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“Big City, Turn Me Loose, and Set Me Free.” A Critique of Music Education as Urbanormative

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“Big City Turn Me Loose and Set Me Free.” A Critique of Music Education as Urbanormative

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Urbanormativity is a term used to describe the cultural hegemony of urban ideals of sophistication, cosmopolitanism, and refinement. It also carries with it the baggage of industrialization and globalization. In this paper, the author considers the ways in which school music might also be urbanormative. This analysis is organized according to Bourdieu’s three forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified, and institutional. The author refers readers to previous work outlining potential reasons and ways to counter urbanormativity in music education.

Keywords: *urbanormativity, music education, cultural capital, sustainability*

Toward the end of a recording session in 1982, country music legend, Merle Haggard, went outside to check in with his bus driver, Dean Hollaway, a life-long friend (Myers 2014). It was a scorching hot day in L.A. and Dean was not in a good mood, to say the least. Merle asked him how things were going, to which he responded, “I hate this place. I’m tired of this dirty old city.” Merle reflected on that pivotal moment as follows:

As a songwriter, I instinctively listen and watch for interesting ways people put things at bars, diners and on billboards. “This dirty old city” sort of caught me. I said, “Mr. Holloway”—that’s what I always called him—“I can see you’re upset but why don’t we take that anger out on a piece of paper.” I climbed on board, and Dean handed me a pad and pen that he had with all the other things he kept near his seat.... Whenever I work on lyrics, I hear the music as I write the words. The two go together for me. On the bus, the lyrics came real good and their feel sort of dictated the melody. I took Dean’s “dirty old city” line and began to build a story. (Myers 2014).

Then Merle needed a chorus. He asked Dean where he would rather be than Los Angeles. Dean replied, “If it were up to me, it’d be somewhere in the middle of damn Montana.” In response Merle penned those iconic lyrics, “Turn me loose;

set me free, somewhere in the middle of Montana.” The rest, as they say, is history. Ten minutes later they had a song with chorus and two verses. Merle ran back into the studio where the band was packing up and asked them to set everything up again and record just one more track. He showed them how the song went, the producer came back in, and they recorded what became a number one hit, “Big City” (Myers 2014). The entire process from the first idea through the recording took less than an hour and, by the way, didn’t involve a single bit of staff notation.

I'm tired of this dirty old city
Entirely too much work and never enough play
And I'm tired of these dirty old sidewalks
Think I'll walk off my steady job today

Turn me loose, set me free
Somewhere in the middle of Montana
And give me all I've got coming to me
And keep your retirement and your
So called Social Security
Big city turn me loose and set me free
(Merle Haggard, “Big City”)

The simple tune with a straight-forward lyric constitutes only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, in a complex musical/cultural performance. Careful listening to the sonic qualities reveals complementary steel guitar, electric and acoustic guitar, fiddle, and harmonica motifs alternating between and alongside the melodic phrase, elegantly sharing foreground and background within the context of a laidback country shuffle. Careful analysis of cultural and social qualities reveals deep-seated beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors reflective of and formative to social class and place. It’s all part of the country “aesthetic,” if you will, wherein simple statements carry great contextual depth and nuance.

The sociological statement in this song is key: “Big City, turn me loose!” In effect, the City—the embodiment of relentless urbanization—has a mind and will of its own, enticing rural populations with its promises of progress, economic security, efficiency, and entertainment. This process of urban hegemony is well-illustrated in the popular contemporary account of Tian Yu of China. At 17 years old, Yu joined the migration of rural populations from farm to factory. “I was born into a farming family,” she explains. “My grandmother brought me up while

my parents were earning money as factory workers far away from home.” She provides the following context for her move:

Internet technology and mobile communications has opened a window on the wealthy, wonderful city lifestyle for us. Almost all the young people of my age, including my school friends, had gone off to work, and I was excited to see the world outside too. Upon completing a course at the local vocational school, I decided to leave the province to seek new opportunities, with my parents’ support. (Chan 2013)

After just 37 days of mind-numbing, repetitive, 12-hour workdays under hyper-authoritarian management at Foxconn, makers of the Apple iPhone, Yu, like a startling number of her co-workers, attempted suicide, jumping from the fourth floor of her dormitory. Reflecting the experiences of other rural migrants, city life had not lived up to its promise: it was, in many ways, alienating and dehumanizing.

Urbanormativity

Urbanization is part of a taken-for-granted progress package throughout the world, inextricable from industrialization, corporatization, militarization, and globalization. Some countries, of course, aren’t as far along in this process as others, but are rapidly following the so-called “developed” world into an unsustainable nightmare. Grimmond (2007) noted, “Given the large and ever-increasing fraction of the world’s population living in cities, and the disproportionate share of resources used by these urban residents, especially in the global North, cities and their inhabitants are key drivers of global environmental change.” Corporations, like Foxconn, receive much of the blame for the negative outcomes of urbanization—as they well should: if only they could adopt more humane and environmentally friendly practices. Seldom, however, do we critically confront the process of urbanization itself; urbanization is simply the way things are. It’s the water in which we swim.¹ It is normative. Fulkerson and Thomas (2013) introduced the term, *urbanormativity*, to identify this phenomenon.

Cities are associated with a range of positive values: prosperity and progress, education and refinement, cosmopolitanism and diversity. In contrast, those living in the country are associated with poverty and backwardness, ignorance and

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crudeness, boredom and homogeneity. And as the world becomes increasingly urban, the effect is not only demographic but cultural as well. (5–6)

Urbanormativity refers to the underlying structural and cultural rationality that privileges the urban *center* that, although utterly dependent upon it for sustenance, represses and exploits the rural *periphery* (Fulkerson and Thomas 2013; see also Thomas, Lowe, Fulkerson, and Smith 2011). This is not to say that the same destructive and oppressive urban cultural norms are embodied by the entire urban population or absent in rural populations. Urbanormativity is a rationality, a way of thinking and acting, stemming from the reduction of complex living arrangements and places into a simple binary. Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández (2011) pointed out a similar place-based cultural distinction six years ago, in a special urban issue of ACT, contrasting two versions of urban life: on the one hand, the urban is urbane, “the center of civilization, cultural refinement, and progress,” and, on the other hand, the urban is “a place of decay, poverty, and danger” (19). It is the positive, sophisticated, *urbane* ideal that is constituted in urbanormativity, marginalizing and stigmatizing non-conforming urban as well as rural populations.

Fulkerson and Thomas (2013) see a compelling correlation between their concept of urbanormativity and Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital.² “In fact,” they suggest, “so tightly intertwined are cultural capital and urbanization that it is surprising that Bourdieu failed to make this point central to his discussion” (21). Of course, Bourdieu was studying social class, seeking an explanation for what is popularly referred to in education circles as the “achievement gap.” Cultural capital is a concept intended to help explain how public education functions to maintain the privilege of dominant groups. Consequently, Bourdieu’s discussions of cultural capital were cognizant of the “brutal fact of universal reducibility to economics” (1986, second paragraph under “Conversions”). Cultural capital, in short, grows from and reinforces financial inequality as well as the destructive exploitation of the natural environment by capital.

This same economic reducibility can apply just as well to urbanormativity, particularly considering what happened (and still happens around the globe) at the advent of capitalist development. Economic historian, Michael Perelman (2000), discusses how, in Europe, the “classical political economy advocated restricting the viability of traditional occupations in the countryside to coerce

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people to work for wages” (3). “The brutal process of separating people from their means of providing for themselves ... caused enormous hardships for the common people” (13). As the rural commons were eroded or stolen outright, rural folk were forced to gather in urban centers to labor for wages.³ As agrarian writer, Brian Donahue (2003), has argued, this process is ongoing: “the market economy has consistently encouraged and rewarded farming that is exploitative of land and people, and has steadily driven farmers off the land. As it has operated in America, the market has systematically undercut all other agrarian values: care for the land, and healthy family and community life” (39). Urbanization and rural out-migration, in other words, are processes whereby people have been and continue to be exploited for the sake of profit.

It is vital to recognize that *there is nothing inherently superior about the cultural values and practices of the privileged*. It’s not generally their cultural practices that make some groups dominant. Rather, in capitalist societies, power derives ultimately from economic accumulation. William Bowles and Michael Jensen (2001) point out that “since there is no objective way of differentiating between different class cultures (upper, middle, and working class cultures for example), the high value placed on the dominant cultural values characteristic of an upper or ruling class is simply a reflection of their powerful position within Capitalist society. A dominant class is able, in effect, to impose its definition of reality upon all other classes” (mid page). Consequently, for groups with relatively low levels of cultural capital, acquiring the cultural values and dispositions that have more general currency will not necessarily lead to class mobility. As an allegorical example, consider the case of the Sneetches, a fictional social group conjured in the mind of Dr. Seuss (1961), but reflecting a larger principle in society. The Starbelly Sneetches, of course, felt they were better than everyone else. Those without stars were made to feel badly about their deprivation. Then somebody came along with a *machine* that could put stars on bellies, and those without stars paid to “have stars upon thars.” This made the Starbelly Sneetches rather angry because now there was no way to differentiate themselves from the lower order. So, they determined that stars weren’t desirable after all, and they had theirs removed. Just like in the “real world,” the privileged can change the cultural rules to their advantage. Dr. Seuss’s social allegory does fall short, however, in that not everyone can afford “stars on their bellies,” and so elite culture is

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not often challenged in this way. In fact, its superiority is often as taken-for-granted by the dispossessed as it is by the blessed.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is similar to James Paul Gee's discussion of *dominant discourses* (Gee 1989). Discourses are "ways of talking, acting, thinking, valuing, etc." (10). Gee makes an important point relative to social mobility: schools do not have the capacity to adequately prepare students to participate in dominant discourses or, in Bourdieu's terms, acquire cultural capital. Developing dominant discourses requires extended immersion in an array of subtly nuanced behaviors and "superficialities" stemming from and deeply ingrained during primary socialization. There is simply too much involved to be adequately acquired later in life. Change depends on addressing unequal social structures, rather than their cultural extensions. Gee writes: "Beyond changing the social structure, is there much hope? No, there is not. So we better get on about the process of changing the social structure" (12).

Urbanormativity, as either dominant discourse or cultural capital, reflects and perpetuates the structural injustices of urbanization, human alienation, and environmental exploitation. As difficult as it is to teach the dominant discourse or acquire cultural capital, we might also question the viability of these cultural forms for long-term sustainability. Put another way, it makes little sense to consciously teach such unsustainable and harmful values. But, as I will now argue, that's the actuality in our cherished field: modern music education, in multiple ways, is urbanormative.

Urbanormativity in Music Education

Bourdieu identified three forms of cultural capital: First, *embodied cultural capital* refers to the "way we walk and talk" (Fulkerson and Thomas 2013, 20), our general habits. Second, *objectified cultural capital* includes cultural artifacts that have high levels of currency. Third, *institutional cultural capital* pertains to professional credentials and affiliations. I will discuss each of these in turn within the context of formal music education, school music in particular.

Embodied Cultural Capital

First, regarding embodied cultural capital: In my experience, teaching education majors from all content areas, music educators tend to be the most pretentious and assuming of the bunch—musical/cultural snobs, in other words. I say “pretentious” and “assuming,” but the terms preferred terms might be “refined” and “sophisticated,” or perhaps “cosmopolitan” (see Bates 2014) and “urbane.” By the time prospective music teachers make it to my student teaching seminar course, their identities as elite classical and/or jazz musicians are solidly ingrained and my short time with them seems to be insufficient to bring them back down to earth. And this elitism runs much deeper than a sense of *musical* sophistication. In traditional university schools of music and their extensions into public schools and other institutions, the disinterested connoisseurship cultivated musically seems to extend generally to an appreciation for other refined activities and tastes—international travel, fine wine and dining, fine art. Manners in walking and talking, too, reflect an array of dictionary synonyms for “urbane”: suave, sophisticated, debonair, worldly, cultivated, cultured, civilized, cosmopolitan, smooth, polished, refined, self-possessed, courteous, polite, well-mannered, civil, charming, gallant—etymologically, *belonging to the city*.

Granted, these values can be cultivated in rural places, but this is most likely to occur among more elite rural groups who are equally at home in the city. The values cultivated in rural places (see Bates 2013b) tend to be more egalitarian and “down-to-earth” (see Bates 2016). Here I am speaking also from personal experience as someone who grew up in a very isolated place (e.g. dirt roads, no telephone or TV; no indoor plumbing; see Bates 2011a) and then moved to the city to become a music teacher. The gulf between myself and my professors and peers was (and is) behavioral more than academic. In fact, I excelled in my music classes and in French horn performance, earning A’s and playing principal horn in the top BYU orchestra. Still, I never did seem to “fit in too well”⁴ with others who were (and are) more polished and sophisticated. One summer I took a music history course along with about 40 other music majors. I recall receiving a perfect score on an exam on Mozart, a fact announced by the professor in class. At that moment, when he told everyone else that I was the only one to achieve the highest score, I felt a distinct sense of vindication—that I had somehow beaten my elite peers at their own game. In retrospect, my reaction may have seemed

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strange to my urban and middle- to upper-class peers to whom cultural capital was taken-for-granted and, hence, unnoticed. To me, as an outsider, however, the cultural distinctions and hierarchies were clear and ever-present.

Even when we make the attempt to look at the music “by itself,” we have to admit the urban bias of school music. The two most taught genres in North American public schools and in university schools of music, classical and jazz, developed in urban contexts. Consequently, attempts to spread classical music and jazz to rural areas constitutes a form of cultural colonization (Bates 2011a). Even emphasis on musical/cultural diversity can be urbanormative. As I have pointed out previously (Bates 2014), racial and ethnic diversity is more of an urban value than a rural one. Yes, rural places do include increasing racial and ethnic diversity, but significantly less than and more concentrated than in urban areas (HAC 2012). So, by elevating diversity, in and of itself, as a core value, we privilege cities—hubs in the global network. In addition, incidentally and ironically, respect for musical diversity does not typically include country music, the most popular genre of music among rural populations in North America and elsewhere. In fact, country music is still openly denigrated in music education at the same time that urban genres—hip hop and rock—are increasingly embraced. To admit an affinity for country music in some circles can still lead to judgements about anything from one’s political preferences and professionalism to one’s personal hygiene. Finally, so-called “folk” musics, ostensibly the music of rural folk, are typically viewed as resources, the raw material for early school music experiences, as kernels from which larger compositions are derived, and/or as artifacts to be collected and consumed by urban cosmopolitans/cultural omnivores.

Objectified Cultural Capital

Second, regarding objectified cultural capital, urbanormativity centers on the production and procurement of consumer products, usually without consideration for their use long-term or for the impact of their production on the natural environment. Music education in North America mirrors a capitalist society in which expensive items are purchased for relatively short-term use and negligible reward. Composer, Murray Schafer, offers the following:

Sometimes I think that music programs ... are crippled by affluence. How many times have I entered a classroom and the proud teacher points out all the instruments lined up against the wall, the loudspeakers, the amplifiers, the CD players... But the problem with flutes and trumpets and violins is that all you can do is to learn how to play them, and that takes years. A very expensive music education program has been erected in the form of a triangle in which the base line is all those enrolled in the program and the apex is the professional performer/teacher, or, in a very few cases, the genius who will make the school famous.

In North America, a high quality school music program ideally has the best and most current equipment. That people actually have the time to focus on purchasing an extra layer of stuff not essential for satisfaction of basic needs is itself an indication of objectified cultural capital. The labor of others in manufacturing the iPhone, for example, allows us to “save” the time that is often subsequently devoted to heightened levels of consumption—a vicious cycle. Bourdieu writes:

Among the advantages procured by capital in all its types, the most precious is the increased volume of useful time that is made possible through the various methods of appropriating other people’s time (in the form of services). It may take the form either of increased spare time, secured by reducing the time consumed in activities directly channeled toward producing the means of reproducing the existence of the domestic group, or of more intense use of the time so consumed, by recourse to other people’s labor or to devices and methods which are available only to those who have spent time learning how to use them and which (like better transport or living close to the place of work) make it possible to save time. (This is in contrast to the cash savings of the poor, which are paid for in time—do-it-yourself, bargain hunting, etc.) None of this is true of mere economic capital; it is possession of cultural capital that makes it possible to derive greater profit not only from labor-time, by securing a higher yield from the same time, but also from spare time, and so to increase both economic and cultural capital. (note 20)

The increasing focus on technology in formal music education, in particular, accentuates the unsustainability aspect of urbanization, especially when thinking and acting globally (Bates 2013a, Bates 2013b). The gadgets and other goods we purchase for a relatively low price come at the high price of exploited labor, often of formerly rural subsistence farmers (see Waters 2010). In “developing” countries around the world, in fact, policies have been enacted specifically for the purpose of pushing/luring farmers off the land to ensure a steady supply of low wage factory workers. China, for example, is currently in the process of relocating 250 million rural farmers to the city (Johnson 2013). Progress at the expense of

human exploitation and alienation is compounded on rural environments by the impact of urban production, consumption, and excretion.

Institutional Cultural Capital

Finally, regarding institutional cultural capital, formal music education throughout the “developed” world revolves around university schools of music, the largest and most prestigious of which are found in metropolitan areas (with exceptions, of course, such as Pennsylvania State University). Rural students interested in becoming music teachers are typically required, then, to move to and become acculturated to the city, at least temporarily. The urban university serves as the prototype for school music programs across North America. (I have described elsewhere the attempts in my own small high school to pattern music and other programs according to urban or suburban models; see Bates 2011a). Music teachers, gaining their professional credentials in these institutions, naturally pattern their professional work after their university experiences in ensembles, applied instruction, and music theory and history classes. In addition, university music faculty influence the profession directly and indirectly through their teaching, research, and professional service. Their closest affinity, from what I have observed, tends to be with suburban high schools from which they recruit many of their students, followed by urban high schools, and only occasionally rural high schools, if at all.

Large ensembles—particularly bands, orchestras, and choirs—dominate at universities, high schools, and middle schools. In fact, school music in North America continues to be virtually synonymous with large ensembles. Internationally, the growing El Sistema movement, too, is focused on large ensembles, particularly orchestras (Baker 2014). These performing groups require large performance spaces and large groups of people from which to draw participants—features, again, typical of urban centers. This privileging of the large ensemble actually has served as a catalyst for the consolidation of American rural schools, furthering the deterioration of community life in rural places (Bates 2013b). As I have pointed out before, a distinct hierarchy of schools develops, with those that are most like universities at the top and small rural schools at the bottom (Bates 2011b).

That so few music education scholars have taken up the issue of rural music education is likely an indication of at least two things—both stemming from urbanormativity. First, the profession seems to attract music teachers and educator teachers who have already embraced urban. The “movers and shakers” at the largest, most influential universities, are likely either from metropolitan areas or have lived in metropolitan areas for extended periods simply by virtue of their professional positions. Second, I suggest that urbanormativity within institutions, groups, and individual minds may amount to or be accompanied by an anti-rural bias, leading music education scholars generally to ignore or avoid rurality as a serious topic of study. After all, in a field hyper-tuned to issues of race and gender, it still seems somewhat acceptable politically to openly espouse negative views about rural ideals, values, and cultures.

What can we do?

In issues of social justice and cultural diversity in music education, inclusion is usually proffered as the preferred solution. Considering urbanormativity, however, inclusion is the problem, not the solution. The focus on urban performance practices (e.g. large classical ensembles), performance spaces, and music institutions, serves to (in conjunction with a variety of other social forces) both draw rural students away from rural places and ways of life and foster a deficit view of rural life and musicality, reinforcing that rural people and places are culturally backwards, despite the fact that there are many personal, social, and environmental advantages to rurality (Bates 2013b). Yet, the question has been, perennially, how can we modernize the rural music education program? In other words, how can we bring these backwards rural folk into the modern world? This urbanormative view, of course, is a deficit view (Bates 2011b)—that rural populations lack cultural capital—sophistication, refinement, diversity. To be included within this framework involves accepting urbanormative ways of living and being and potentially rejecting rurality, becoming someone else, leaving behind traits developed through primary socialization. Not only is this a virtually impossible task, it also seems to be a rather unjust and inappropriate expectation.

We can and should teach students about the problems with urbanormativity—to themselves and to the health of the natural environment—along with teaching

them about racism, sexism, classism, and so forth. We can and ought to teach about cultural capital and dominant discourse, equipping students possibly with a form of “meta-knowledge” (Gee 1989) to understand, resist, and work within a hierarchically organized and oppressive society. Dallavis (2008) put it this way in his dissertation: “Students must be aware of the challenges they will face, as well as the societal implications of race, poverty, and language bias that limit their capacity for social mobility. To ignore these realities is to do students a grave disservice” (44). This process involves problematizing cultural hierarchies as they arise. A focus on small music ensembles or even no music ensembles, for example, could be paired with discussions about the relative advantages of musicing in small groups, alone, or within diverse cultural contexts (home, church, bars) that lend themselves well to small-group or individual performance. Also, discussions of local musical values could be accompanied by overt recognition and leveling of musical/cultural hierarchies. Rural students, for example, who identify with country music and eschew classical music could explore the apparent animosity between these two art forms and their proponents in detail, recognizing the contextual factors that might, in fact, lend credence to their aversions to “high-brow” culture.

“But, we shouldn’t cut the rural student off to the many possibilities offered in a diverse global society,” some might respond. What I am arguing here is that the “exposure” that rural students receive from the surrounding increasingly urban world should be presented and received with full understanding of urban normativity and its hierarchical impact on culture and consumption. The desire to own the newest musical instruments and technologies, for example, is a manifestation of the consumerist facet of urban normativity. Alternative conservative and more rural values—making-do, making or doing it yourself, or doing without—can and, in the interest of global sustainability, should be embraced instead. In this way, music teachers and students take a critical look at music consumerism and cultural development rather than taking it for granted. In addition, classroom instruments or technologies could be traced to their roots: who constructed it, where, and with what raw materials? How was it transported? What impacts did its construction have on people and places? How many people will use the item? How long will it last? How long will it be used? Are there more sustainable alternatives?

As Gee (1989) notes, those within a dominant discourse don't typically recognize it as such; it's just the way things are. Subsequently, they are not in an optimal position to critique it. Outsiders, on the other hand, can see what is happening and, in the interest of change, bring it to attention. Rural groups around the world, living more sustainable lives than the modern urban norm, are in a notable position to both offer critique and show the way. As music educators venture into the world (including MDG members as part of an international association), we should be mindful and critical of the urbanormative mission of music education globally. What is taken for granted as cultural and institutional progress within music teaching and learning (the development of "ideal" school music programs) may very well be the most unsustainable of many possible approaches to music teaching and learning. I continue to maintain, along with others, that rural life past and present holds an important key to a sustainable future (Bates 2013a). At the very least, those of us residing in urban areas, immersed in urbanormativity, ought to avoid doing more harm that we are doing to rural populations globally and to the natural environment. Preferably, we will work to decrease our overall "footprint." Ideally, however, we will work, through our unique medium as music teachers, to counter the ongoing destruction precipitated by unsustainable and oppressive forms of human development.⁵

About the Author

Vincent Bates teaches elementary arts integration, secondary student teaching seminar, and values education at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah. Most of his scholarship relates to social class and rural music education. He is currently serving as editor of *Action, Criticism, and Theory in Music Education*, and recently completed a two-year term as chair of the Weber State University Storytelling Festival, one of the largest storytelling festivals in the world to feature youth storytellers.

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Notes

¹ This reminds me of the scene in *Finding Nemo* in which the fish have blocked the filter and the tank has become disgustingly dirty, particularly the line: “Don’t you people realize we are swimming in our own sh-!?” This example from popular culture surely reflects a parallel sense of environmental dis-ease within society. (see <http://www.clipconverter.cc/download/UnEMiktZ/196093994/>)

² Cultural capital is defined as follows:

A term introduced by Pierre Bourdieu to refer to the symbols, ideas, tastes, and preferences that can be strategically used as resources in social action. He sees this cultural capital as a ‘habitus’, an embodied socialized tendency or disposition to act, think, or feel in a particular way. By analogy with economic capital, such resources can be invested and accumulated and can be converted into other forms. Thus, middle-class parents are able to endow their children with the linguistic and cultural competences that will give them a greater likelihood of success at school and at university. Work-

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ing-class children, without access to such cultural resources, are less likely to be successful in the educational system. Thus, education reproduces class inequalities. Bourdieu sees the distribution of economic and cultural capital as reinforcing each other. Educational success—reflecting initial cultural capital—is the means through which superior, higher-paying occupations can be attained, and the income earned through these jobs may allow the successful to purchase a private education for their children and so enhance their chances of educational success. This ‘conversion’ of one form of capital into another is central to the intragenerational or intergenerational reproduction of class differences. (From *A Dictionary of Sociology* by John Scott and Gordon Marshall. Oxford University Press 2009.)

Some key treatments of Bourdieu in sociologies and critical theories of music education include Regelski (2004) and, more recently, Burnard, Trulsson, and Söderman (2015)—an edited collection of articles in which Schmidt (2015) discusses Bourdieu within the context of place.

³ Perelman (2000) sees the anti-rural bias trajectory of modern development as a pair of scissors: “The first blade served to undermine the ability of people to provide for themselves. The other blade was a system of stern measures required to keep people from finding alternative survival strategies outside the system of wage labor” (14).

⁴ This line brings to mind a popular country song from my childhood: “Crystal Chandaliers,” recorded by African-American country phenomenon, Charlie Pride—a song that highlights, like so many country songs, differences between highbrow and lowbrow culture, often in terms of the urban/rural binary.

⁵ Adopting, as Dan Shevock (2015) puts it, an “eco-literate music pedagogy.”