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## ***A Response to Commentaries on Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education, Second Edition (2015)***

David J. Elliott and Marissa Silverman

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## A Response to Commentaries on *Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education*, Second Edition (2015)

David J. Elliott  
New York University

Marissa Silverman  
Montclair State University

### Abstract

*This essay responds to five commentaries on Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education, 2nd edition (2015). Because each author provides a substantial discussion of different aspects of the book, this essay does not attempt to address all points. Instead, we reflect on selected aspects of each scholar's critique.*

Keywords: *praxial music education, music education philosophy, eudaimonia, personhood, care*

**W**e wish to thank Vincent Bates for organizing this special review issue of *Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education*, 2nd edition (or *MM2*) and Marie McCarthy who graciously agreed to assume the editorial duties. And, of course, we're deeply grateful to the five scholars who reviewed *MM2* for this issue: Deborah Bradley, J. Scott Goble, Joel Krueger, Diane Thram, and Dylan van der Schyff. We value the diverse and constructive perspectives they offer, and we appreciate the time and effort they invested in developing their contributions.

Because each author provides a substantial commentary on different aspects of *MM2*, we won't attempt to discuss all the points in each review-article; instead, we'll reflect on selected aspects of each scholar's critique. However, and just for readers' information, when we published *MM2*, we also created a website ([www.musicmatters2.com](http://www.musicmatters2.com)) to accompany the book that is intended as a place where

we can answer/discuss anyone's inquiries about any aspect of the book, blog about specific topics, including some questions raised in this issue of *ACT*, and more.

First, though, please allow us to summarize basic premises and themes in the praxial philosophy of music education that we propose in *MM2*.

Through the development of normative and provisional concepts of music, education, personhood, musicing, listening, musical processes and products, musical creativity, musical values, and curriculum— <http://www.musicmatters2.com/table-of-contents/> —, *MM2* aims to construct a philosophical foundation for guiding teachers, community music facilitators, and university students toward the fullest understanding and enjoyment of music making (of all kinds), music listening, and music teaching and learning. Also, we aim to model *one* way of thinking—through the many basic concepts that need careful consideration before preservice and in-service music educators can build their own philosophies of music education. As Leonardo DaVinci said: “He [or she] who loves practice without theory [which includes philosophy] is like the sailor who boards ship without a rudder and compass and never knows where he [or she] may cast.” As Gary Griffin, former Dean of Education at Columbia University, says: “Thought without action is futile, action without thought is fatal.”

The process of planning and writing *MM2* began with rethinking and “re-visioning” the first edition of *Music Matters* (1995), or *MM1*, which included (1) clarifying, updating, and expanding on the premises and themes in *MM1* and (2) studying (about 900 sources) and then selecting and integrating what we considered the most logical, valid, and evidenced-based research in a wide range of fields, including the philosophy of music, mind, and personhood; music psychology, ethnomusicology, neuroscience, and emotion studies; the sociology of music; creativity studies; and educational philosophy.

This is *not* to say we believe *MM2* provides a comprehensive philosophy of music, education, and music teaching and learning. Definitely not. *MM2* is nothing more or less than the best we could do to make a useful contribution to the literature of music education philosophy. So we're completely aware that our thoughts in *MM2* only scratch the surface of the vast range of theoretical issues and practical problems involved in music education and community music as complex global practices.

*MM2* unfolds in three parts. Part One (Chapters 1–5) examines past and present relationships between philosophy, music, education, and personhood, because without foundational understandings of the interdependent relationships between musics, educations, and what it means to say that students and teachers are holistic persons, we can't get very far in trying to form a philosophy of music education.

Part Two (Chapters 6–11) builds a philosophy of music education based on the foundational understandings we propose in Part One. Part Two suggests that when school and community music teachers engage with learners educatively and ethically, then musicians and listeners of all ages, in school and community settings, are more likely to become empowered in multiple ways to pursue their musical and personal needs and desires for full human flourishing. Based on Parts One and Two, Part Three (Chapters 12–14) proposes concepts of music curriculum development and instruction.

*MM2* hopes to encourage positive changes in the philosophy and practice of music education by serving as a catalyst for critically reflective thinking and individual philosophy building. So this book is *not* “a philosophy” in the popular but mistaken sense of a canon to “live and die for”; and by “a philosophy” of music education, we do *not* mean (we don't mean!) “*the* philosophy”—as in “the one and only” and “best” philosophy of music education for the whole world. For one thing (as we said above, but it bears repeating) music, education, and music education include a massive array of issues, concepts, opinions, assumptions, as well as an expansive body of past and present philosophical scholarship. For another thing, we are fallible human beings.

Therefore, as we say many times in *MM2*, “our” praxial philosophy of music education—“our,” not “the” praxial philosophy, because there are other versions—is just *one* possible philosophy and, therefore, a tool for initiating, stimulating, guiding, and supporting the efforts of music teachers of all kinds as they tackle the many theoretical and practical issues involved in music education and community music at all levels of instruction. It's our hope that *MM2*—as *one* example of thinking about music education—will be refined in the future with the help of those who think about it and use it.

It follows that what we've written in *MM2* isn't intended to replace what has already been done or is being done now, or will be done. As Walt Whitman said, "Oh farther, farther, farther sail!" Which brings us to the ideas, concerns, and questions of each of our reviewers.

### **Deborah Bradley**

It was rewarding to read Deborah Bradley's critique, especially because (as she notes) she was in on the ground floor of *MM1*—meaning that she read it in manuscript form while she was studying music education at the University of Toronto and, therefore, in David's courses while he was teaching at the U of T. If it was possible to rewind time and talk with Bradley as her "undergraduate self" and, now, as her highly esteemed scholarly self, it would be very interesting to know whether and why her views about the past and present editions of this book have changed over time, and/or if they've made a difference in her thinking and practice.

Bradley situates her discussion in the here and now and spotlights important issues that we either omitted or that we could have (if we'd had the space) taken up more fully. She focuses primarily on issues we discuss in Part Three of *MM2*. From her perspective, we didn't explain clearly why we made the "move" from dynamic multiculturalism in *MM1* to dynamic *interculturalism* in *MM2*.

In reply, we'll begin with the background that we explained in *MM2* (Chapter 13) about a general movement toward educational multiculturalism that began roughly 20 years ago in North America. This "move" emerged partly from the ethical and educative concerns of scholars such as James Banks, Cherry A. McGee Banks, Christine Bennett, Geneva Gay, Christine Sleeter, and Carl Grant. These authors and teachers were keenly aware that classrooms were becoming increasingly diverse, and that educators were not sufficiently aware of or prepared to serve the pluralistic needs of students in any subject domain. Gradually, ideas and practices emerged that assessed and attempted to rectify the abuses of inequity, racism, discrimination, stereotyping, and beyond: "This meant integrating the world's cultures into the mainstream of our school's curricula. By doing so, multiculturalism seeks to teach respect through knowledge and understanding, for when using a Eurocentric curriculum a school excludes a number of people and ethnicities" (*MM2*, 447).

On this point, we quote educational scholars Jack Nelson, Stuart Palonsky, and Mary Rose McCarthy (2004) who rightfully challenge the practices of excluding diverse groups of people from a democratic public. Through alternative multicultural approaches, these scholars call for:

fairness and a better representation of the contributions of all Americans. Multiculturalists do not disparage the school's role in developing a cohesive, national identity. At the same time, however, they recognize schools must ensure all students preserve, as well, their individual ethnic, cultural, and economic identities. (284)

We argue that although this may seem to be a laudable goal, one problem is that, more often than not, this mission—i.e., ensuring that all students preserve their own multi-layered identities—does not get accomplished in today's public schools. Initially, school music and university music teacher education programs did not embrace this movement, as David (1989, 1995) argued they should. Our position is that if and when music teachers are engaged in praxial music education—in *MM2* we explain in detail that praxis always includes ethics, and much more—it's more likely that the abuses of inequity, racism, discrimination, stereotyping, and beyond will be addressed—to greater and lesser degrees, depending on many variables—because musics are powerful “affordances” that allow people to feel and understand (nonconsciously and consciously) the social, cultural, gendered, and many more dimensions of others' personhoods. *MM2* echoes Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (2005) who states that teachers “should aim for nothing more—and nothing less—than to educate the whole child for the whole world” (212), and should educate students both socially and emotionally. Schools should help students engage in

cross-cultural work: empathy and learning with and from others who happen to differ in race; religion; national, linguistic, or social origin; values; and worldview. They are all our brothers and sisters on the ever more diverse, interconnected, and global family. (212)

Let's go back to the above-quoted material because Bradley spots an issue regarding our reference to a point in the work of Nelson, Palonsky, and McCarthy (2004): “Multiculturalists do not disparage the school's role in developing a cohesive, national identity” (cited in *MM2*, 447). Bradley argues that this statement is problematic because it fails to suggest answers to a central question: Who would

decide what makes a “cohesive, national identity”? (15) Point taken. But Nelson, Palonsky, and McCarthy were writing in 2004, which was a time that required them to rebut and resist strongly vehement critics of multiculturalism who argued mindlessly but powerfully that multiculturalism would incite separatist mentalities and, therefore, threaten the longstanding homogenous, “melting-pot” concept of the USA as a “common culture.”

So we most definitely understand Bradley’s reservations and we agree, which is partly why we discussed an extreme example of how far this potentially “purist” view of society can go: i.e., the Third Reich’s Aryan master race ideology that depended heavily on an inhuman, immoral, and unethical general education, and music education, and the deliberate abuse of music (*MM2* 19, 21, 225–6). In the overall context of challenging and making practical head-way against any form of human exploitation or violence, we explain in *MM2* our concept and practice of “artistic citizenship,” which includes but goes beyond music and arts education (see Elliott, Silverman, and Bowman in press) for social justice (268).

We frame praxial music teaching and learning in relation to many ways of welcoming students into music education contexts and creating safe spaces of belonging that can provide sustained support for students’ personal and musical flourishing. So now, why our use in *MM2* of dynamic *intercultural* music education instead of *MM1*’s multiculturalism? For us, “intercultural” includes a more nuanced, feminist ethic of dialogue, community, care, compassion, and concern for others *through* music education (*MM2* often draws from feminist perspectives on many topics: see our discussions of the writings of Nel Noddings, Jane Roland Martin, Diane Ravitch, bell hooks, Kathleen Marie Higgins, Susan McClary, etc; and, also, our considerations of critical pedagogy as put forth by Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Michael Apple, etc.). The preposition “inter” connotes interpersonal and intersubjective exchanges. While multicultural education does sometimes include an ethic of care, we feel the term is too limiting, and it can lead to “borders” between different cultural communities in the same locations (as it did early on, and even now, in different regions of Canada). “Multicultural” can (but doesn’t always) imply a silo-ed approach to understanding the world, as if worlds of musics cannot inter-relate, communicate, propagate, transform, and so forth.

When students are ethically guided towards a dynamic intercultural music education, it seems plausible to suggest that they're more likely to achieve interpersonal and intrapersonal growth, and musical growth, which may pave the way toward more and richer tapestries of personal, social, cultural, historic, gendered, and political musical understandings. As we say, "teachers and students must be concerned with what different music makers in different contexts take to be the 'right results' of their musical processes and products" (450). By "right results," we are not referring to musical accuracy and fluency (though, these are part of technical right processes and results). By "right results" we mean broad, deep, ethical, affective, and critically reflective understandings of the ways different musics are practiced, understood, valued, and shared within local communities. On this point, and to support our view, we quote J. Scott Goble (2010) who says it's important to understand and value the effects music has "for people in different cultural contexts in which they have arisen or the differing ways in which those people experience and understand them" (244).

As Bradley points out in her review, music educators need to critically reflect upon indigenous knowledge and multiple ways of knowing, challenge power structures, as well as openly discuss issues of race and racism. We concur:

The classroom as community seeks to address a number of questions as they relate to music teaching and learning: How can teachers support all students? And how do students learn empathy? How do classroom communities honor diversity and foster mutual respect and care while bringing people closer together? These are profound ethical questions. Many teachers believe simplistically that if they teach "another's" music, regardless of how they honor (or dishonor) said musics, they are contributing to world citizenship. This, however, is short-sighted. Sonia Nieto's *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* discusses these issues. Nieto worries that simply by including the musical cultures of the world, we are not necessarily working toward equity: "to plan an assembly program of ethnic music is easier than to provide music instruction for all students."<sup>1</sup> She notes that although this may be valuable to some degree, it doesn't "confront directly the deep-seated inequalities that exist in schools. Because they are sometimes taken out of context—isolated as prepackaged programs or 'best practices'—multicultural education . . . can become a band-aid approach to serious problems that require nothing short of major surgery."<sup>2</sup>

Nieto's words remind us to consider the purposes of schooling. As we noted in most of the previous chapters (4 and 12), one of the purposes of schooling is to teach the "whole" child. This means teaching as holistically as possible—



teaching in ways that consider the needs, desires, and aims of students in relation to their emotional, social, cultural, embodied, gendered worlds; teaching with empathy and compassion toward personal and social transformation; teaching toward a better tomorrow through the social praxis of musics. (*MM2*, 450)

Part of being effective and professional educators involves understanding the ethical dimensions of teaching and learning, which requires that we make every effort to understand “personhood” (*MM2*, Chapter 5). Of course, personhood includes teachers’ personal, well-informed, affective, and critically reflective dispositions, and our professional dispositions and responsibilities to teach with empathy, compassion, and self-other cultural respect. All of these responsibilities fuel our efforts to improve (among other things) our students’ self-efficacy, self-identity, resilience, and overall well-being, all of which are—very sadly, in many cases—essential as our vulnerable students endeavor to deal with daily violence, racism, homophobia, bullying, etc. As educational scholar Pedro Noguera asks and answers: “What does it take to educate the children you serve? If you cannot answer that question, you shouldn’t be doing this work. But it’s not a simple question. Because to answer the question you have to know and understand the children you serve” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzhJrohXHiA>)

In *MM2*, we suggest that:

During ethical processes of intercultural music education, guided by practical wisdom, or phronesis, teachers and learners can confront and reflect critically on their prejudices (musical, personal, social, cultural, political, and gendered) and face the possibility that what they believe to be universal is *not*. In the process of welcoming learners into unfamiliar musical musics, music educators and CM facilitators link the primary values of musics and music education to the broader goals of democratic-humanistic education. (194)

Additionally, we say:

As a result of the intercultural nature of MUSICS, school music and CM programs are also a primary way in which students can achieve self-identity, musical identities, and a commitment to respect for themselves and others. Since schools today should be concerned with preparing students for work and life in pluralistic societies, and since schools themselves are more culturally diverse than ever, it stands to reason that schools should support the rich, cumulative, and enjoyable intercultural learning experiences that can be achieved when school music programs welcome children into a variety of musical praxes. (465)

Bradley rightly notes that *MM2* doesn't explain everything that's needed to eradicate inequities, racism, and social injustices of many kinds. Point taken. But this doesn't mean that teachers shouldn't be vitally concerned with this extremely important daily mission and learning more from specialized sources on these topics. Additionally, what Bradley's point *does* in fact mean for us is that the third edition of *Music Matters* will be improved to address these concerns. Learning and improving from dialogues like the ones in this issue of *ACT* are the lifeblood of doing philosophy.

### **J. Scott Goble**

J. Scott Goble suggests that in today's neoliberal societies an education should aim to help people become active participants in democratically pluralistic societies. This requires that students grasp the importance of critical reflection and critical thinking-and-doing toward deepening their own and others' humanistic flourishing (*MM2*, Chapters 1 and 2). As Goble also points out, one of the ways to do this is to practice non-universalist perspectives and cultural relativism because doing so, says Goble, helps people situate values without imposing social structures and hierarchies where they don't belong.

Related to this point, Goble moves on to question the veracity and care we use in *MM2* when discussing music versus musics. What should we teach, Goble asks: music education or musics education? Before answering, we'll provide some background information on *MM1* that will help us put Goble's concern and our rejoinder in context.

Goble claims that *MM1* doesn't take an anthropological view. Had it, says Goble, Elliott would have placed "*human beings* . . . at the center of his inquiry," thus further appreciating the unique values people place when engaged in something we Westerners would "construe as 'musical'" (33–34). By placing music at the center of his inquiry, says Goble, Elliott creates a somewhat "universalist" position on the nature of music. Our reply is that Goble's interpretation is incorrect. In fact, *MM1* does *not* place music at the center of the book's praxial philosophy; it places *people* and *people's ways of doing and listening to music*, and the social-cultural contexts of

people’s musicing, at the center of the praxial philosophy. Indeed, the very nature of praxis is that “praxial emphasizes that ‘music’ ought to be understood in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making and music listening in specific cultural contexts” (*MM1*, 14). This is why Marie McCarthy (2000) argues that “at no other time in our professional history did we have a view of music education [i.e., as explained in *MM1*] that is as *people-focused* [italics added]” meaning that praxialism emphasizes that music teaching and learning should be practiced as “a social collective” based on “ongoing dialogue between teacher and students” to develop “individual creativity in the context of a shared communal practice” (3, 5).

The *starting* point of *MM1*’s praxial philosophy was then (and still is in *MM2*) that music involves at least four interlocking dimensions: (a) musical doers or “social agents” (music makers and listeners of any kind)—i.e., *people*—(b) musical doing (music making of *all* kinds, and listening)—by people—(c) something done (musical products, including compositions, improvisations, and arrangements, and so forth, *ad infinitum*)—for oneself and other people—and (d) the contexts—personal, artistic, historical, social, cultural, educational, ethical, political, and so forth—in which people’s musicing, listening, and the products of these take place (39–45). So a basic premise of *MM1* is that “without some form of intentional *human* activity, there can be neither musical sounds nor works of musical sound. In short, *what music is, at root, is a human activity*” (*MM1*, 39).

Building a philosophy of music and music education by jumping off from the basic premise of people and people’s many ways of making and listening to music—instead of starting with the nature of musical products or aesthetic objects—does *not* mean that *MM1* omits musical products or pieces of music. The idea of music as a “human activity” is just the jumping-off point, not the end point, for *MM1*: music as a diverse social practice—simply put, people engaged in musical actions in social-musical contexts—is the premise that launched David’s effort to construct a multidimensional concept of music and music education.

So, *MM1* suggests that we conceptualize “music” holistically: as a verb (i.e., processes, as in musicing and listening), and a noun (compositions, improvisations, and so forth), and a hub of *human* interactions (social, cultural, political, and so

forth), all of which depend on musical style-communities (social-musical interactions), or social praxes, in which *people* in different times and places make and listen to music of different kinds.<sup>3</sup> Importantly, *MM1* uses musical “doing” and “musicing” *inclusively*—meaning, “all five forms of music-making: performing, improvising, composing, arranging, and conducting” (40) that may also include moving, dancing, worshipping, and so forth (129), depending on the musical style-community, or musical praxis involved. Also, *MM1* emphasizes strongly that music always includes “another kind of ‘doing’ called *music listening* . . . The kind of doing we call music listening is therefore an essential thread that binds musicers, musicing, and musical products together” (41).

Before moving on, it’s important to highlight a methodological feature of *MM1*’s starting point, which marked an important paradigm shift. By beginning with the “root” idea of “music as a human activity,” *MM1* broke with previous philosophical practice in music education that usually operated in a top-down, synoptic manner. In other words, the longstanding philosophy of “music education as aesthetic education” (MEAE, e.g., Reimer 1970/1989/2003), which dominated music education philosophy prior to the publication of *MM1*, begins with the assumption that “music = musical works” (products) in the sense of music as aesthetic objects. Put another way, MEAE starts by “downloading” its premises from 18th- and 19th-century object-centered aesthetic theory, and, especially, Susanne Langer’s mid-20th-century “aesthetic cognitivism.”<sup>4</sup> These theories, and MEAE, argue that the nature and value of music and music education lie in the elements and form of musical works and nothing “outside” works of music, as perceived and experienced aesthetically. The vast majority of contemporary or “new” philosophers and musicologists have rejected these claims in the last 30 years or more.

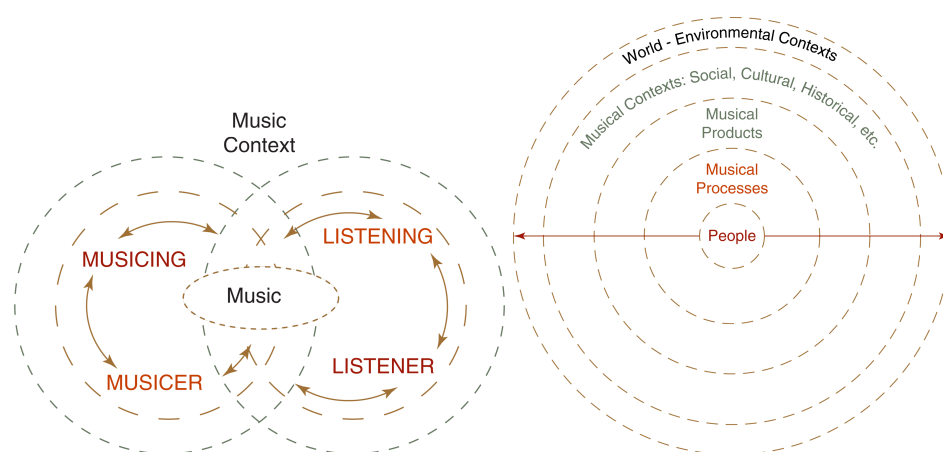
The paradigm shift inherent in *MM1* is threefold: (1) David rejected MEAE’s synoptic method of philosophy building (see Jorgensen 2006) and its concomitant faith in both 18th- and 19th-century Enlightenment and Langerian notions of music; (2) *MM1* followed a Deweyian route to conceptualizing the natures and values of *music* by examining the relationships between music and actual, everyday, social-musical actions and experiences in the world; and (3) *MM1* included—but did *not*

Elliott, David J., and Marissa Silverman. 2015. Response to commentaries on *Music matters: A philosophy of music education*, second edition (2015). *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 14(3): 106–130. [act.maydaygroup.org/articles/ElliottSilverman14\\_3.pdf](http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/ElliottSilverman14_3.pdf)

exaggerate or elevate works of music above—all other dimensions of musics (i.e., people, processes, contexts, multiple musical values, etc.).

*MM2* continues to place people at the center of our version of the praxial philosophy, with (we hope) more clarity and emphasis than the first edition. Please see below our visual representations (from *MM2*, Chapter 3) of the word “music”: notice the many dimensions that surround and support our social-cultural view of “music” in the sense of human musical praxes.

At first glance, the left-hand diagram *seems* to put “music” at the center; examined closely, however, and in direct relation to our explanation of *MM1* (39–45) above, readers will see that musical products (center) come into being and are experienced by one or more “musicers”; music makers of all kinds, and listeners, are the starting points for the creation and experience of each kind of music (e.g., making and listening to American bebop jazz or cool jazz or jazz-rock fusion; urban blues; traditional County Claire Irish fiddle music; Balinese kebyar; roots reggae; etc.). And each dimension depends on all other dynamic dimensions as situated among porous, softly bounded musical-social-cultural contexts. We place the left-hand and right-hand diagram next to each other in *MM2* (101) to clarify all of the above.



This “two circles diagram” isn’t meant to account for all possible themes and interactions of the praxial concept of musics in *MM2*, only major “launching” themes. They attempt to capture the idea that in the case of most musics, four basic

dimensions come into play: (1) people—or musical doers of all kinds in all cultures; (2) people’s musical processes or musical “doings” of all kinds; (3) musical products in the widest possible sense of all forms of musicing (performing, improvising, composing, etc.), as well as “participatory” musicing and listening (Turino 2008), and all forms of contemporary social media and technological forms of musicing-listening; and (4) praxis-specific musical, social, cultural, historical, gendered, political, economic, and all other contexts and combinations of contexts. These four dimensions feed-into and feed-back to our social-emotional musical experiences; there’s a seamless, ever-changing integration between and among all these four dimensions—and more—that powers our conscious-nonconscious, cognitive-affective-corporeal, “spiritual” (in the broadest sense), phenomenological, and other experiences of music making and music listening, as each chapter in *MM2*—separately and in combination—explains.

Additionally, *MM2* emphasizes from the get-go and repeatedly that there’s no such thing as “music”; instead, there are “musics.” Music is *not* a unitary phenomenon, and music is not a thing or “sounds-works” alone. To emphasize what we mean, we explain that the word “music”—as typically used—should be conceptualized as the integration of three different senses of the word (Goble credits this in his review).

1. MUSICS (all uppercase) means all musics in the world, past and present.
2. Music (uppercase M) means one specific musical praxis—e.g., Cool jazz—that is recognizable as a result of at least four interacting, intersubjective dimensions of human engagement:
  - a. The people who make and listen to a specific kind of music for the values or human “goods” they obtain from doing so, or for the values that “their music” provides to others;
  - b. The processes of musicing and listening (and dancing, worshipping, and so on) that the people of a specific musical praxis decide to use, develop, integrate, perpetuate, elaborate, change radically, abandon, and so, forth;
  - c. The musical products of one specific musical praxis or hybrid form of two or more praxes;
  - d. The contextual details—social, historical, cultural, spatial, visual—that partly caused a specific musical praxis to originate, develop, change over time, continue, or die out.
3. music (lowercase) means music in the ordinary sense of musical products, pieces, or musical-social events of various kinds: compositions, performances, improvisations, recordings, music videos: e.g., Miles Davis’ “So What,” Lady

Gaga’s “Poker Face,” Esa-Pekka Salonen’s *Wing on Wing*, John Mayer’s “Paper Doll,” and so forth, ad infinitum. (105)

Notice that each of these dimensions is *plural* in some way, shape, or form. Please notice also that, taken together, musics are intentional human activities. The springboard principle of musics as human activities—musics as critically reflective actions (musicing and listening of all kinds)—provides *a self-evident way of* beginning to explain many interactive dimensions of what musics are and what they’re ethically “good-for.” (A principle is self-evident if its opposite is unthinkable: e.g., the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 3, says “Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.”) Taken together, we suggest that these dimensions and their implications offer a blueprint for elaborating our thinking about musics as social praxes and various forms of music education and community music as musical-social-civic praxes.

Goble asks for further clarification about the importance of the “s” when speaking about music versus musics. He argues that though “we frequently affirm that musical practices must be understood ‘in context,’” we “might have gone further to demonstrate for readers what makes the delineation of cultural difference so very important, especially at this point in history” (37). Fair enough. And ideally yes. But with respect, every author probably wishes he or she had more room to go further on every issue, but editors and publishers usually set limits on the lengths of books. So we decided—with our editor’s permission—to write 467 pages of philosophical explanation and document our sources with 59 pages of notes, etc.

Anyway, as we attempt to say fairly clearly in *MM2*—and state numerous times throughout the book—“MUSICS” is used

as a shorthand term for a vast (if not infinite) spectrum of specific musical praxes (e.g., EDM, traditional bluegrass, “bomba,” baroque “stile concitato,” etc.) that continuously evolve (slowly or quickly), or die out completely, or generate hybrid or completely new musics. Each musical praxis depends on and is identifiable by the natures and values of the swirling, situated interactions among and between the people, processes, products, and contexts (social, political, economic, gendered, etc.) that constitute a specific musical praxis. (236)

Indeed, as many times as Goble believes we vacillate between “music” and “musics,” we can quote many additional ways we differentiate repeatedly the

common (lowercase) sense of music as a piece of music and musics in the sense of musical-social praxes, or social-musical style communities. Also, we reiterate frequently that there is no universal understanding—and there should not be—of what music is. And, of course, there are some typos in the book that we missed, which would partly explain Goble’s concern.

Furthermore, in Chapter 6 (Musical Understanding), our embodied-enactive discussion of musicing and listening takes into account that people’s engagements with musics—even (say) the same piece, song, march, waltz, or whatever—are different with each and every experience, even though someone might think it’s all the same. Why? For one thing, each person is constantly growing, changing, and developing, and experiencing the world in new ways. And so is the moment-to-moment unfolding of (say) performing, improvising, or listening during a musical event as it “passes in time.” So a listener’s listening is (for example) simultaneously experienced as something like a “standing in time” and phenomenologically passing time. In *MM2*, we cite Evan Thompson who elaborates this point:

Our making and/or listening has “a subjective character that makes it immediately manifest, without observation or inference, as one’s own experience. In this way, we experience our listening implicitly, without it becoming an object of awareness.”

Put another way, our experiences of musicing and listening are rainbowlike. What we mean is that because mind-perception-cognition is not receptive but *active*—engaged with the musical world we’re creating with our musical, bodily-perceptual “knowing hows”—*we create for ourselves and others vivid experiences of “a standing-streaming living present . . . the living present is streaming because it is the continuous transformation . . . of the about-to-happen into the happening into just-happened.”* And yet, at the same time, the real-time, living present “is standing” because our self awareness remains as an unchanging dimension: as Thompson puts it, “*It stands—to use the striking image of William James—permanent, like the rainbow on the water fall, with its own quality unchanged by the events that stream through it.*” (206, italics added)

Musics also provide us with “affordances” for a great many things, one being the emotional regulation and manipulation of our peripersonal spaces. This shift in a person’s sense of self—whether consciously or nonconsciously—affords us a certain newness of experience with everything he or she encounters. Even our personal experience of one piece of music becomes musics (plural) because of the embodied



feedback loops we maintain within our personhood processes (*MM2*, Chapter 5).

At the heart of all of the above is our contention that we shouldn't think of teaching "music," we should think of teaching "musics." Similarly, we shouldn't think of being engaged in "education," we should think of engaging within various domains of "educations." Why? Because both musics and educations are so varied, complex, and ever-changing praxes that it's neither accurate nor helpful to conceptualize education as a unitary phenomenon.

In sum, we affirm that people should be our central concern as teachers, music makers, and critical thinkers. If we remove people from the center, we have no musics, no educations, nothing. Which begs the question, "Who are you, and who are we as *persons*?" To answer, we examine numerous concepts and dimensions of "holistic" (non-dualistic) personhood (Chapter 5). In doing so, we studied current research in the fields of the philosophy of mind, personhood studies, neuroscience, different fields of psychology, emotion studies, and so on. We decided that the most logical and well-documented sources we examined included the works of Evan Thompson, Alva Noë, Mark Johnson, Jesse Prinz, Richard Shusterman, Joseph LeDoux, Gary Marcus, David and Eric Clarke, and more. Their brilliant, cutting-edge insights helped us build a provisional understanding of personhood based on new understandings of persons—*not* simply as brains, or bodies and brains—as holistic beings who possess embodied-enactive powers of attention, perception, cognition, emotion, volition, action, and so on. From these standpoints we were better able to examine musicing and listening in context, which led us to develop more nuanced discussions of musical understanding, musical emotions, and music learning, as explained in separate chapters. We then drew from the work of scholars such as Francisco Varela, Eleanor Rosch, and Joel Krueger. Their scholarship helped us unravel the interactive and interpersonal dimensions of persons acting with/for musical products, musical understanding, and so forth.

### **Joel Krueger**

One point (for example) that follows from the above is that everyone, including music makers and listeners, "actively *construct* their emotional lives by deliberately making and listening to specific kinds of music, at specific times, and specific places

in their lives” (*MM2*, 308). Related to this point, Joel Krueger, the next reviewer of *MM2*, states that musicing and listening promotes multi-layered dimensions of a “musical-scaffolded emotional niche” (5). This is a subtle way to appreciate and understand the active processes within personhood (Chapter 5), specifically the interrelationships between a person’s brain-body-mind-world-conscious-nonconscious processes.

Krueger provides a three-dimensional way of understanding the musical-scaffolded emotional niche as a “manipulation of (1) soundworlds deliberately *engineered* (2) to provide self-stimulating *feedback* (3) affecting *functional gain*” (5). Although we don’t have space to comment on the many ways Krueger’s three-dimensional approach to this kind of embodied-enactive manipulation is complimentary to our own view, there are two ideas we’d like to highlight in Krueger’s essay.

First, readers may be jarred by Krueger’s choice of wording, especially “manipulation” and “engineered” (5). In today’s landscape of technological jargon, these terms not only imply a certain allegiance to music production, they also ring of scientific lab experiments and neoliberal notions of manufacturing. But this is definitely not what Krueger means.

In *MM2*, we point out that when people are engaged with musics, we experience a “full-blooded sense of phenomenological couplings between our entire beings (not just our brains) and the meaning-making opportunities or ‘affordances’ of pieces of music that flow in time and across time” (205). Also, we suggest that “music is a social device, affordance, or strategy for everyday ‘emotion work’” (308). Krueger refines our argument when he explains that the spatial, temporal, and physical dimensions of musicing and listening—or what he calls the “materiality” of musics—make musics perfect for the kind of sensorimotor couplings and feedback (Chapter 9) we had in mind. As Krueger says: music[s] are

a material resource that can be selectively manipulated in various user-specific ways. These manipulations . . . are important . . . because they exert a downstream modulatory impact on the listener’s ongoing patterns of emotional action and experience. In manipulating music, we simultaneously manipulate not only the environment but *ourselves*. The music we manipulate loops back onto us and, as active and responsive listeners, shapes our further manipulations and embodied responses. (52)

Furthermore, says Krueger, the emotional, embodied, and enactive gains we receive when engaged with musics do not end here: “when we ‘couple’ with music, we access emotional capacities and experiences that, without the music’s ongoing input, remain otherwise inaccessible—again, much like a novice dancer can only perform advanced moves with a skilled partner. To borrow a term of art from cognitive science: as musically-coupled listeners we realize *functional gain*” (52). We agree completely.

Additionally, Krueger writes that *MM2* might be better suited to consider a recently amended version of the embodied-enactive concept of personhood we use that’s called the 4E-concept of musical engagements—meaning musicing and listening as *embodied, embedded, enactive, and extended*. As Krueger explains: “Environmental resources—when coupled with neuronal and bodily processes in the right sort of way—become constitutive parts of the associated cognitive process and, in so doing, open up access to otherwise-inaccessible forms of cognition and intelligent behavior” (55). We make a point in *MM2* to discuss the ways our worlds—or worlds, environments, contexts (or WECs)—are part of musical understanding. Without this “extended” spatial-temporal-felt dimension of musicing and listening, people would have no situated “place” to enact with/for in understanding musics and, therefore, ourselves. We’re grateful to Krueger for pointing us towards the 4E approach to musical engagements, which we’ll adopt in our future work.

### **Diane Thram**

Early in Thram’s commentary, she states (1) that *MM2* “lack[s] consideration of what music educators might stand to learn from how music is valued, taught and learned in indigenous cultures where group participation is the norm” and (2) “*MM2* give[s] scant attention to attitudes toward music and its value in social life outside the authors’ own context as music educators in North America” (65).

With respect, we disagree with Thram’s assessments. For one thing, we emphasize—as we quoted earlier in this essay—that “teachers and students must be concerned with what different music makers in different contexts take to be the ‘right results’ of their musical processes and products” (450). For another thing, we made

every effort to emphasize that there are multiple ways to see, value, and share musics (for example, see our discussions of musics: 54–55, 58–65, 86–105, etc.). The same goes for our understandings of educations. For instance, we discussed Ancient Chinese music, Vedic music, Dagomba drumming-and-dancing, and more. Indeed, at the outset of Chapter 3 (Music) we began our discussion of the natures, values, and situated ways that people make and listen to a very wide range of musics, and we continued to do so throughout the book. Moreover, we reflected critically on traditional Western assumptions about and concepts of musical practices that omit all or most forms of pop, rock, hip-hop, EDM, “DJ musics,” and so forth; also, we offered an alternative social-cultural praxial view supported by numerous contemporary scholars such as Thomas Turino, Ian Cross, Susan McClary, Bruno Nettl, Kathleen Marie Higgins, Richard Taruskin, Martin Clayton, Lawrence Kramer, Timothy Rice, Natalie Sarrazin, and Tia DeNora, all of whom consider Western and non-Western musics and the indigenous “knowledges” involved. So while we did reflect on musics from our own Western perspectives, we think it’s fair to suggest that we provided detailed discussions of musics that are “ours” and “not ours,” which we supported with the perspectives of non-Western scholars.

It’s worth mentioning, too, that Chapter 4 (Education) compares, contrasts, and critiques the writings of a range of educational philosophers who worked in different periods of history and in different cultures, including the educational values of our early human ancestors, as well as those from the Vedic era in India, ancient China, and ancient Greece, and the work of Marie Le Jars de Gournay, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Nel Noddings, etc.

Thram argues that *MM2* does not pay enough attention to the therapeutic agency of musics and the positive kinds of healing musics can provide. Given that the book is intended primarily for music educators and community music facilitators, and not music therapists, it’s fair to say that we didn’t discuss the therapeutic benefits as prominently as Thram would have preferred. But we did provide examples of personal and community healing and transformation from *The Oxford Handbook of Medical Ethnomusicology*, and more.

More broadly, we state many times that musics from all cultures have the potential for personal, social, political, and emotional transformations of many

kinds, depending on the aims of the people and the musics' they choose to use as "affordances" for healing. Indeed, we point out that our personhood processes (see *MM2*, Chapter 5) are so adept at living-through our musical moments, and that musical participation(s) of many kinds can provide numerous opportunities to achieve many human "goods," which (for the following reasons) includes intersubjective-social bonding:

Since music "moves" temporally and phenomenologically; and since people often suggest or feel that music seems "alive" in some sense; and since people frequently talk about "loving" their musics, it may be that people interpret musical pieces and processes with a *principle of charity* that makes musical experiences *feel like* an interaction with another person. In addition to many other human processes that make it possible for music to arouse and express a very wide range of the same emotions we feel in everyday life, it may be that we *make it true* that specific pieces or musical-social events *possess a special kind of personhood* that we respond to empathetically and emotionally. (190)

Concluding our thoughts on Thram's review, we emphasize that all forms of positive musical engagements, creativity, and educative musical experiences contribute to students' "full human flourishing," or what Aristotle called *eudaimonia*—as we emphasize in the first two chapters and onward—which includes a "good life" of happiness, meaningfulness, fellowship, *well-being*, joy, personal significance, self-knowledge, and the *care* of oneself, others, and one's community" (190, italics added). So we believe, as Thram does, that the therapeutic agency of musical engagement is certainly a major dimension of ethical musical praxis.

### **Dylan van der Schyff**

We're grateful for Dylan van der Schyff's very supportive and detailed commentary, and we agree with him that his work is closely aligned with our efforts to integrate the praxial philosophy with today's enactive-embodied concept—and, henceforth, Krueger's 4E concept—of personhood, music, and music education.

However, van der Schyff's focus on Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*—while very interesting and brilliantly described—deserves special attention. *Dasein* is Heidegger's term for "being" and/or the ontology of being. Literally, Da-sein means "there-being." van der Schyff explains that "as a mode of 'disclosure' in which we are inextricably implicated, the primordial way being is revealed by a being who *cares*

about being (i.e., *Dasein*; Heidegger 2008)” (84). “Care” and “caring” are key words for us because “care ethics” is a major dimension of many concepts and practical issues we discuss, including the natures and values of praxis, music(s), education(s), community, musical understanding, music curriculum development and instruction, the eudaimonic “goods” of music education, and more. But our concern is that Heidegger’s concept of “caring” is not compatible with ours (see below). So without important amendments, Heidegger’s ontological theory of personhood isn’t entirely compatible with ours, either.

The concept of “care ethics” that’s embedded in our enactive-embodied view of personhood (see *MM2*, Chapters 4 and 5) conceives the self as always existing *in relation* to social worlds. Rose Graf-Taylor reinforces an important theme in *MM2*’s praxial concept of personhood and education: “We become who we are in relation with others. There is no isolated entity called a human being, ‘no I taken in itself’ [as Buber says in *I and Thou*]. There are only persons-in-relation” (Graf-Taylor cited in *MM2*, 141). Graf-Taylor elaborates: “Psychology has focused on individuals and, following the subject-object split, treated their relatedness as an external factor . . . the feminist approach goes a decisive step further in its attempt to understand the connectedness of human life” (Graf-Taylor cited in *MM2*, 141). This feminist foundation is essential to our praxial understanding of personhood. As we suggest:

Personhood is a dynamic, social, interpersonal, empathetic co-construction process, not a fixed bundle of never-changing things. According to numerous contemporary scholars in developmental psychology, philosophy of mind, experimental philosophy, and neurobiology, an “I” is an “I” because there’s also—in his or her life and in his moral community—a “you,” a “me,” a “we,” and an “us.” (162)

So, again, because praxial music education is rooted in care ethics, we believe that effective, ethical, and educative music teachers should do their “good work” in/with an ethos of active interrelatedness. Thus, from our perspective, Heidegger’s principles are problematic because if we accept them, then a felt ethical and social “interrelatedness” is at risk, or would be lost.

Many feminist scholars (e.g., Huntington 1998; Holland and Huntington 2001; Nagel 2001) pinpoint important problems in Heidegger’s works. Mechthild Nagel (2001) argues that “Despite being socially embedded, *Dasein*, properly understood,

is foremost concerned with itself, not with others” (295, italics added); “Dasein is ethically engaged insofar as it takes responsibility for *itself*, refuses to take responsibility for others, and recognizes that the self is positioned *in opposition to others*” (299, italics added).

A few points related to the above need further elaboration. First, Heidegger’s concept of care is not the kind of care we advocate in *MM2* because (in praxial terms) truly ethical engagements (e.g., teaching, musicing of all kinds) with others—including students of all ages and abilities, other music makers, parents—are socially embedded in and coextensive with our immediate and extended contexts of conscious, feelingful, interpersonal interactions as educators, music makers, listeners, and so forth.

Second, Heidegger argues that empathy is not an “authentic” way of being (Dasein). As he (1995) puts it:

The question concerning whether we human beings can transpose ourselves into other human beings does not ask anything, because it is not a possible question in the first place. It is meaningless, indeed a nonsensical question because it is fundamentally redundant. (205)

However, in *MM2*, which puts care ethics at the center, we argue that empathy, as a *felt awareness of self-in-relation to other*, is essential for ethical musicing and music education and, indeed, for a eudaimonic way of life.

Evan Thompson (2007) also challenges Heidegger’s views:

Heidegger (1995, 201–209) rejects the concept of empathy (*Einführung*) as an erroneous way of understanding human relations because it presupposes “that we must ‘feel our way into’ the other being in order to reach it. And this implies that we are ‘outside’ in the first place” (203). For Heidegger, “being-with” belongs to the essence of our existence, and we are always already “transposed” into one another, prior to any particular attempt to grasp the feelings of another. (477)

Furthermore, says Thompson (2007), Heidegger “loses touch with the affective and corporeal aspects of intersubjectivity” (477). Groves (2014) agrees with Thompson and argues that “genuine concern for others, in the feminist sense of care, cannot feature in Heidegger’s account of *Dasein* and *Mitdasein* [Being-with] . . . Hence any account of care which copies a Heideggerian reading of care has its work cut out linking self and other” (109).

Summing up, it seems plausible to suggest that any effort to connect Heidegger's Dasein and his concept of care with our understanding of praxis—that is, praxis as fueled by self-other interrelationships and the “care of oneself, others, and one's community” (MM2, 190)—needs further mapping out. We invite van der Schyff's perspective.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sonia Nieto, 2011, *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education*, New York: Pearson, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Sonia Nieto, 2011, *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education*, New York: Pearson, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Elliott (1995) summarizes his view of music by altering the word in three ways (p. 44): MUSIC denotes all the musical style-communities around the world (“music as a diverse human practice”); Music (capital M) refers to a specific musical style-community (e.g., bebop jazz, Baroque choral singing, urban blues, trip-hop, *ad infinitum*) that pivots on the distinctive forms of musicing and listening, and the specific purposes and values, and the specific pedagogies (and so on) shared by the people whose thoughts and actions define that style; thirdly, music (lowercase) denotes what the word commonly means: the sonic products or “works” of each form of Music.

<sup>4</sup> The concept of aesthetic cognitivism is explained by Philip Alperson: “What Should One Expect from a Philosophy of Music Education” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25, no. 3, Special Issue: Philosophy of Music and Music Education (Autumn, 1991), 215-242.

### About the Authors

**David J. Elliott** is Professor of Music and Music Education at New York University. Prior to joining NYU in 2002, he was Professor of Music Education at the University of Toronto for 28 years. He has also held visiting professorships at Northwestern University, University of North Texas, Indiana University, the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music, and the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance. He is co-author (with Marissa Silverman) of *Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education*, 2nd ed. (2015), author of *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education* (1995), editor of *Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues*, co-editor of *Community Music Today* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), co-editor of *Artistic Citizenship: Artistry, Social Responsibility, and Ethical Praxis* (in press), and author of numerous journal articles and invited book chapters. He has given more than 300 keynote papers and university lectures in 44 countries, and is an award-winning composer/arranger with several works published by Boosey & Hawkes/Hal Leonard.

**Marissa Silverman** is Associate Professor at the John J. Cali School of Music, Montclair State University, NJ. A Fulbright Scholar, she has published invited chapters in recent Oxford University Research Handbooks, as well as journal articles in the *International Journal of Music Education*, the *British Journal of Music Education*, *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, *Research Studies in Music Education*, *Music Education Research*, the *International Journal of Community Music*, and *Visions of Research in Music Education*. She is also co-author (with David Elliott) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education* (Oxford University Press, 2015); co-editor of *Community Music Today* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), and the forthcoming *Artistic Citizenship: Artistry, Social Responsibility, and Ethical Praxis* (Oxford University Press). As a secondary school teacher, she taught band, general music, and English literature at Long Island City High School (Queens, New York).