, commerce, advertising and work - Music has always played a major part in our work activities being used to co-ordinate movement, alleviate boredom, develop team spirit and speed up the pace of work. Nowadays, the commercial and industrial uses of music constitute major industries. Music is a major component of consumer marketing. It is effective in enhancing the appeal of products and in promoting memory for them. It has also been used to manipulate consumers shopping, eating and drinking habits. The type of music we listen to may also be able to predict consumer behaviour. Ratings of the depressive content of the most popular songs in the USA have also predicted gross national product with a one to two year time lead.

## **Endnote**

Most people hear music for substantial proportions of time each day. It plays a major part in our everyday lives and has major benefits in relation to our well-being and development. It is unthinkable, therefore, that it should not be studied by young people within compulsory education systems. In addition, the demand for music continues to increase. To support this, young people need to be provided with opportunities to acquire the necessary skills to work in the music industry.

Further reading: The full report is available on the web at [www.thepowerofmusic.co.uk](http://www.thepowerofmusic.co.uk) or free in hard copy from The Performing Right Society, 29/33 Berners St, London W1T 3AB

## 9: Music in the Formal School Program

Jack Heller<sup>8</sup>

The call for more educational time for “the basics” in schools seems to be growing louder. Of course, most of us agree with this view. But what is considered “basic?” If the inclusion of instruction in music is to be among the basic subjects taught in school, music instruction must be shown to contribute to the general goals of education. Music in the school day can only be justified if the outcomes of such instruction form a part of the overall development sought for all students. What might music education contribute to this development? I will describe three of many possible reasons one might use to justify music’s role in education. The first could be labeled cognitive, the second, cultural, and the third, experiential.

In the last decade we have heard much discussion about the benefits of music study to the development of skills and knowledge in subjects other than music; to spatial/temporal intelligence; to health and mental well being; and even to creativity (whatever definition one might want to give to this construct). I believe these reasons for music instruction in the schools are somewhat specious. Even the argument of the ubiquity of music in all societies does not convince me of the need for music instruction in our schools. There are many activities ubiquitous to all societies but we do not normally consider the study of them important for the general educational curriculum. And creativity is not limited to study in the arts. Creativity is coveted by all human inquiry.

So what will serve as a catalyst for enlightening the general public to consider the study of music basic to the school curriculum? First and foremost, I believe music study is basic to the curriculum because music is basic to the human brain. Music teachers immediately embraced the research that became known as the “Mozart Effect” as a means to show how important music instruction is to education. But the research is mixed and the rationale for music’s value to other subjects taught in schools is misleading. Even the multiple intelligence theories so touted in recent years (and in earlier decades, by the way) may not be the best reasons for including music instruction as part of the basic curriculum in our schools.

One way to justify the teaching of music in schools (especially in the early years of schooling) is to view music activity (listening/performing) as the Rosetta stone of human communication. Both music and speech require the brain to organize acoustic patterns. Cultures require the brain to construct and interpret rules for using these patterns. Many of these music/speech rules are implicit yet critical to successful musical and linguistic communication.

There is a learning window for certain aspects of language development that opens at birth (or even before) and closes by around the age of ten. Most researchers agree that important language rules are learned by age ten. If the same learning window operates for music (which I believe is the case), the important musical rules are learned by that same age. In speech, practice begins soon after birth. For the human brain to learn music, the practice window must be opened early in life (before the learning window closes). Early music study provides the grounding for meaningful brain pattern organization and problem solving.

Language develops as the newborn child learns to organize abstract acoustic patterns. Language in the infant quickly develops a need to become referential. Since music does not need a referential component I have argued that it (music in its most basic form) develops a capability in the brain prior to language. By “music” I mean the human brain’s organization of non-referential acoustic patterns. This brain activity begins shortly after birth, and if it is reinforced (as language is reinforced) it develops into a musical brain. But this musical brain is the same brain that is required to deal with all sorts of complex problems. Early training in musical “language,” then, helps the brain learn to differentiate, organize, and order abstract acoustic patterns. The musical brain’s ability to solve complex abstract problems efficiently and elegantly contributes to a basic goal of education. We expect our educational system to develop such cognitive processes. This is especially

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so in the primary grades.

In grades 6 to 12 the study of music takes on added dimensions. First, music study in the middle and upper grades relates more to social and cultural constructs. An important goal at this level is to develop skills and knowledge that allow students to explore and to develop a perspective about great accomplishments of men and women in society (past and present). This includes, but is not limited to music. The curriculum at this level includes studies in government, literature, sciences, mathematics, and so forth. Knowledge in a wide variety of disciplines is a hallmark of the educated person. Of course, music should be part of this literacy.

Second, and perhaps more important in the middle and high school years, is the value inherent in the process of music making, both in individual and group settings. The notion of “practice makes perfect” is valuable across the spectrum of human endeavor, but nowhere is it more transparent than in the realm of music. Teaching students that consistent application and concerted effort leads to improvement and understanding is the stock-in-trade of secondary school education. Further, in a group setting, the value of working to perform together well, to function as a well-oiled machine, to meet the goals of the individual and the group, is enormous. In this way, music leads to great self-fulfillment, a very important concept for schools to teach and students to learn by doing.

Since all human activity requires the ability to construct meaningful patterns in the brain, and since music is an important way to develop such abilities, music instruction should be basic to education. Music study can also contribute to cultural literacy and meaningful participation. For these reasons music education should be central to the school curriculum.



## 10: Why Study Music?

Don Hodges<sup>9</sup>

Soccer, computer classes, scouting, and on and on—today’s children have so many activities to choose from, it often seems as if their days are programmed from dawn to dusk. In the midst of all this, why should parents make certain their children are engaged in musical activities? Is there anything special that music has to offer? Participation in music instruction has many benefits and outcomes. Musical activities may help students develop leadership skills, enhance self-esteem, promote esprit de corps, or foster a work ethic and dedication to excellence. But, as valuable as these outcomes are, they can also be attained through other experiences. Joining a chess club might, for instance, provide many of the same benefits. What can be said, then, about music that is unique, and is there anything about it that would make it necessary for all children to have the experience?

As a starting place, consider that a musical experience cannot be replaced by any other. Just as reading a novel by Dickens cannot be compared to viewing a painting by Van Gogh, so watching a ballet cannot replace hearing a symphony by Beethoven. Even if a novel, painting, ballet, and symphony were all concerned with the same idea, what one gets from each experience is unique. Or, imagine going to a funeral. At some point words will be spoken in the form of a eulogy and there will also likely be music. The words cannot express what the music does, nor can the music substitute for the words. Both are unique expressions of that which is shared among the mourners.

Suppose one admits that music is, indeed, a unique experience but contends that that alone does not make it necessary for all children to have a musical education. After all, bungee jumping is a unique experience and we don’t say everyone ought to experience that. Furthermore, nearly all children engage in music outside of school (e.g., watching MTV, listening to favorite CDs with friends, playing or singing in a “garage” band or church choir) so why should it be included as part of a school curriculum? The short answer is that “music provides unique and invaluable insights into the human condition.” To unpack the implications behind this short statement requires two brief digressions—to define education and to look at modern conceptions of human intelligence.

What is the purpose of an education and what do we want our schools to do? Because answering these questions would entail another series of essays, let us begin with the following simple definition: “The purpose of an education is systematic development of the mind and capabilities of every child.” In practice, our educational system has focused on the specific mental capabilities of language and mathematics. This narrow conception of human intelligence is reflected in curricula, standardized tests of academic achievement, and intelligence tests.

Recently, psychologists and others have begun to decry this myopic view and have argued for an elaborated view of human intelligence that more fully encompasses a broader range of human potentialities. One list includes linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal (access to one’s own feeling life), interpersonal (ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals, especially their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions), and naturalist (sensitivity to flora and fauna) intelligences. (A ninth, spiritual intelligence, only partially qualifies as it does not meet all eight of the specified criteria.) In this conception, each intelligence provides a unique and equally valuable way of knowing.

Cognitive neuroscience is identifying neural networks in the brain that support each of these intelligences. Evidence from psychology, anthropology, sociology, and other related disciplines supports the notion that humans are endowed with multiple ways of knowing. These human knowledge systems provide a means for sharing, expressing, understanding, knowing, and gaining insights into one’s inner and outer worlds.

If one assumes agreement with the foregoing—that music does indeed represent a knowledge system—it then becomes legitimate to ask: What does one know, understand, share, or express through music? Our society recognizes and understands what is to be gained through language and

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mathematics knowledge systems; the generally accepted notion that a "basic" education consists of reading, writing, and arithmetic is but one example. But what is gained through music? What follows represents only a few of the things we know, discover, understand, experience, share, or express through music:

1. Feelings. Central to any discussion of music as a knowledge system must be the idea of feelings. From one end of the continuum dealing with vague, unspecified moods to the other end dealing with crystallized emotions such as grief or joy, music is intrinsically connected with feelings.

2. Aesthetic experiences. All human beings have a need for beauty and to activate their innate responsiveness to the organized expressive sounds that we call music.

3. The ineffable. Precisely because music is a nonverbal form of expression it is a powerful means to express or to know that which is difficult or impossible to put into words. Two of the most common human experiences that are frequently known through music are love and spiritual awareness.

4. Thinking. Musical thought is just as viable as linguistic, mathematical, or visual thought. It can be a potent means of expressing ideas and of knowing truth.

5. Structure. Closely allied to the idea of thinking is structure. The human mind seeks patterns, structure, order, and logic. Music provides a unique way of structuring sounds across time, as well as a providing a means of structuring thoughts, feelings, and human experiences.

6. Time and space. Time and space are the "stuff" of the universe. All human knowledge systems provide ways of dealing with time and space. As indicated in number 5, music is a means of organizing sounds across time. Although music occurs in "real" time, it deals more with "felt" time. Music, in connection with dance (bodily-kinesthetic knowledge system), is a primary means of experiencing space in time.

7. Self-knowledge and self-identity. Music's role in intrinsic, and especially peak (transcendent, life-changing) learning experiences, provides for powerful insights into our private, inner worlds. Many gain their sense of self through a variety of musical activities and experiences.

8. Group Identity. Group identity through music is both inclusive and exclusive in that: (a) music helps cement the bonding of those members of a group who share common ideas, beliefs, and behaviors, and (b) music helps isolate and separate one group from another.

9. Healing and wholeness. From more specific applications of music in therapy and medicine to more general interactions, music has profound effects on human beings. Music provides a vehicle for the integration of body, mind, and spirit.

All nine of these, and the many others that could be listed, can be subsumed under the idea that music provides insights into the human condition (i.e., the condition of being human).

Although music represents a built-in knowledge system that allows human beings to know aspects of their inner and outer worlds in a unique mode, such knowledge does not come automatically. All the knowledge systems represent potential learning modalities. More than any other animal species, for whom many specific behaviors are pre-wired, human beings rely heavily on learning for built-in potential to be realized. Human knowledge systems will not simply come to full fruition through a natural growth process; a series of environmental interventions in the form of learning experiences are necessary to activate them. Full development of any knowledge system

will only come as innate potential is realized in environmental circumstances. We must learn how to use language, how to think logically and use mathematical symbols, and so on through the list.

Many aspects of a knowledge system can be learned informally, by observation and imitation. However, formal learning experiences, primarily in the form of an education, are the real keys to unlocking and realizing full human potential. Thus, education ought to be concerned with the systematic development of human knowledge systems. An important implication to come out of this discussion is that human beings need to be educated in all the knowledge systems in order to achieve maximum human potential.

One can learn how to speak, to count, to run and jump, to draw, and to sing through informal means. But it takes systematic development, to become a novelist, a mathematician, a ballerina, an artist, a composer. In many education systems around the world great emphasis is placed on linguistic and logical-mathematical knowledge systems and very little on the musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and naturalist knowledge systems. In terms of formal education as schooling, adoption of the notion of a variety of equally valuable knowledge systems carries with it the implication that the curriculum will reflect these knowledge systems. All students should have an opportunity to experience and develop their capabilities in all knowledge systems. Clearly this is counter to the prevailing back-to-basics emphasis on language and mathematics skills, but it is far more consistent with the current understanding of the human mind from a behavioral sciences perspective. To adopt this viewpoint would place music in the core of the school curriculum.

## 11: Why Music Education?

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The human brain's limbic system becomes highly activated during music participation. Because the limbic portion of the brain developed early in the evolutionary process, it is likely that musical behaviors developed early also, perhaps even before speech, which is controlled by the cerebral cortex, the last major part of the brain to evolve. The striking fact that music became a part of all known cultures, past and present, adds credence to the hypothesis about music's early evolution.

Despite its universality, the only truly universal characteristic of music is its existence; indeed, music and musical activities vary so widely that it is difficult, some say impossible, to identify universal musical traits and practices among the world's cultures. Regardless, it appears that music and musical behaviors developed in various ways at different times and in different places throughout the process of human evolution. It also appears that music and music participation mean different things in different cultures, as well as different things among subcultures and even individuals within cultures.

More than three decades ago, Bennett Reimer set forth a philosophy of music education with which few music educators would disagree: "[T]he nature and value of music education are determined by the nature and value of the art of music." Since Reimer wrote those words, music educators seeking to understand and explain music education have written copiously about "the nature and value of the art of music."

Much writing about music focuses on its sonic qualities, and on the important related topic of music as a means of aesthetic expression. This is valuable work, because just as surely as aesthetics is a central feature of music, music's aesthetic meanings should be central to music teaching and learning.

Far less has been written about other aspects of music, especially how it functions in society other than as a means of aesthetic expression. These "other" ways in which various cultures use music, and music's effects on people, should be considered as well. Furthermore, many writers have tended to treat music as a monolithic phenomenon, whereas in reality it occurs in an almost infinite variety of types, which has led some writers to use the term "musics," plural. For all these reasons, I would alter Reimer's statement to read: "The nature and value of music education are determined by the nature and value of musics and musical practices."

When considering the "nature and value" question, we should remember that music probably evolved as a primary means of expression and communication, and that today it continues to function in similar ways. Humans express thoughts and feelings through music that can be expressed and communicated in no other ways. For that reason, music is unique among human behaviors and in the human experience generally.

At the most basic level, music as a psycho-social phenomenon could be described as an important, apparently essential means of establishing and maintaining our humanity through learned and shared (as opposed to instinctual) behaviors. It appears to be a unique, learned means of abstract communication through which humans not only express thoughts and feelings, but through which they can receive the expressed thoughts and feelings of others. Some of these thoughts and feelings are aesthetic in nature, whereas others involve the signaling of intended relationships (including opposition), not only to one's own culture, but to the myriad subcultures and ideas that make up an individual's network of social identifications. In addition to identifying with a specific music or musics, individuals (including music participants) often identify with one or more musical groups or musical activities, which constitutes a direct form of musical social identification.

The (apparent) fact that music evolved early and became a culturally universal practice suggests that it is indeed a human need, whatever the cause(s). At this point, we cannot give a

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definitive answer to “the nature and value of music” question, because musics and musical practices vary so widely throughout the world that their “nature and value” defy definitions. Nevertheless, advocates could emphasize that there should be no need to justify the inclusion of music in the school curriculum beyond the fact that it is a universal human need and practice, leaving scholars and others free to continue to speculate about the reasons why this is so.

The wisest course for society and its music education profession might be to expend less energy and fewer resources devising universal rationales and philosophies for music education (why teach music), one-size-fits-all music curricula and curriculum guidelines (what music and musical behaviors to teach), and elaborate, prescriptive teaching methods (how to teach music). We should probably be less concerned about the why’s, what’s, and how’s of music teaching—such as whether music is taught through performance, listening, or composition—than whether it is taught at all. For all these reasons, advocates of music education should work to facilitate the teaching of musics and musical practices in as many venues as possible throughout the world.

Music belongs to a very small group of sociologically universal human practices. As such it is, by necessity, transmitted from generation to generation in every culture. In the world’s less complex cultures, this transmission takes place without formal instruction. In the world’s more complex cultures, masses of children are taught in formal schools so as to free most adults for other tasks. Formal schooling also seeks to ensure systematic coverage of subjects deemed too important to be left to chance in cultures in which most adults are preoccupied with jobs other than rearing and educating their and their neighbors’ children.

Why teach music in schools? Because it is a unique, exceedingly powerful means of aesthetic and social expression that is central to our humanity. In cultures complex enough to need formal schooling practices, formal music instruction is essential because musics and musical practices, together with a few other subjects, are simply too important to be left to chance.

## 12: Why Study Music in School?

Paul R. Lehman<sup>11</sup>

Why is music important? Why should every child study music in school? Almost everyone who has made a major contribution to educational thought since Plato has agreed that music should be an integral part of the basic education of every young person. So why are we still trying to answer these questions? Because some people view music not as a subject for serious study but merely as a form of entertainment. Others believe that it can be learned well enough outside school. Still others see value in music but simply don't regard it as a high priority.

Educators generally agree that there are five basic fields of study—mathematics, languages and literature, physical sciences, social studies, and the arts. No one can claim to be educated who does not have a reasonable acquaintance with all five. Every person should have the ability to perform, to create, and to listen to music with understanding. To achieve that end, every student should have access to a comprehensive, balanced, and sequential program of music study in school.

Recent research has suggested that music instruction can have a positive effect on the functioning of the brain in young people and can offer other far-reaching educational and developmental benefits. These results deserve our attention, but the most basic reason for studying music is that music is intrinsically worthwhile. It is valuable in itself. It is important.

Still, not everything that is valuable and important can be included in the school curriculum. Why should music be? There are many reasons. Here are only a few:

1. One of the most fundamental and generally accepted purposes of education has always been to transmit the cultural heritage of a group to succeeding generations. And music is one of the most powerful, the most compelling, and the most glorious manifestations of every cultural heritage. The fundamental and pervasive role that music plays in the entertainment business sometimes blinds people to the even more fundamental and pervasive role that it plays throughout human culture. Because of the central position that music occupies among the core behaviors of human beings, any student who is allowed to leave school without studying music has been cheated just as surely as if he or she had been allowed to leave school without studying mathematics or science.

2. Another purpose of education is to help students to achieve their potential. Musical potential is one of the basic abilities that exist in every person. It can best be developed if study is begun at an early age and continued through adolescence. Anyone whose musical potential remains undeveloped, which happens too often, is deprived of some of the most satisfying and rewarding experiences that life has to offer. Schools should give students opportunities to test the limits of their potential in as many domains of human endeavor as possible. The more such opportunities are available, the more likely it is that students' lives will be as full and rich as possible.

3. We are surrounded by music every day. If we are content to wallow indiscriminately in the superficiality and banality of popular culture, then there may be no need to study music. But just beneath the surface layer of trivial music, to which we are involuntarily exposed on a daily basis, there is a wondrous and incredibly diverse realm of profound and engaging music where, once the barriers of unfamiliarity and bias have been stripped away, exquisite beauty and enjoyment are readily accessible to everyone. The formal study of music can unlock this gate. It can increase the satisfaction that students derive from music by enabling them to understand and enjoy more sophisticated and more complex music. Anyone can "enjoy" music at a rudimentary level, but sequential study can sharpen students' perceptions, raise their levels of appreciation, and expand their musical horizons.

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4. One of the things that schools teach implicitly is that every question has a right answer. But outside the school the most important problems facing society seldom have clear-cut answers. These problems do not lend themselves to the formulaic, step-by-step solutions that we are taught to apply in school. Music is different from the other basic disciplines in that it does not reflect a preoccupation with right answers. It tolerates and accommodates the ambiguities with which life is filled. It teaches us to cope with the subjective. In this respect music is more like life itself than are the other disciplines. Music brings a balance to the curriculum that can help to offset what might otherwise be a distorted view of problem-solving in the real world.

5. Every student should have a chance to succeed in something. Music in school can prevent drop-outs by providing opportunities for success for some students who have difficulty with other disciplines in the curriculum. For some students music can make school tolerable. Most music teachers have known students who remained in school solely because of the joy and satisfaction they received from participating in music. Only in music class were their talents appreciated, their contributions respected, and their achievements valued.

6. Most important of all, music exalts the human spirit. It enhances the quality of life. The vast and unique ability of music to improve the quality of life has too often been underemphasized or overlooked entirely in discussions of the value of music study. Music transforms the human experience. It brings joy and pleasure to men, women, and children in every society and every culture. It brings us solace in the ordinary activities of daily life, and it's an indispensable adjunct to both our happiest and our most solemn occasions. It represents one of the most basic instincts in human beings. That's why it has played such a important role in every known civilization. And that's why it will continue to do so as far into the future as anyone can see. The only question is whether we want to limit access to music knowledge and skills to an elite few or whether we want to make them available to everyone to appreciate and enjoy. I hope that the answer is obvious.

I'm tired of excuses from school administrators trying to explain why their schools can't offer good music programs. And the excuse I'm most tired of is the claim that there is not enough time in the school day for music. That's nonsense. Lack of time is a pseudo-problem. It's a false issue. A lack of will is masquerading as a lack of time. There are excellent schools all around us that have no trouble finding time for music and can serve as models. If time is not a problem in school A, why should it be a problem in school B? Of all the resources necessary to run a school, time is the only resource that is allocated with absolute equality to every school everywhere.

Another frequent claim is that the schedule won't allow music instruction. That's equally absurd. Who's running our schools anyway? Is it the schedule, or is it educators? Is our highest priority the schedule, or is it the students? Should we begin with an arbitrary schedule and then try to fit in educational experiences if and when we can? Or should we begin by identifying what we want kids to know and be able to do and then figure out how to make that possible? Again, there are good schools everywhere that have no trouble in scheduling music. We have only to look around us.

When asked to cite their most memorable experiences in school, an extraordinary number of adults as well as students cite musical experiences. They typically describe the electrifying chill that flows up the spine during an exquisitely emotional performance, the uniquely close fellowship that develops with other students in an ensemble, the friendship and mentoring of a particular music teacher, a cherished opportunity to perform a solo, or the magnificent feeling of accomplishment one experiences after overcoming daunting challenges to achieve an ardently sought musical goal. Education is what we have left over when we have forgotten the things we learned in school. Treasured musical experiences are often among the most unforgettable events of our school years and, at the same time, they lay the groundwork for a continuous flow of pleasurable experiences throughout life. Music makes a difference in people's lives.

Perhaps the greatest threat to school music programs today comes from principals and other

decision-makers who did not experience challenging and rewarding music programs themselves while in school. They don't realize what a good music program can do for a child, for a school, and for a community. It would be a terrible disservice to society, as well as to the individuals involved, to deprive yet another generation of educational and political leaders of the enormous satisfaction and joy that can come from participation in a high-quality music program.

Advocacy is an activity that music teachers have never sought to engage in but must nevertheless. Our most potent allies are the parents of our students, who are well positioned to bring effective pressure on elected decision-makers. In addition, we must mobilize all of our natural allies at every level in support of strong school music programs. These natural allies include other educators, amateur and professional artists, college and university professors, sympathetic politicians, and graduates of our programs, as well as every group and every individual who considers himself or herself a supporter of the arts.

In many places, the traditional emphasis on humanistic values in education has become badly distorted in recent years as the emphasis has shifted toward short-term, narrowly mechanical objectives. Too often schools have neglected important long-term goals in seeking to achieve fashionable short-term goals. It is not the central purpose of education, for example, to help the student to get a job. A broadly educated person will find a job, but a narrow focus on job training ignores the very skills that employers most desire: the ability to think clearly and the ability to communicate effectively. Employers want workers who are familiar with the five basic fields of study; they prefer to provide their own job-specific training. And the personal skills most valued by employers – creativity, flexibility, discipline, and the ability to work cooperatively with others—are all skills emphasized in music.

Neither is it the purpose of education to prepare students for the manufacture and marketing of consumer goods. Young people must not be treated merely as pawns on the gigantic chessboard of international economic competition. And it is certainly not the purpose of education to prepare students to pass standardized examinations. The larger, true purpose of education is the pursuit of truth and beauty, the development of human capacities, and the improvement of the quality of life. And nothing does more than music to contribute to that purpose. It is shortsighted and misguided to emphasize preparing students to earn a better living at the expense of preparing them to live a better life.

A nation is judged by posterity not by the strength of its army, nor by its trade surpluses and deficits, nor by its students' scores on standardized tests, but principally by its contributions to the arts and humanities. That has been true throughout history, and it has become even more true as we expand our potential for making our beautiful planet uninhabitable through pollution and war. It is the achievements of a civilization in the arts and humanities that remain when everything else is swept away by time.

Music is vitamin M. Music is a chocolate chip in the cookie of life. There is a magic about music. It enables us to express our noblest thoughts and feelings. It engages our imaginations. It provides us with unparalleled opportunities to assert our uniqueness. These are particularly important functions in a world increasingly dominated by electronic technology. Music is not merely an adornment of life; it is a basic manifestation of being human. In insisting that every student have access to a comprehensive, balanced, and sequential program of music study in school, we are merely seeking to give students in all schools the opportunities that are presently given to students in the best schools. A democratic society can settle for nothing less.



## 13: Why is Music Important?

Besa Luzha<sup>12</sup>

I am a new music educator coming from Kosova, a small country in South Eastern Europe that is better known on the basis of the terrible conflict and war that happened here during the years 1998-1999.

Since June 1999, when the International Community through the NATO Alliance intervened and brought peace to my country, life has come back to normal and now we are trying to fulfill the necessary standards to join the European Family.

There is a lot of work to be done and many processes have already begun. Among them are a series of reforms in many segments of our life, and the most special one the Education Reform in all the levels.

I personally am responsible for the coordination of the group of experts compiling the new reformed music curriculum for all the grades (K-12), and parallel this work by teaching the students in the Faculty of Music about the exiting opportunities available in the music teaching profession.

While working in this process I have been asked many times "Why is music so important.?" And truly I have been trying to explain even to myself the reason why, and I have often thought why is it that we need to explain something very visible and evident.

In this article, I will not try to explain the scientific arguments starting from the theory of Multiple Intelligences and up to the benefits of music to the cognitive processes and results in overall tests in math and reading (as many researcher have already argued these benefits). I want to share with you a personal experience that has answered my question about the importance of music. I want to speak about another aspect of music that evoked to me the opinion of Plato and his "colleagues" from the ancient times about the opinion that "Music makes better people" or the opinion of Schopenhauer (the philosopher) that "music is the bath of the soul".

The power of music to touch our souls and evoke reactions and expression of different moods and emotions is for me the most important quality of music.

In the culture of my country, music plays a very important role. It is part of the most important moments of our lives-from birth, marriage and until death. (In our tradition when someone dies they cry-sing about the dead person by mentioning his good qualities and by describing in a form of poetry with rhymes and very unique tune and melody the pain that the members of his/her family feels).

In the most difficult times during the conflict, songs were created speaking of the freedom and the children where singing those songs all the time. It brought them hope for a better life in the future. For ten years in a row (1989-1999) the oppressive regime that administrated Kosova forbade the use of the only concert hall existing in Prishtina (the capital of Kosovo) for the population of Kosovar Albanians –majority of Kosovo population.

In the year 1999, after the peace was established my colleague musicians and I took an initiative to organize a concert of Classical Music that was the first for 10 years. It might seem so unusual to speak about the organizing of the concert in normal conditions. But the situation back then was everything but normal. I am speaking about a city coming our of war with lots of killed and massacred being found everyday in massive graves, lots of demolition and destruction and many homeless people.

Anyway, we tried and we did it. One night on a cold November where the temperature inside the hall with the broken and demolished windows was only 10 degrees Celcius, musicians from Kosova, Macedonia, Albania and their guest colleagues from Germany, USA and Italy performed to the audience of more than 600 people the beautiful orchestral pieces from Bach, Haydn, Barber, Copland and others as well as pieces from Albanian composers.

Although it was so cold, the musicians were dressed properly for the concert atmosphere and

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the sounds they produced created a warm environment. Thus music heated the hearts and spoke to all those people in one language-the language of love and mutual understanding. It brought courage and hope to the local people to move forward and showed the guests who had come to work in Kosovo the spirit of this people and their dreams to be treated as equal citizens as the other members of the European Countries.

Thus music established the bridges between the people in those moments and they were touched by its meaning. When the concert ended I saw something that I will never forget. All the 600 people raised and applauded and their faces were covered with tears of joy, pain and all the possible emotions that they had experienced in those moments. I will never forget this experience and I say-this is why music is so important. It enriches our lives and makes us feel human-with body and soul.

Today when we are asked to advocate for the importance of music in the schools we can say very simply and sincerely to all those who have doubts: Music is important because it helps us to educate the pupils (the people) to be sensitive and caring. So let us give this chance to music.

## 14: Why Does Our Profession Need Advocacy?

Michael L. Mark<sup>13</sup>

The most eloquent statement I have seen about advocacy for education was made by former United States Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan: “Knowledge is a form of capital, much of it formed by government investment in education. . . . Politics has become a process that deliberately seeks to effect such outcomes as who thinks, who feels how.” Senator Moynihan has pinpointed the reason that the music education profession needs to advocate on its own behalf.

Why is it important that music education advocates serve as a voice of the profession to civic officials? Why do we need anybody to advocate for us? The answer is simple: we cannot expect policy makers, at least not all of them, to understand why the work that we do as music educators is important to our students, our communities, our nations, and to civilization. We music educators are musicians as well as teachers. We know inherently the importance and value of music. We feel it deeply and we believe it. If policy makers who have the authority to control education do not know these things, then we must not only tell them, but persuade them as well.

It is the responsibility of advocates to ensure that those responsible for formulating public policy do so on the basis of accurate knowledge and informed judgment.

Music education speaks to people in many ways. The most obvious voice is that of music itself. People value music and recognize the need for children to be musically educated. Students are another voice of music education. When they demonstrate their musical learning and accomplishments, they are the voice of music education as it speaks to parents and communities in a convincing manner. Another voice of music education is that spoken by advocates. Advocacy is the voice of the music education profession as it speaks to members of boards of education and legislators, and government administrators.

Most music educators are uncomfortable in the role of advocate. We have spent years preparing ourselves to become musicians and teachers of music. Our backgrounds and experiences have not prepared us to approach politicians and administration officials to explain why what we do is so important to them. We would like to think that they already know this, but we also know that just isn't so. And so we need people to advocate for us .

I have heard music educators disparage advocacy because they feel that advocates sometimes misrepresent what we do in our professional lives. They might or might not be right, but we have to recognize that there are two aspects of advocacy: how we advocate, and what it is that we advocate. These are separate issues. If advocates do not represent our interests accurately, then we must correct them. The issue being addressed in this paper, however, is not what is advocated, but the fundamental need for advocates to represent us to policy makers.

Advocacy is a form of lobbying. Virtually every professional and vocational interest, whether the arts, business, industry, or labor, needs to be represented to policy makers. Otherwise, policy makers neither know why our work must be supported, or what we need to continue serving the public interest effectively. And we need a lot. We need recognition by governing officials that music education exists for important reasons. When we persuade them that we serve important needs of the greater community, then they can perceive the relationships between public policy and music education and can make decisions that are critical to our profession. Should portions of funding for school programs be designated for arts education? Should education laws recognize that curricular decisions must include music education? Should those laws support industrial issues that affect musical instrument manufacturers, music publishers, uniform makers, retailers, and other interests? Should our education laws dictate that every child must have a musical education in the interest of equal educational opportunity? As we analyze the myriad issues that connect music education to public policy, it becomes apparent that we need to be represented by advocates who are knowledgeable about our professional needs and who are capable in matters of public policy.

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The Music Educators National Conference provides a model of effective professional advocacy at the national level in the United States. Over the years, MENC has developed its advocacy capabilities by identifying issues that need to be brought to the attention of policy makers. It has also coalesced with other education associations to increase the numbers of people represented by arts education advocates. This is especially important because our clout increases as the numbers of people who are represented increases. Although the United States government recognizes music education as a discrete discipline, much legislation has been in the name of arts education—music, visual art, theatre, and dance. MENC has also established strong ties with the music industry, which multiplies the number of people and professional interests that are represented several fold, and equally important, relates our profession directly to the national economy. Obviously, policy makers will consider our needs more readily as we establish our ties to business and industry as well as to schools.

Undoubtedly there are different models for national advocacy in other countries. I hope that music educators from other countries will share their advocacy strategies and techniques through this web site.

If we truly believe in the value of our work, then we owe it to ourselves, our students, our colleagues, and our communities to be sure that education policy makers are informed and supportive of us.

## 15: A Rationale for Music Education

Clifford K. Madsen<sup>14</sup>

For those who value knowledge, the learning process is perpetual throughout life's time and includes: (1) the ability to think, and therefore, value and discriminate, (2) the ability to feel, and therefore, become sensitive to aesthetic qualities in life, and (3) the courage to act, and therefore, translate those abilities to think and feel into overt behavior. The study of music, because it includes cognitive, aesthetic and experiential participation advances these attributes.

Musical training creates a respect and desire for continuing aesthetic experiences, and the ability to react positively, listen responsively, and participate enthusiastically in an artistically sensitive manner. Music study promotes positive interpersonal attributes and participation enables one to be empathetic with people of differing social and ethnic backgrounds. Music study encourages students to demonstrate mature attitudes and positive values because of shared experiences in highly structured activities that are responsive to the emotional commonalities in life.

While music participation enhances intellectual development, it is an activity that is extremely broad in its capacity to include every child: the poor, ethnic minorities, children of the inner cities, the handicapped, and the highly gifted. It does this at all levels from pre-birth through adulthood with continuing life-long programs. Music study helps each student understand him/herself as a person. It assists in the development of positive attitudes and keener insights toward others within the world community.

In addition to advancing personal competencies in music performance, the study of music includes improvisation, conducting, composing, arranging, analysis, history, varied repertoire, as well as other skills, where students are exposed to other arts, the sciences and the humanities. The study of music helps students approach life in a positive, imaginative, and enthusiastic manner and the schooled musician evidences the personal qualities of leadership, intellectual curiosity, and social commitment.

The task of structuring and managing a musical environment in which individuals, regardless of ability level, positively experience, successfully achieve, and hence, come to value the art of music, demands a breadth of knowledge and skills, as well as high levels of perception and sensitivity. All music study should be based upon an important yet extremely simple premise—that every person involved as a learner ought to have the best and most complete instruction possible. This premise includes a commitment to the subject of music and its use with people. The strength of this commitment is evidenced by academic and social behaviors in life, both in and out of the music environment, and is characterized by diligence in the pursuit of musical and academic excellence and active dedication to the improvement of the quality of life.

The acquisition and development of these abilities requires an intellectual and experiential commitment that is realized in daily living and is maintained and strengthened during formal and informal music study continuing throughout one's lifetime.

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## 16: Why Teach Music in School?

Janet Mills<sup>15</sup>

There is recorded music almost everywhere in everyday life, but so little music making, and so much misunderstanding of what music is all about. People think that they are ‘not musical’. Or that to play an instrument you first have to learn to read music. Or that if they have tried to learn an instrument, but did not make too much progress, this was necessarily their fault. Or that you have to be Mozart to compose. Or that music teachers are only interested in classical music composed by men who are long dead.

Teaching music in school enables us to put all this right before it goes wrong. We build on the natural affinity for and joy in making music – including making up music – that all children bring to their first day at school, and help them in the early stages to achieving their full musical potential. We avoid dogmatic approaches to music teaching that constrain children, but rather guide them as they grow musically, and exceed our very high expectations of them. We make it easy for children to carry on thinking that making music is just as natural as speaking, reading and writing. We show children that there is much more to music than the ‘Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy’ or ‘Mary Had a Little Lamb’. We engage with the music of children’s own culture, and also help them to broaden their musical perspectives. We help the children who become so passionate about music that they want a career in it to achieve their goals. And we also show all the other children that music can be a major force in their lives, if that is what they want.

We teach music in school primarily because we want children – all children – to grow as musicians. But music, also, improves the mind. While it is hard to catch the results of this in a scientific experiment, or to plan music teaching so that this will necessarily happen, no-one who has had the privilege of observing really good music teaching, and has watched children grow intellectually in front of them, can doubt that this is the case. It may be the raising of children’s self-esteem through success in music making that helps them towards achievement more generally. It may be that enjoying music helps children to enjoy school more. It may be that chemical changes induced in the brain by music facilitate learning more generally. Or perhaps the thought experiments that musicians must carry out to improve their performing and composing help children to extend their thinking more generally. I don’t much mind what the reason is, but am certain that it happens.

Music making is something that we can draw on to make the bad times in life more bearable. Sometimes this is just in little ways. But I know an elderly man who struggles to make himself understood in words through the fog of Parkinson’s disease. The other day, he stood up from the dinner table, moved to the piano, and played the songs of his youth perfectly, and with such communication. I know a much younger man, an outstanding physicist, who has cystic fibrosis. When the frustrations of his life now, and his limited prospects, become too much, he sits down at the piano and improvises for hours and hours .....

But music is mainly about good times, and making them more frequent and even better. Music is not a gift but a right. By teaching it in schools, and teaching it as musically and as inclusively as possible, we give all children the best opportunity in the world to make the most of music for themselves as they move through life.

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## 17: An Ethnomusicological Perspective

**Bruno Nettl<sup>16</sup>**

Ethnomusicologists may be the people who, as a group, look at music most broadly. Devoting themselves to the study of all of the music in a society regardless of its social and artistic status; they investigate the musics of all of the world's societies; and they examine musical culture from all possible perspectives, contemplating its relationship to social organization, spiritual domains, economics, politics, the other arts, and looking at music as sound and as a system of ideas. Music educators benefit from its breadth as well as its insistence on a relativistic stance, and on seeing a culture from both an insider's and an outsider's perspective.

Ethnomusicologists have come to conclude that music does something to a person, something not done by anything else in nature or culture. They do not consider music to have a single main function among the various aspects of culture, and among the various cultures of the world, except for simply being music; but the peoples of the world all feel that they cannot live without it. Of the many domains of culture, music would perhaps seem to be one of the least necessary; yet we know of no culture that does not have it.

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## 18: The Experience of Music

George Odam<sup>17</sup>

Music is an essential life-experience and in our increasingly secular Western European society, it provides an important source of spiritual experience for the majority of children in our schools. Such musical feeding of the spirit remains an important part of my own early memories. That transcendent sense of well-being and connection with something beyond the day-by-day experience of the world could be sensed in the humblest musical activities: in nursery rhymes and singing games, in hymns and songs and in listening to music of all kinds through mechanical reproduction. I had a familial and environmental disposition towards music and was lucky enough to experience music at first-hand as well as in audience. As a youth I felt impelled to study music even though I had little formal teaching and less hope of success.

Can anything helpful be learned from that I wonder? I cannot demonstrate how much musical experience, in the home and outside, helped my studies overall but I am sure it did. I know it was my solace when things went wrong for me and that it helped me to learn to co-ordinate and develop my thinking and feeling processes, but I cannot prove it. I believe that youthful musical experience develops the brain, and there is increasing scientific evidence of positive effect, such as the evidence on brain development in musicians published in 1995 by Schlaug et al. and in 1998 by Pantev et al. in *Nature*.

What I think my story does underline is the importance of real musical experience in early life. It was hearing a busker on a street corner playing a popular song on the violin that first inspired me to want to try to play a musical instrument. At that age everything in music seemed equally wonderful and important to me. I loved hearing brass bands, choirs and organs, salon music, popular songs (there was no ‘pop’ music as such), dance and big bands, folk songs, Gilbert and Sullivan, Victorian sentimental ballads, live concerts of Britten’s music (I came from the same region as he did), orchestras and jazz bands.

Formal school music education did not figure much in my early life and neither did I have many individual instrumental lessons. Most of what little I received I rejected as boring and irrelevant. Perhaps I was motivated to teach because I felt deprived of being taught well. But it has also made me healthily sceptical of the intentional effect that any individual teacher can have. Music doesn’t fit easily into the timetabled security of school-life. It is an art and arts are uncomfortable, anarchic things. Arts demand time and attention and encourage individual expression. Good music teachers respond to this by finding ways to provide captivating musical experiences in spite of the mechanisms of schools. They understand the power of music and the need for it to be able to speak for itself rather than be explained. However much they plan carefully, they expect the unexpected and allow the music to work its own magic. They note the fundamental experience of music that comes through the human voice and how this underlies common musical practice in all cultures and at all time. They don’t give up on this and diligently search for new vocal materials that will engage, thrill and motivate young people.

Helping pupils to find themselves through learning to play an instrument is a vital part of providing a musical environment in which pupils can learn. In some countries this can be done in school time, in others it may be through local music schools. Good teachers remain keenly aware of their individual pupils’ instrumental and vocal progress and capabilities and make endless opportunities for their skills to be nurtured and developed within the school. Another way of experiencing music is by composing music of your own. Good teachers encourage inventiveness in their pupils and help them to approach musical experience with the invitation to try creating it for themselves. They provide rich opportunities for pupils to hear and experience the effect of their own compositions when it communicates with others in performance. The question “what if...?” “ is

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fundamental to all good music teaching both in the classroom and in the music studio. Good teachers keep their ears and eyes open and are always ready to test out new musical experiences to find the value in them. They share their sense of discovery and enjoyment with their pupils and make certain that their own enthusiasms and knowledge are conveyed to their pupils through making music with them whenever possible but encouraging all of them to take responsibility for their own learning.

Music is one of our earliest sensory experiences. It can be identified by babies even before birth. It can sustain us through life, providing relaxation or stimulation when needed. As we grow older, so our musical needs and tastes change. Music can be a lifeline. For all of us, well or ill, in physical or psychological pain, young or old, it provides a way of understanding ourselves and our world and of knowing about and experiencing things that otherwise cannot be fully expressed in words. Music making engages thinking, feeling and doing in a way that is unique and highly fulfilling. Above all it can provide a strong sense of well-being and a feeling of connection with things, well beyond our daily experience, that help to give meaning to our lives. Dr Colwyn Trevarthen, of the Department of Psychology at Edinburgh University recently described that power by saying that it attunes to the essential efforts that the mind makes to regulate the body. I believe that we are becoming increasingly aware of how important that internal tuning process is to our physical and mental good health and that music is a precious commodity that we must nurture and develop in ourselves and others as well as we can for the common good.

## 19: A Music Pedagogy Credo

Bengt Olsson<sup>18</sup>

“We are living in the best of musical worlds”. Never in history have so many people experienced and performed music. This new technology has made it possible to both create and distribute music all over the world. In media – newspapers, magazines, radio, TV and by Internet – the music and the artists are acknowledged, but very seldom music education is put forward. The role of music education in this marvelous expansion is often neglected although its importance is huge.

What is the essence of music education? Through our language we have words and concepts like “education”, “teach”, “learn”, “school” etc, but they don’t tell us what is really going on. A research-based definition speaks of “intentions to teach” and “intentions to learn” as two basic premises for education. Consequently, the conscious purposes to teach other people as well as the conscious purpose of people’s learning are the core values of music education.

Such a definition embraces all kind of music education. The most obvious feature is traditional music education in schools, community music schools and within higher music education. But music education is much more. Community music involves, for example active participation in music making of all kinds (performing, improvising and creating). The kinds of music employed encompass a wide range and diversity of music. Music may occur with cultural events, folkways and other arts. The music may reflect the cultural life of a geographical community, recreated community, or imagined community.

Musical communities take many forms. While music making groups may crystallize into unique structures, there are certain characteristics that facilitate positive group dynamics. Procedures and structures don’t seem to be fixed determinants. There may be a conductor, people may take turns leading and following, or there may be a collective.

One core issue is what are the unique aspects of music education? First of all music education leads to a spirit of community. It is through the musical performances as well as experiences of music that the social dimensions of music education are strengthened. However, the forces of music education on the individual strengthen his/her abilities to distinguish another core issue. What is good and what is bad music? This is not only a matter of skills to decide what is good and bad music for the individual, but a matter of being able to take part of the deeper aspects of music. It is here that music education can play a role in human development.

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## 20: The Nature of Music

Isabelle Peretz<sup>19</sup>

We sense that music is much more than a pleasure technology or mere entertainment. Yet, the idea that our responses to music might be instinctual has only gained credence in recent years.

Developmental psychologists have convincingly shown that before the age of one year, infants display a remarkable and rather subtle sensitivity to music. These perceptual abilities are similar, in many respects, to those displayed by adults. Humans appear to be born with processing predispositions for music. These musical abilities develop spontaneously, by simple exposure to music. The initial trigger appears to lie in maternal vocal singing. All mothers sing to their infants, in all known cultures. Basic musical skills are not only precociously acquired and universal, they are also old in evolutionary terms. Archaeological finds show a continuous record of musical activities in all human settlements, dating back at least 50,000 years. Thus, music seems to correspond to an evolutionary adaptation.

Neuropsychologists have accumulated evidence that shows that the human brain is specialized for processing music. Findings reveal that the human brain is equipped with neural circuitries that deal exclusively with music. Such circuitry is not only independent of language processing, but also of the melody of language (intonation). Thus, the functioning of the musical brain is relatively autonomous. Given such independence, it is possible that a person may lack music competence, through either some form of congenital or developmental disorder, while having all other faculties intact; or, on the other hand, retain the music faculty in the presence of other mental dysfunction. This explains why you may find brilliant and remarkable individuals – like Che Guevara—who experienced a life-long inability to recognize music. Conversely, you may be impressed by the musical virtuosity of some autistic individuals, who are otherwise severely handicapped.

Music is unique. Musical abilities flourish independently, without much assistance from other cognitive and affective systems. One sequela of having a highly specialized musical brain is that a slight neural deviation may compromise its functioning from birth. Individuals that experience such a deviation, like Che Guevara, are commonly called tone-deaf. And for a long time it was thought that lack of effort or musical practice was responsible for their condition. Now, we know that this view is incorrect. These individuals suffer from a genuine musical impairment. The existence of a few “deviants” is probably the price to pay for having a sophisticated machinery underlying musical sensitivity.

But why is our species so musical? Two main evolutionary explanations have been offered. The initial account was provided by Darwin himself (1871) who proposed that music serves to attract sexual partners. However, the dominant view lies at the group-level rather than at the individual-level, with music helping to promote group cohesion. This bonding effect of music may well be initialized in the mother-infant interactive pattern created through maternal singing. The individual- and group-level roles attributed to music do not need to be mutually exclusive. Individuals taking the lead in gatherings by virtue of their musical and dance prowess can achieve leadership status in the group, a factor that contributes to reproductive success.

Thus, the universal appeal of music, which used to be considered as a social construct that varies from culture to culture, might be better conceived as an adaptive response of the organism. It seems that emotional responses to music can be aroused similarly in every proper functioning human as reflexes, by being the product of dedicated neural structures. Indeed, musical emotions occur with rapid onset, through automatic appraisal, and with involuntary changes in physiological and behavioural responses. This conception fits with the fact that we often experience emotions as happening to us, not as chosen by us. And this is exactly what should be expected from the operation of a musical instinct.

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## 21: On the Value of "School Music"

Tom Regelski<sup>20</sup>

Music educators often feel the-need to advocate the value of music and to promote its inclusion in schooling. This need may be felt because, given the importance of schools to society, talk of various kinds extolling the value and status of schooling is common, especially where the pragmatic value contributed by particular ‘subjects’ of study is not obvious. To the degree the value of music education is not obvious, it shares this same need and for many of the same reasons.

One of the frustrations of teaching most subjects is that students rarely have the same interest in the subject as led the teacher to study and teach it. A prime reason for this is that the structure-of-the-discipline curricular paradigm characterizing much of schooling teaches subjects as self-contained disciplines rather than for their direct relevance to life. The goal of curricular scholasticism, then, is to develop a ‘disciplined mind’. If anything, students’ lack of interest in the information studied is prerequisite to developing the intended mental discipline. The disinterestedness of such study is underscored, in any case, because contemplation of the subject matter for its own sake is said to be the main value of learning it.

Not surprisingly, resistance and ‘discipline problems’ result and these typically lead teachers to teach their subjects defensively. Sometimes this takes the form of defending the discipline from the students! In such cases, grades and other so-called ‘standards’ are used to selectively discourage or weed out the many who are insufficiently appreciative or adept. The explicit curriculum, as a result, prevents or disinclines most students from going beyond the initial introduction-to-the-discipline that constitutes ‘basic’ schooling in it. On the other hand, the “hidden curriculum” effectively teaches most that they are ‘no good’ at the subject. Once required ‘basics’ are over, then, most students quickly forget whatever they learned only for classroom purposes.

The disinterestedness upon which study is predicated entails that students learn to value the subject for its own sake. This leads to the kind of defensive teaching that tries to motivate interest in the ‘subject matter’ despite its disconnection from life. Success in developing some ‘appreciation’ on the part of an adept minority often compensates in the minds of many teachers for the parallel failure to interest the remaining (and unpromising) majority whose efforts are instead motivated by grades and curricular requirements—and most notably by the desire to have the required course behind them. After graduation their attitude towards such studies is at best neutral. However, more often there are negative implications—for example, parents who excuse their own children’s problems with a certain subject because “I wasn’t good at it when I was in school, either.” And, of course, this also means that their own lives as adults are, for most practical purposes, untouched by such instruction.

Curriculum theorists commonly recognize these problems of traditional schooling. They are, however, commonplace in music education, as well. Thus, a “music appreciation” approach to comprehensive or general education typically fails to develop either the connoisseurship and ‘taste’ for ‘good music’ favored by classroom instruction or functional musical skills useful outside of school and throughout life. And, similarly, the adept minority in school ensembles typically fails to develop either the commitment or the independent musicianship needed to continue performing beyond graduation. As a result, the benefits to individuals and society of such music studies are as unclear as for many other subjects studied in school.

The situation with studying music in school might be thought to be different because, clearly, music is first and foremost a valued and therefore common social praxis. Unlike many school subjects, music and its relevance are facts of life. Disciplines have developed that study different aspects and types of musical praxis, of course. But the disciplines of music, as such, are not the reason or value for which any musical praxis exists in the first place! And while every musical praxis necessarily involves some kind and degree of ‘discipline’ (that is, “practice in the praxis”),

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the musical ‘doing’ in question embraces a wide range of personal and participatory interests and abilities — from vernacular, naïve, folk and amateur to expert, aficionado and professional. In all cases, however, the vernacular, naïve, folk and amateur kinds of musicking, and other widely varied personal and social uses of music—what sociologist Tia DeNora calls “music in everyday life”—are more at the core of any society than the more rarefied and technically demanding manifestations, though these also make a unique contribution.

Herein, then, lies the problem: Social and cultural theorists from a variety of disciplines acknowledge that music in everyday life is in fact very healthy, robust and active. In traditional and modern societies alike, music serves countless and important personal and social goods. Because it both ‘carries’ and shapes cultural life and individual consciousness and meets a wide variety of social purposes it is ever-present in any society.

The issue, then, is not the value of music but uncertainty concerning the value of music education. To the degree instruction is concerned with ‘disinterested appreciation’ or concerns itself with only the adept or self-selected few, music in school becomes disconnected from its important roles and functions in everyday life on the part of ordinary people. It suffers from the arid, neutralizing “scholastic point of view” sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has described that is devoid of all practical intentions or tangible relevance. School music, as a result, becomes a praxis of its own, the value of which applies mainly to students only while they are in music class, formally taking lessons, or in connection with school-based performance. As a consequence, too many music teachers have little evidence and thus little assurance that their efforts have made a lasting difference. They prefer to believe and contend that simply including music in the curriculum somehow has intangible benefits that are realized (and thus expressed) only in vague, almost spiritual terms.

It has been said, correctly I think, that music is too important to be left to musicians; and the same might be said for its academic study in traditional schooling—that music is too important to be reduced to a subject or a discipline or a vaguely described realm of abstract, metaphysical values. Instead, music is a personal, social and cultural praxis that is more basic to the good life than many of the academic ‘basics’ featured in schools. As a socially created reality, music simultaneously participates in and contributes to the commonly shared sociality serving all human actions, institutions and needs. As such it is one of the greatest, on-going achievements of human kind; a major contribution of human intelligence, sociality and creativity. As a social praxis of immense currency in every society, music continues on a daily basis to influence and enhance consciousness in ways far more important than the hallowed status it is often accorded when treated as a ‘museum’ rather than a ‘living’ art.

Many noble-sounding and august claims are made in behalf of this rarefied mode of musical “high” culture. In fact, sociologists and cultural theorists widely acknowledge that formal schooling ideologically favors this vague, cerebral and culturally ‘elevated’ conception of ‘classy’ music. Yet it is with music—of all kinds, types and ‘levels’—as used in the living of daily life that we create and appreciate its value. When cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz wrote that “meaning is use, or more carefully, arises from use,” he reminds us that the value of an art such as music is determined by “how it is used, who owns it, when it is performed, who performs or makes it, what role it plays in this or that activity, what it may be exchanged for, what it is called, how it began, and so forth and so on”; in other words, its value is not preordained but arises only as constituted by particular musical practices and customs. Such value, in his words, depends on at the same time it contributes to a social “sensibility” for art and music that is “as wide as social existence and as deep”—a sensibility that goes well-beyond what philosopher Nelson Goodman described as “the absurd and awkward myth of the insularity of aesthetic experience.”

Much of the advocacy for school music takes for granted this paradigm of the “insularity of aesthetic experience.” Treating music as aesthetically self-contained leads, first, to studying ‘about’ music as though it’s meaning can be found already formed in autonomous ‘works’ or performances by the intellectual discrimination and connoisseurship developed only by schooling or as a privilege of social class. Thus, and secondly, it leads to the sequestering of music in what musicologist Lydia

Goehr called “the imaginary museum of musical works”—in the concert hall—rather than contributing to the living of daily life through ‘doing’ music in some form. Music, then, is often mistakenly considered and therefore taught as a pre-finished ‘product’ for appreciative consumption rather than as a vital ‘process’ by which both individual and social reality and consciousness are in part constituted.

Where music is taught as a social praxis, students become personally productive in one or more musical praxis. Considered as praxis, music is thus understood as processual: It is taught as an act of musicking that is realized within the diverse musicianship traditions of numerous genres, styles and uses, and that is decisively shaped by the particularizing requirements of the uniquely situated occasion—that is, by the personal and social needs occasioning a present instance of musicking. This approach to instruction focuses attention on performing (of all kinds and proficiencies) and composing (understood broadly as creating, improvising, etc.)—that is, it focuses on doing rather than on vague or high-minded ideas about “music appreciation.”

Listening, regarded processually, becomes directly energized by the sociality of the particular occasion (i.e., the social practice occasioning the music), stimulates varied ‘interpretations’ afforded by the music (e.g., from affective to intellectual, spontaneous to studied), and even responds to the semiotics of the space in which the music is heard (e.g., hearing a chorale in a church service versus in a secular concert hall)—to mention only a few of the most important aspects of sociality that work against the possibility of insular or immanent meaning. Schooling of music as and for social praxis, then, forges direct connections for students between education and their present and future musical choices and musical lives. The role of music as personal and social agency thus produces tangible consequences the value of which is perfectly obvious.

Unlike most other school studies, music is already widely and conspicuously used and thus valued in daily life. In both traditional and modern societies its ubiquitous presence develops and reflects the social consciousness and shared values—in broad terms, the “common sense”—that constitutes a society, culture or ‘sub-culture’. And the key role of music in creating and ‘expressing’ the stage between childhood and adulthood that modern societies reserve for “adolescence” is a relatively recent and consequential socio-cultural development in its social relevance and implications. Regarding music as a social praxis appropriately reinforces the intimate relation of music to both the personal and social self rather than treating it as self-contained and autonomous in its meanings and values.

An education that strengthens and extends the connection of music to daily life—to self and society—is a value added to a value. The social fact of musics already in existence is evidence of the first level of value. The ‘value added’ level, then, is the contribution of schooling. It amounts to what students can do newly, at all, or better with regard to the musics and musical knowledge and skills they bring to school with them each day; in other words, to what of music, as a result, they are enabled to choose to ‘practice’ throughout life as part of the good life.

With such teaching, which is by no means rare, teachers do not experience the problem of student apathy or disinterest. Rather, the challenge becomes one of formally harnessing, focusing and guiding students’ already abundant musical energies in ways and directions that enable, enrich and extend their choices and capabilities for musicking throughout life. Where this kind of teaching takes place—whether in the private lesson, the comprehensive school, independent music schools, or in the mentoring and models of adept peers and elders—there is no need to offer fine and noble sounding words legitimating the value of music or its study. Its value is already a personal and social fact for students—who, as the next generation of parents, social leaders, politicians, etc., are thus favorably disposed to music education. The value of such teaching is tangible; it is easily seen in the active musical lives students are enabled to create for themselves and for society and culture. As a result, there is no doubt concerning the relevance of music or education, or a need for the advocacy or defense of either.

Wittgenstein famously said, “whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent,” reminding us that meaning arises only with use, only in or from action. Given its personal and social importance in every society, the meaning and value of music is abundantly clear; and the meaning

or value of music education is something that cannot be said, only seen—in action, as praxis.

## 22: The Danger of Music Education Advocacy

Bennett Reimer<sup>21</sup>

To advocate is “to plead in favor of; support or urge by use of argument.” Given the widespread enjoyment, even fulfillment, music provides to people all over the world and has provided throughout history, it would seem that there would be little if any need for advocacy for it, especially now when it is so easily available to all who choose to be engaged with it in whatever ways they prefer. Yet those whose profession it is to teach music in schools have always had to plead in favor of it, to offer whatever arguments they could imagine to gain support for their endeavors. Why would something so widely regarded as a valuable component of human life, particularly among youngsters of school age, need such intense, ongoing efforts to plead its cause as being a worthy school subject?

One answer to that question is that music is often regarded to be essentially different from those subjects requiring the development of the intellect—of intelligence. The “core” or “basic” or “serious” subjects, like mathematics, sciences, languages, history, and social studies, require ongoing, focused tuition. Music, on the other hand, in this view, is a matter of talent rather than intellect, of expression rather than intelligence. And everyone can enjoy it just by “doing what comes naturally,” without the same need for systematic study the basic subjects require. So why would people want to use up precious school time for music unless strong advocacy arguments for it were offered? We may call this answer to the question of why we need advocacy the “intellect versus talent” answer.

Another answer to the why-the-need-for-advocacy question, related to the first, is that very few students have the talent to do something with music that requires serious, long-term study, such as make a living from performing. Talent for performing likely falls on a normal curve. Those few with a high level of talent cannot expect schools to provide for such a very special need, except, perhaps, as an elective after the core subjects have been attended to. And even that is very expensive to provide, in teacher salaries, special equipment and facilities, and student time away from the basics. Let those who want and deserve such service find it outside the schools, from the many available and eager musicians/teachers in the community. Strong advocacy, music educators argue, is necessary to counteract this issue of “why in the schools?”

Still another reason often given for the need to plead the cause of music in the schools is that the deeper values of music, including but going beyond easily obtained entertainment, are poorly understood by many. Philosophers and others in history and in the present have clarified that music is so basic to the human condition, so foundational for a life well lived, so humanizing in its powers to deepen and widen what all people can experience, as to be not only worthy of inclusion as a basic school subject but essential if all people, including youngsters, are to realize the potentials their humanity affords. Not to make music study available to all in the schools, as seriously provided as every other important subject, is to abrogate a fundamental responsibility of education—to enable lives to be as full as they can possibly be. This argument about the deep values of music is difficult to elucidate, especially to lay people. Professional expertise is needed in order to convince people that music is as important to support as everything now considered basic in education, perhaps even more important in that it balances attention to intellectual pursuits by attention to the inner life. The need for such arguments to be made may be identified as “getting to the depths.”

Each of these arguments (and others) for the need to advocate for school music is valid, I believe. I have no quarrel with the music education profession doing all it can to offer reasons that might persuade those not already devoted to music education to come around and offer their much desired support

But lurking beneath each of these needs for advocacy, and all the other arguments that have been and continue to be made in answer to the questions about why music should be taught in

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schools, is a danger seldom if ever identified as connected to—perhaps even to some extent the result of—all the many, intense, even frantic efforts we in music education make in support of our cause. The danger stems from the prevalent belief among music educators, seldom if ever doubted, that what we actually offer in the schools 1. does in fact develop musical intelligences, 2. does in fact serve the needs of the great majority of students who do not have or do not choose to cultivate musical performance talent, and 3. does in fact help students gain the deepest satisfactions music can offer. We do not examine our unswerving belief that our actual music programs are in all these respects entirely adequate if not exemplary, and that doing what we do is entirely sufficient to obtain the benefits we so vociferously and often eloquently advertise. That is, we advocate for what we do when the question begging to be asked is whether what we do is validly and optimally connected to what we claim.

The dangerous side of this situation is the tendency to blame our plight, of insecurity, lack of full respect, misunderstandings of our value, the ever-present threat of being dropped, on forces outside rather than inside our professional actions. Advocacy efforts have a way of replacing self-examination. We spend a great deal of time and effort thinking up ways to persuade people to accept our status quo, based on our very special values and traditions, rather than on how we can more realistically and effectively serve the musical needs of our culture as being our guiding aim. We tend to protect and defend and proselytize when we more fruitfully need to critically examine who we are and what we offer. We need to look inward rather than outward for the causes of our uncertain status in education.

This is not to argue that we do not offer a great deal of value to our cultures. Of course we do. But the gap between what we do and what our cultures want and need from us is often perilously wide. We need to examine everything we teach, both in general music education settings and electives, as to whether it is a viable way to be involved with music outside the schools and when schooling ends, or whether it exists only as “school music,” separate and distinct from the realities of our musical cultures. Some of our present teachings are likely to be valid, while many are likely to be irrelevant, thereby making us irrelevant. To put it directly, there is a positive relation between the efforts we have to expend on advocacy and the level of irrelevancy of what we offer.

Parents, students, non-music professionals in education, our wider communities, all have the right and responsibility to ask hard questions about whether and how we fulfill the often grandiose arguments we offer as advocacy. We have the obligation to bring our programs fully in line with our cultures’ desires from us, using our expertise in music and in education to satisfy those desires while also enlarging and deepening them. We need to do less persuading by claiming all sorts of wonders for music learning when we still don’t offer—don’t know how to offer—their magnificent beneficences. We need to look clearly at who we are and who we need to become, at what we’ve done and what we haven’t yet done. The better we do this the less need there will be for advocacy, for needing to persuade people to buy what we are selling rather than to make what we are selling so valuable and pertinent to their musical lives that they are delighted to get as much of it as they can. The degree of our success in fulfilling our communities’ musical needs will, to that degree, relieve us, and them, of the necessity to advocate. We will have gotten closer to the maturity, in our principles and programs, that music, students in schools, and each culture in which we exist, should reasonably expect from us. And that we should expect from ourselves.

## 23: A Worthy Function for Music in Education

Robert Walker<sup>22</sup>

Humans have two basic but essential needs: one is to keep us alive with enough strength to earn a living and look after our loved ones involving such things as food and clothing; the other concerns less tangible emotional and intellectual matters - viz., our mental living. Religion and music are easily the most important parts of our mental life. The ubiquity of music in our contemporary commercialized environment is testimony to the fact that music is possibly the most important thing in our life. Its function is to provide sound analogies to encapsulate our emotions, our feelings, our beliefs, our personality. We cannot exist without our mental life. In which case we cannot live without music.

There is an inevitable human need for some expressive form of communication which deals in over-arching matters of life: love, death, tragedy, religion, belief, happiness, sadness, melancholy, wars, famine, and so on. The structure of our brains is such that we demand answers to such cosmic questions as why are we here, where did we come from, why did this or that happen. This is where music comes into its own. It is a form of philosophical discourse which has no axioms, no logical arguments in the sense that language has, but yet it contains all the elements for our minds to engage in complex thoughts purely through the sounds of music.

So there is a good case for claiming that music is a natural and inevitable part of the evolution of humans everywhere. The fact that there is no known human culture without music is sure testimony to this. In our contemporary media-dominated society music is the central component in the profitability of the entertainment industry. Can we even imagine a movie without music? Movies sell as much for music and its ability to encapsulate key components of the story as anything. From Casablanca's "As time goes by" to Titanic's "Our love will go on", millions across the world know the power of music to evoke the deepest sense of who we are, what we know about being human, and life itself.

The popularity of Pop stars rises and falls with an intensity which is nothing less than illustrative of the power of music to affect people's lives almost instantly. Note how Madonna captivated the minds, and purchasing habits, of practically a whole generation of teen-age girls in the late 1980s. The power of Elvis's music has now turned into a religion, the centre of which is at his home in Memphis. On another level, no words can possibly convey the mental effect of hearing Beethoven's 9th Symphony performed in the ruins of a former Nazi concentration camp in Austria recently, and ending with no applause, just an overwhelming silence and a brain crammed with thoughts and images too powerful even to attempt to articulate. Mendelssohn's famous comment that music can convey meaning too powerful for words is only too true.

Music is clearly essential to humans. Of that there can be no doubt. And it occupies such a prominent place in our daily lives, through the various broadcasting media, recordings, in supermarkets, dentist's waiting rooms, elevators, aircraft, hotel lobbies, bars, even out on the streets, that there is virtually nowhere one can go without hearing music. With music so ubiquitous, so pervasive, and so universally prominent in all societies there arises the question of how it should be dealt with in education.

The first point to make is that music is essentially something we listen to; not necessarily do. The plain facts are that the minority perform music for the majority to listen to. There are in fact few cultures where everyone is a performer. The vast majority of humans spend their time listening to music, and it is the effects of that listening on our sentience as humans which contains the power of music.

In education we tend to see children performing music as the major educational goal: the school administrators are particularly pleased at a good concert where parents can be impressed, or at a successful tour overseas by the school choir, concert band, or orchestra. The reality in

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educational terms is that only a small proportion of the total school population is involved in such activities. A fact which raises the age old issue of whether we should focus on musical performance or developing good listening habits in our schools and of course feeds administrators with the notion that music is really only for the few who perform. It is this as much as anything which has pushed music to the fringes of education. We don't see mathematics in education as only for mathematicians, nor science as only for scientists for the obvious reason that we believe that everyone should learn about mathematics and science.

Plato and Aristotle discussed this matter 2,500 years ago when they argued about whether the Guardians, the sons of the elite leaders of society, should actually learn to play musical instruments as opposed to listening to music performed by the lower orders of Hellenic society. In 18th century England, the powerful Lord Chesterfield famously wrote a letter to his son, traveling in Italy, that under no circumstances was he to perform music, although he could listen to it.

The critical issue is to do with what we mean by an education in music. Learning to perform on an instrument is not necessarily the same thing as learning about music. In the same way, learning to recite formulae in mathematics or physics is not the same thing as learning about important concepts in mathematics or physics. An education should focus on conceptual understanding rather than peripheral skills. In music this means developing an understanding of the way music works on our senses, our emotions, and our intellect.

An education in music should concern the development of musical understanding, and particularly how music can affect our emotional and spiritual well-being. For performers in a choir or orchestra the effects of music are magical, but the reality is that less than 10% of all children take part in musical performance for many reasons. Most young people are not prepared to devote the time needed to perform well; nor to commit their time, money and effort in practicing. However, everyone likes to listen to music but not necessarily play music.

We have, then, a conundrum in music education. It is crucial to our lives and performing music gives one a wonderful insight into how music works on our sensibilities. Yet most children will never develop very far as performers. We know this well because we have been attempting to get all children to perform music in schools for at least half a century now, yet the numbers of school age performers inevitably drop to a meager 10% of the total population by the onset of puberty.

The most important thing that we can provide for the majority of children is to teach them how to listen intelligently, and with a growing sense of the power of music to symbolize our emotional sensibilities. Focusing so much on performance in music education, at the expense of developing sophisticated methods of teaching students to listen with intelligent involvement fails to address the demands of the majority of students with the result that most young people leave school with no idea at all how to listen to music, or what to listen for. They become immediate and unwitting fodder for the clever and seductive world of popular musical entertainment to exploit. The only freedom most young people have in this situation is the freedom to spend their money. They don't have the freedom to choose Bach instead of Britney because they have never been taught how to exercise such freedom.

Just imagine how our musical world would change if even a fraction of the amount of money young people spend on purchasing recordings of every new "pop" sensation was spent on recordings of, say, western art music, or of indigenous music from across the world, or of the traditional music of some ancient culture! It might even promote greater cross-cultural understanding among the instinctively egalitarian young, but an understanding that was based on intelligent listening to the other, and a desire to learn more about the complex ways in which music can express, and be an analogue to, enormously complex semantic capabilities of the human brain. To achieve such an end is a worthy function of an education in music.

## 24: We Are Musical

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In one sense, it seems bizarre to be asked to be an ‘advocate’ for music and music education because both have a species-wide omnipresence. We are musical: it is part of our basic human design. The human brain has specialist areas whose prime functions are networked for musical processing. Also, we are musically educated, in the sense that we acquire sophisticated musical behaviours from pre-birth through enculturated experience. We do not require formalised music education in order to engage purposefully with music and to exhibit musical behaviours. Informal music education happens all the time because the experience of organised sound is a key element in our daily lives. Our basic neuropsychobiological design enables us to make sense of, and find significance in, the patterns of sound that are organised as music within our culture.

Yet, despite this human propensity for musical behaviour and our desire to engage in musical activity (whether as producers or listeners), it is apparent that we are not all identical musically. As we get older, there is a continuum of engagement with music that depends, in part, on individual preference, the local context for listening or enjoying music, the availability of musical styles and genres and also on our perception and emotional ‘tagging’ of previous musical experiences – all of which shape the extent to which we regard ourselves as ‘musical’. Indeed, there may be some rare individuals who appear to have some congenital disorder with regard to music and who find little sense or enjoyment in much musical activity.

But, for the vast majority, music is integral to our social and cultural environment and to their engagement with it. This engagement begins pre-birth. The womb is a relatively quiet environment and from the third trimester the foetus is observed to react to external sounds, especially to mother’s speech and singing, as well as external musics. In particular, although speech is partially muffled and the sound spectrum is reduced for its higher frequencies, the pitch inflections of mother’s speech are clearly audible. Subsequently, as newborns, we demonstrate sensitivity to our own mother’s voice compared to other mothers, as well as sensitivity to the music of our maternal culture – particularly the music that mother listened to during pregnancy. Furthermore, because our developing foetal life involves a shared bloodstream, mother’s emotional engagement with music (related to her neuroendocrine condition) during pregnancy is also shared. Music that she finds pleasurable, soothing, relaxing, exciting or boring to listen to is likely to produce a biased sound-associated affect in us. So we enter the world with a cognitive and emotional bias towards our mother’s voice and her music.

This interweaving of language and music, speech and song from pre-birth through early childhood is further evidenced in vocal interactions between our parents (caregivers) and us as infants. The vocal sounds of these adults are intrinsically musical and encourage imitative sounds, spontaneous singing and growing vocal mastery by us during the first eighteen months of life. Mothers exaggerate critical acoustic features in speech (such as emphasising vowels and raising vocal pitch) when addressing us as young children. Mothers also often have a special repertoire of lullabies and play songs that are characterised by relatively higher pitches, slower tempi and more emotive voice quality when compared to their usual singing style.

These common elements of vocal behaviour in our upbringing as young children are key foundations for subsequent musical development and distinctive musical behaviours. However, much of these early vocal and musical interactions are other-than-conscious. Parents are rarely aware of how they are fostering, shaping and framing our musical development. Consequently, any relative lack of interaction between a parent and us, any relative paucity in our local sound environment, such as a limited encouragement to engage and explore with sound, is likely to lead to lesser musical development when compared with others who are provided with such extensive experiences and opportunities.

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This diversity of pre-school musical experience needs to be understood and addressed when children enter the educational system if we are to ensure that each child's basic musicality is developed to its full potential, whatever that may be. If musical behaviour is integral to human design, it should be equally integral to any educational system that professes to educate the whole person. This is not to deny that much learning in music takes place outside school, but rather to argue that such non-school experience may be haphazard and uneven at the level of the individual. Music in school, therefore, is not just a basic human and educational entitlement; it should be sensitively designed to address the diversity of our musical backgrounds, to differentiate our musical needs and to foster individual musical development.

For example, children whose mothers have sung to them during their early years and who have been encouraged to sing are highly likely to enter school at age five as relatively competent singers. Not surprisingly, children who have had fewer opportunities to sing, or to be sung to, are more likely to enter school as less developed singers. Unfortunately, this latter group are more liable to be labelled as 'unmusical' by insensitive and ill-informed adults. Negative comments from such teachers on the basis of perceived singing ability generates public humiliation in front of friends and peers and a sense of shame and inadequacy that can lead to lifelong self-perception of musical disability.

It does not need to be like this. Such negative and harmful comments arise from several false assumptions, such as people are either 'musical' or 'unmusical' and that singing is a simple activity. Because some children and adults appear to find singing easy masks its basic underlying complexity. Singing involves words and music being interwoven in a complex physical behaviour that has strong cultural associations. The pre-school experiences of some young children lead them to focus on the element of the song which (for them) has the greatest significance, namely the words. The same children become much more pitch accurate when asked to focus solely on the song's musical features without the perceptual 'contamination' of its text. Furthermore, there is a highly significant school effect. Research evidence demonstrates that, whilst some schools foster song-singing development in their pupils; others do not. In some schools, children who are relatively less accurate than their peers at age five (in their pitch or word accuracy, or both) can become even more inaccurate by age seven. In contrast, in other schools children improve significantly by age seven, despite having demonstrated the same singing competency at age five, suggesting that there are important variations in the nature and quality of music teaching between schools.

It would seem that many (Western) children follow a phased-base sequence of singing development in which completely 'in-tune' song singing is preceded by simpler, less complex, singing behaviours. These phases appear to be related to the child's particular perceptual focus, which tends to progress from the song text, to melodic contour, to phrase-based accuracy and finally to an increased accuracy overall. Young children also often have a limited comfortable vocal pitch range. This range tends to expand as the children get older, with girls having wider ranges than boys for successive age groups.

As well as addressing developmental issues, school music education will be more successful if it embraces both the plurality of musical cultures within the wider community and also children's initial individual preferences for certain kinds of music (and songs). Popular music and music practices are often poorly represented in school music, leading to a mismatch between the interests and musical identities of pupils and the curricula that they experience. Young children like activity songs and often use play songs for specific purposes and individuals that link to their activities.

It is normal, therefore, for children to exhibit a range of singing behaviours and competences as part of their musical development. Because of their earliest vocal experiences with parents and caregivers, the borders between speaking and singing for young children are often blurred. 'Out-of-tune' singing behaviour will likely arise from a mismatch between the child's current singing competency and the particular musical 'task' that they have been set by the teacher/adult. But children and adults who have been labelled or who have self-labelled themselves as 'non-singers' and 'tone-deaf' have been shown to improve and develop enhanced singing skills when provided

with appropriate educational experiences.

We are all musical: we just need the opportunity for our musicality to be celebrated and developed. Such is the prime purpose of music education.

## 27. Music Education Around the World – Spotlight on a Global Issue

### Highly Effective Music Teachers

*Translating our passion for music education into effective advocacy requires particular approaches. MARY-JANE WHITEHEAD found a management classic surprisingly relevant.*

Everyone loves music, so it seems. It comes in all flavours, shapes and sizes and you can have it ‘24/7’, courtesy of modern technology. Background music is so much a part of modern life that most people now feel bereft without it. If music is all around us all the time, apparently ‘enjoyed’ and ‘appreciated’ without any effort beyond the flick of a switch, then of course music education appears redundant and of low priority in the educational scheme of things.



Like many, in my teaching career I have been subjected to the usual put-downs about the value of what I do. I’ve been told that music is a ‘frill’ subject; that teaching music is a ‘soft option’—all we do is sing songs and play games (no skills, academic rigour or sequential learning involved). This flies in the face of the facts: that the kids like coming to music, enjoy their time with us in the music room, perform like champions when required . . . and that when their parents make their choices about where their children go to school, the quality of the school music program is often very high on their list of queries.

So how can we each translate what we know about music education into the nitty-gritty business of being an effective advocate for music in our own work situation, in our own sphere of influence?



This thought sent me back to Stephen Covey’s 1989 book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. If you look at effective school music programs and inspiring music teachers, these seven habits are apparent—in the way the teachers act, and the ripple effects of their attitudes and actions. This is advocacy in action. Let me translate these seven habits into a school music context.



Covey's first three habits focus on ourselves—knowing our goals and purpose, what we believe is important, and how to stand solid as an independent person.

**Be proactive** So, nobody at your school seems to understand or value what you are trying to do? You are in control of how you respond. You can be negative or positive—reactive or proactive—it's your choice. Successful teachers take what they find and work to transform it.

**Begin with the end in mind** Be clear about your values and the goals of your music-teaching program. Advocacy articles are for you to read and ponder! So too are the pedagogic ideas in this and other magazines and journals and the musical and professional development activities run in the wider community.

**Put first things first.** Keep reviewing your priorities. Effective music teachers manage what they do so that they are not too busy to do the important things, big or small, whatever they are.

While working on ourselves, the next 3 goals get to the nub of advocacy in action—how we relate to and work with others.

**Think win/win:** Successful music teachers respect what others are trying to do and treat them as valued colleagues. Successful music teachers are prepared to work cooperatively and align what they are doing with school events and priorities or other teachers' classroom themes, while still working to maintain the integrity of their own learning program.

**Seek first to understand, then to be understood** Our best teachers take the time to understand the other person's point of view and respect what they are trying to do.

**Synergise:** Once teachers work together, the power of many is more than the power of one! Seek out like-minded people, at school, in the community or through a professional association. This makes us both individually stronger, and a more powerful voice as a group.

The final habit is the glue that binds it all together.

**Sharpen the saw** Take the time you need to renew yourself physically, socially and emotionally, spiritually and mentally!

Successful teachers keep perspective, balance and variety in their lives. There is more to life than work, important though that may be. To burn out is a personal tragedy for you and certainly doesn't help your school or students either!

## Reference

Stephen R Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1989; also numerous later editions, imprints and spin-offs.