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Introduction: Praxialism Revisited

In a seminal article, Philip Alperson (1991) first argued that a proper philosophy of music and music education should account for all musical *praxis*. Nonetheless, his introduction of the concept of praxis into the philosophical discourse of music education seems to occasion either a yawn or hostility, despite having a much longer and more solid intellectual history and philosophical pedigree than aesthetic theory. And, in recent years, a "practice turn" in social theory (e.g., Schatzki et al. 2001) has stressed the critical importance of social practices and "communities of practice" (Wenger 1999) to culture and society.[1] However, since praxial accounts of music rely in part on social theory and empirical research, they may seem sacrilegious for those in music and music education who have succumbed to the sacralization of music, with its quasi-religious sounding aesthetic rationale and discourse.

In a recent paper Alperson (2010) reconfirms and further examines the idea of music as praxis, and clearly demonstrates that praxial philosophy is thriving in music education circles despite wishful thinking to the contrary by its detractors. His account once again affirms that understanding "music as a species of art" (176) leaves out much of what music has to offer; namely, that "music is produced and enjoyed in a wide range of contexts and circumstances in which music can be understood as having many different kinds of *functions*" (182; italics added), thereby reaffirming the praxial robustness of music.

> There are myriad instances of music—work songs, anthems, sport songs, dirges, religious chants, and so on—whose main function is not necessarily or perhaps even primarily tied to a concept of art at all, . . . Music plays an important role in the fabric of society, helping to foster personal identity and what has been called the "performance" of gender and race, regulate behavior, enforce compliance with social norms and mores, integrate society by marking significant events in the life of a community, induce behavior that may be disintegrative to society, enhance personal relationships, have a healing or restorative function, further particular political aims, raise awareness of oppressive conditions, and encouraging action to correct oppressive forces in society. (176)

Such common and diverse praxial contexts, in fact, are what occasion the creation of different musics to begin with, and their abundance provides unequivocal evidence of widespread

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appreciation and value. In fact, as he notes, the list of such functions for music "is indefinitely large" (Alperson 2010, 182). Yet these myriad functions have been disregarded, dismissed, denigrated, or denied by speculative-rationalist aesthetic theories[2] and by music education philosophy and practices predicated on a corresponding aesthetic rationale.

In comparison, he reminds us, praxial philosophy proceeds "inductively from the diversity of musical practices in particular cultures" (182). In other words, it takes its strength from the ample and varied *empirical* evidence of music's always functional values. Appreciation, thus, is seen in how, how often, where, and why music is *used*! Accordingly, Alperson advises that it is wise *not* to start philosophical inquiry

> by attempting a totalizing account of the philosophy of music education based on some essentialized notion of music but rather to look into some of the domains of musical meaning and value that music educators, music practitioners, and music lovers have thought worthy of focused attention (176).

Yet, despite his acknowledgement of these praxial "domains of musical meaning and value," he nonetheless *does* try to rationalize such meaning and value by recourse to a range of traditional aesthetic speculations that, in effect, attempt to make praxialism into what he seems to believe is a praxially "robust" form of 'music education as aesthetic education'.

Alperson's recent assertions thus afford an opportunity for me to focus on these traditional claims and, thereby, to critique some of the many typical, intractable problems inherent to aesthetics-based approaches to questions about music, musical value, and music education. His and other claims that have music dependent on "aesthetic this, aesthetic that, aesthetic whatever" also allow me to clarify that such speculations compromise the most useful advantages of the praxial orientation, and that praxialism most definitely is neither an impure nor a robust species of "aesthetic education"—that its premises are fundamentally different; that it offers a distinct and highly pragmatic alternative; and that it is fully robust on its own without recourse to aesthetic speculations and language. My analysis concludes with a consideration of the advantages and usefulness to music education of the distinctions offered by praxial theories.

Problems and Conundrums of Aesthetics

To begin with, Alperson's "robust praxialism" and the usual rationales for 'music education as aesthetic education' *are*, contrary to his admonition quoted above, fully predicated on a "totalizing account" that *is* based on an essentialized notion of music: that music's manifold

praxial values and functions rely on the appeal of music's aesthetic essence; on its many purported "aesthetic properties" (2010, *passim*). However, he fails even to attempt to define what he means by aesthetic properties, qualities, or experiences. Despite ample use of aesthetic qualifiers, he fails to distinguish aesthetic experiences ontologically from other experiences,[3] aesthetic properties epistemologically from non-aesthetic properties,[4] or aesthetic values from musical or praxial values.

This imprecision and other vagaries and conundrums are all too typical in such traditional aesthetic discourse—including aesthetic rationales for music education. This problem arises from the fact that "many philosophers are quite skeptical about the possibility of defining key aesthetic terms . . . or of devising theories that explain what is special or unique about them" (Eaton 1988, 10).[5] Indeed, "some people reject the possibility of defining or theorizing about key aesthetic concepts altogether" (7), while other philosophers openly admit that "the idea of aesthetics is controversial" (Feagin and Maynard 1997, 4). The problem arises because,

> as Wittgenstein discovered in his own philosophical investigations, the concept of "aesthetic experience" is not only difficult to define or express but may in fact be impossible to do so with logical language. (…) Finding any clear defining characteristic of it or any single feature that is shared by all the various descriptions has proved to be extremely difficult. As a result, during the twentieth century, particularly in the Anglo-American tradition, not only the value of aesthetic experience but also its very existence has been questioned. (Tomlin, in Shusterman and Tomlin 2008, 1[6])

Alperson is therefore obliged to confess that "there are many ways to construe the idea of aesthetic experience and aesthetic qualities" (2010, 184), thus conceding the *fallacy of equivocation* where the meaning of "aesthetic"[7] constantly shifts. Furthermore, his supposedly more robust account of praxialism, as conveyed in the terms of aesthetics-based essentialism, takes for granted as "a matter of fact" (184) the existence and uniqueness of aesthetic experience and, along with most advocates of aesthetic education, therefore exhibits the logical fallacy of *petitio principii*, or "begging the question" of its existence and nature.

Having thus taken for granted "aesthetic this and aesthetic that,"[8] Alperson accuses selected advocates of praxialism of an "anti-aesthetic turn" (183–84). To the contrary, however, praxial theories simply dispense with aesthetic theorizing as a necessary or useful basis for valuing music and musical experience and as a rationale for music education. Praxialism has been more corrective than anti-aesthetic: the literature of aesthetics is so vague and contradictory that its speculations simply make no musical or pedagogical

distinctions that that can serve as bases for action. Moreover, as shall be shown, philosophers themselves have expressed strong reservations about such aesthetic theories[9] and these criticisms have serious, negative implications for aesthetics-based accounts of music education.

First of all, acknowledging music as praxis recognizes that its values are tangibly *pragmatic*, not speculative matters of "aesthetics" as the term traditionally has been used to rationalize a hypothetical, transcendental, occult, ascetic ontology reserved for leisure time contemplation, according to the appropriate 'disinterested aesthetic attitude' practiced by aesthetes, connoisseurs, cognoscenti, or what aesthetician Theodore Gracyk calls "ideal" listeners and critics (Gracyk 2007, 94–99), and as somehow 'above' everyday life and distanced from human agency. By putting aside such speculations, regarding music as praxis allows a greater appreciation of how down-to-earth its values are and highlights its central value for all manner of socio-personal and socio-cultural use in daily life. A rationale and philosophical basis for music education is thus gained that is more robust for being fully understandable to students and the public, and more practical in informing and guiding the pedagogical and didactic actions of music teachers. In short, it is directly applicable and therefore more relevant and useful to the daily conduct of music teaching.

For praxialism, musical meaning, value, and appreciation are most clearly seen in the various functions that music always serves, with different musics sharing a 'family resemblance' collectively called "music." As Wittgenstein concludes, then, "we don't start from certain words," such as aesthetic terms and concepts, "but from certain occasions or activities" (Wittgenstein n.d., 3); that is, from musical praxis.

> The subject (Aesthetics) is very big and entirely misunderstood as far as I can see. (…) If you ask yourself how a child learns 'beautiful', 'fine', etc., you find it learns them roughly as interjections. . . . The word is taught as a substitute for a facial expression or a gesture. The gestures, tones of voice, etc., in this case are expressions of approval. What *makes* the word an interjection of approval? It is the game it appears in, not the form of words. (n.d. 1–2; italics original)

Moreover,

> in real life, when aesthetic judgments are made, aesthetic adjectives such as 'beautiful', 'fine', etc., play hardly any role at all. Are aesthetic adjectives used in a musical criticism? You say, "Look at this transition", or "The passage here is incoherent". . . . The words you use are more akin to 'right' and 'correct' (as these words are used in ordinary speech) than to 'beautiful' and 'lovely'. (3)

Accordingly, that someone "is an appreciator is not shown by the interjections he uses, but by the way he chooses, selects, etc. . . . This is what we call an appreciation" (7).

Secondly, praxialism dispenses with traditional aesthetics and its plentiful progeny because of the sheer proliferation and contradictions of such theorizing. The many terms, concepts, principles, and criteria of such aesthetic theories are exceedingly and endlessly contested. Thus, for example, even Alperson admits: "Consider the difference between the ways the term ["aesthetic"] is understood variously by writers such as Kant, Beardsley, Sibley, Dewey" and others (Alperson 2010, 184).[10] Various compendiums of aesthetic terminology, history, and concepts are required to contend with the interminable aporia in such theorizing[11] but mainly succeed in contributing even more to those conundrums.

In fact, Alperson recapitulates his own 1991 critique of aesthetic formalism, strict aesthetic formalism, enhanced aesthetic formalism, and aesthetic cognitivism (2010, 178–82). But, as noted earlier, other philosophers have also taken due note of the problems of aesthetics. For example, one writes:

> It would be hard to think of a subject more neurotically self-doubting than aesthetics. Claims that the subject is dreary, irrelevant, muddled and misunderstood have been a persistent theme, not only of recent, that is to say, post-war writers, but from the very start of the subject. Alas, these claims have all too frequently been justified. (Proudfoot 1988, 831)

Furthermore, aesthetics has also been criticized for an inability even to define its object of study properly (e.g., Mandoki 2007, 3) and for lacking appropriate philosophical substance and rigor. For example, the noted analytic philosopher J. O. Urmson writes that aesthetics "seems doomed either to pretentious vagueness or to an extreme poverty which makes it a poor step-sister to other main fields of philosophical inquiry" (Urmson, in Urmson and Rée 1989, 3). And pragmatist Richard Shusterman notes the "stubborn prejudice in mainstream analytic circles that aesthetics is only a marginal topic [that] often takes the form of applying lessons from more central branches of analytic philosophy (like epistemology, metaphysics, or philosophy of language or mind)" (Shusterman 2002, 15).[12]

> Analytic philosophy, whose ideal of clarity is often construed in terms of precise definition, has therefore not been particularly friendly to the notion of aesthetic experience, questioning its theoretical value and sometimes even challenging its very existence. (Shusterman 2008b, 80)

As to the *relevance* of such aesthetics, social theorist Christopher Small (1997) writes of having been asked to review Edward Lippman's (1992) history of Western musical aesthetics:

> The trouble was that most of it bore very little relation to anything I recognized in my own musical experience, as listener, or as performer, or as composer. . . . I just could

> not make myself believe that so universal, and so *concrete* a human practice as music should need such complicated and abstract explanations. (1; italics original)

Philosopher Kathleen Marie Higgins (1997) also doubts the usefulness to listeners of musicological and philosophical analyses:

> After all, musicologists tend to analyze musical structures, not experiences; and philosophers similarly tend toward structural accounts and concern with experiences only to the extent that they are dictated by structures. One might also doubt that scholars have much influence on listeners, who typically enjoy music unperturbed by intellectual analysis. (84)

And philosopher Michael Proudfoot notes a similar irrelevance:

> Recent contributions to aesthetics, then, have done little to dispel the charge of dreariness and irrelevance that has hung over the subject throughout its brief history. . . . Thus *aesthetic theory often seems false to our experience of art* . . . . Recently, such an inadequacy to our experience of art has been evident, a result, I believe, partly of aestheticians' preoccupation with what it is to treat something "aesthetically," and partly from *a concentration on works of art in isolation from the circumstances in which they are actually created or appreciated*. (Proudfoot 1988, 850; italics added)

In his recent paper, but unlike many others given to aesthetic premises, Alperson (2010) does strongly acknowledge the limitless praxial circumstances in and for which music is created and appreciated. Nonetheless, he claims that "it is possible to *save* the idea of aesthetic experience and the attitude appropriate to its contemplation by widening the range of what might be thought to be a candidate for appreciation from an aesthetic point of view" (Alperson 2010, 179; italics added).[13] Such attempts to "save the idea of aesthetic experience" by expanding what qualifies as "appreciation from an aesthetic point of view" demonstrate once again that the special ontological status of aesthetic experience and the 'disinterested aesthetic attitude' upon which it is said to depend are uncritically taken as givens that need no further elucidation, evidence, or warrant (184–85). As a result, we might wonder from whom or what, and why the idea of aesthetic experience is being saved? What does the hypothesis support that cannot be accounted for more clearly and usefully by other means? Is such salvationist rhetoric prompted by the earlier mentioned sacralization of music with its semi-religious, metaphysical overtones?

Aestheticist Obfuscations

Whatever the answers to these questions, such attempts to "save the idea of aesthetic experience" mistakenly overlook that arguments for the apodeictic status[14] of aesthetic experience try to pass off an *evaluative judgment* as an *analytic term* and thus commit a

category error: the logical fallacy of basing "an ontic category on an evaluative category" (Schaeffer 2000, 64).[15] Furthermore, as regards the "cognitive pretentions" of aesthetic theory (284), a *double category error* results: "on one hand its descriptive basis is not neutral but functionally dependent on a prior evaluation; on the other hand, contrary to an implicit presupposition, its evaluation is not reducible to a justifying description, since even while accepting the latter one can still deny the former" (Schaeffer 2000, 286). In regard to the resulting *circularity* of claims for an aesthetic ontology, the logical fallacy at stake "confuses art [defined in aesthetic terms] as a phenomenal object with art as value; it defines it by its [aesthetic] value and then valorizes it in return by means of its [aesthetic] definition" (64).[16] Moreover, as Wittgenstein warns, "an aesthetic explanation is not a causal explanation" (Wittgenstein, n.d., 18), thus denying claims that aesthetic properties (etc.) are the causes or sources of music's very obvious and widespread appeal (e.g., Alperson 2010, 184–85).

Irresolvable conundrums exist concerning whether the aesthetic object or work is phenomenal or physical; whether aesthetic meanings are pure or contextual;[17] and whether art engages morality or politics, or is neutral. Answers range from monist arguments for the intrinsic and stable nature of aesthetic meaning and value to pluralist arguments that aesthetic meaning is diverse or changing. Monistic views are dogmatic and ignore the diversity, historicity and situatedness of human interests, and aesthetic pluralism can devolve into the problematic relativism of "beauty is in the mind of the beholder."

Such typical and all-too plentiful arguments in the literature of aesthetics resemble the debates of medieval scholastics about how many angels can fit on the head of a pin. However, this does not prevent some music educators from extolling in their advocacy statements a rationale for music education based on exactly such noble-sounding aesthetic speculations and theories—no doubt because aesthetic values sound akin to other profound or 'serious' religious, ethical, and intellectual values. Of this tendency, philosopher John Passmore (1991) observes that "the attempt to find a certain kind of seriousness in art—a transcendental seriousness—has in fact issued in solemn idiocies on the part of critics and artists alike" (146). Even leading aesthetician Peter Kivy candidly admits that "art has taken on something like the place of religion in our lives" (2004, 11). The resulting *sacralization* of music and art mentioned earlier is widely acknowledged by cultural historians (e.g., Levine 1988, 85–168; Shiner 2001, 187–224), and its tenets are still widely reflected in music education discourse and rationales.[18]

Alperson (2010) seems to accept this sacralized status of music when, in trying to "save aesthetic experience" from "ideology critique" (185), he dismisses critics who resort to the "genetic fallacy" whereby "the origin of a thing may be taken as sufficient grounds to discredit the thing" (186). But if "the thing" in question is the very idea of aesthetic experience and the resulting ideology of aestheticism, the genesis of aesthetic theory and its discourse in the social conditions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries *are* extremely pertinent. And the many problems and obfuscations of that ideology and its *acontextualing* discourse (Meyer 1989, 167–83) are still recognizable in contemporary aesthetic rationales for music education.

To begin with, as the cultural historian Austin Harrington points out concerning the close relationship between "leisure, gentility and aesthetic autonomy" during the Enlightenment (including the Romantic Enlightenment; see Clive 1960), "ideas of aesthetic sensibility[19] have their *ideological* roots in codes of social behaviour in eighteenth-century civil society" (Harrington 2004, 89; italics added).

> These circumstances provide a context for discourses of sensibility among writers such as Kant, Burke, Hutcheson and Shaftesbury. They show how an ethos of delectation of non-utilitarian objects could have emerged out of a culture of connoisseurship among the members of the burgeoning commercial classes, anxious to refine and naturalize their wealth in land and art. They suggest an explanation for ideas of aesthetic autonomy in terms of interests of the upper strata of society in displays of status and charity as signs of refinement, gentility, polish and distinction. (90).

And these "discourses of sensibility" all took for granted the neo-Kantian 'disinterested aesthetic attitude' that Alperson feels the need to save; and the resulting ideology thus "insisted on the irrelevance of all origins, lineages, and contextual conditions whatsoever" (Meyer 1989, 167).

Furthermore, concerning German culture during the heyday of the Romantic era in music, a source of much of the musical canon:

> Both the aspirations of German musical culture and the defining boundaries that its advocates set for it were inseparably intertwined with the interest of music as a field of social practice, and the entire project hinged on the acceptance of music as essential to the cultivation of fully human individuals, the *Bildungsideal* so central to the self-identity of the German bourgeoisie. (Gramit 2002, 2)

Moreover, after noting that art formerly had been "explicitly tied to social purposes," Carroll (2008) explains that with the appearance of the bourgeoisie in the Enlightenment

> a new market for art dawned as well. The bourgeoisie used art as a way of enlivening the leisure time that was increasingly at their disposal (…) [and] sought beautiful

> things to brighten their lives . . . . Taste became a marker of social capital for the rising middle class. Art became more and more an object of bourgeois consumption. (…) The aesthetic theory of art neatly fit the bourgeois practices of connoisseurship and consumption, undoubtedly because, in this case, the theory and the practice were mutually informative. (152–53)

"And inasmuch as the standard concept of aesthetic experience is the cornerstone of any aesthetic theory of art, this concept of aesthetic experience became deeply embedded in the tradition" (Carroll 2008, 153).[20]

Furthermore, since "music is inevitably a social practice," then discourse "about music invokes and constructs social categories" and "musical statements are also social statements" (Gramit 2002, 3). Likewise, musical 'works' function as "texts within which social structures are encoded" and through which "social relationships are enacted" (Cook 2003, 213; see, also, Shepherd 1991). Thus the social structures and practices that have generated discourse about aesthetic experience, properties, and values (etc.) among both the Enlightenment bourgeoisie and contemporary champions of rationalist aesthetics *are* very germane to any critique of such theorizing! Indeed, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu is keen to point out

> the *antigenetic prejudice* leading to unconscious or overt refusal to seek the genesis of objective structures and internalized structures in individual or collective history [and] the *antifunctionalist prejudice*, which refuses to take account of the practical functions that symbolic systems [such as music] perform. (Bourdieu 1990, 295; italics added).

Moreover, regarding aesthetic experience in particular, Bourdieu writes of the aesthetician's

> ambition of capturing a transhistoric or an ahistoric essence. The pure thinker, by taking as the subject of reflection his or her own experience—the experience of a cultured person from a certain social milieu—but without focusing on the historicity of that reflection and the historicity of the object to which it is applied . . . , unwittingly establishes this singular experience as a transhistorical norm for every aesthetic perception. Now this experience . . . is itself an institution which is the product of historical invention and whose *raison d'être* can be reassessed only through an analysis which is itself properly historical. (1993, 255)

As Higgins (1997) notes, then, "treating the terms in which music is analyzed as 'historically and ideologically neutral' . . . has involved the equation of 'music' with 'musical works'," has failed to focus " 'on the concept of music in as broad a sense as it can be understood'," (88; quoting Goehr 1992, 78, 79–80)—viz., on music as praxis—focusing instead on purely "musical 'objectivity'" (89–93), and thus "has distorted the value of idiosyncratic (i.e., nonuniversal) musical responses and the importance of personal engagement with music" (Higgins 1997, 98). These various conclusions decisively invalidate attempts to dismiss the

relevance of the historical and thus social genesis of the idea of aesthetic experience and its 'disinterested aesthetic attitude', and they account for the various apologias frequently marshaled to save the ideology and its rationalist pretensions when it is challenged.

Given (a) the abundant confusion surrounding the very term "aesthetic" and its various rationalizations and speculative aporia, (b) the sheer variety and contradictions of such aesthetic theorizing, (c) the lack of philosophical background on the part of musicians and music teachers that often leads to important misunderstandings of aesthetic theory[21] and its claims, (d) the conflicting philosophies of education entailed by different aesthetic theories (see, e.g., Schwadron 1967, 69–121) and (e) the endless perplexities of translating the ambiguities of such aesthetic theories into tangible and practicable teaching practices (see, e.g., Jorgensen, 2001[22])—all these problems conspire against predictable and pragmatic pedagogical results. Notwithstanding the Babel of uninformed, unclear, bandwagon discourse and aporia about aesthetic this and that, Bennett Reimer has asserted that the aesthetic paradigm "provides coherence and longevity" (1989b, 26) for educators! However, the problems just cited have instead led to a growing legitimation crisis that has music educators increasingly defending or justifying music education to the public.[23]

Nonetheless, Alperson claims that what he labels "the 'anti-aesthetic' turn" of praxialism "diminishes the explanatory reach of the praxialist approach to music education" and is inconsistent with what *he* mistakes to be "the praxial program" (Alperson 2010, 172)—as though such a singular 'program' exists among various paraxial theorists. However, as should now be clear, the contested conundrums of aesthetics not only are *not* needed to account for music's abundant and widespread praxial appeal and benefits; collectively these copious aporia risk an *obscurum per obscurius*[24] that greatly obfuscates the value of music and the benefits of school music education, and misleads music educators.

As Wayne Bowman, one of the praxialists Alperson accuses of being anti-aesthetic (2010, 183–84), notes, "historically, the notion that musical experience should be considered a subset of what is called 'aesthetic experience' " has figured prominently in *advocacy rationales* for school music education.[25] However, he adds, noble-sounding references to aesthetic experience depended on an *ambiguity* that permitted the term "aesthetic" to be used "wherever an affirmative adjective was needed: *aesthetic this, aesthetic that, aesthetic whatever*" (italics added). Because of the use of the term "to mean so many contrary things," he argues that its meaning is invariably unclear, that it fails to add "something indispensible

to the point being made," and that "musical" can usually be substituted for "aesthetic" to the clearest effect. He makes two further points. First,

> the acceptance of the aesthetic norms of modern theory tends to marginalize significant realms of musical practice that do not conform to its defining characteristics . . . : [and] it distorts perception and understanding of what people are doing when they engage in music as musicians. It tends to subordinate musical action to works or pieces, reducing the point of musical engagement to faithful production of consumable, i.e., listenable artifacts. As a receptive stance, the aesthetic orientation to music neglects the importance of musical agency; and, as a formally-oriented stance, it tends to neglect in musical experience dimensions that contribute importantly even to the value of the traditional canon. (2010, personal communication)

And, secondly:

> Music education conceived as aesthetic education necessarily neglects, and even excludes, critical dimensions of music-making as a mode of human action or praxis. The focus of aesthetically conceived music education is pieces rather than events; entities rather than actions; properties rather than uses; listening rather than making. Music considered as praxis—as a form of practical knowledge and a mode of human action—embraces many things of instructional significance that aesthetic theory has been deliberately crafted to exclude. (2010, personal communication)

Regarding the supposed "anti-aesthetic turn," Bowman notes further that

> in order to assume that stance, one would have to define what "aesthetic" means, and then argue against its relevance for music. My biggest concerns stem precisely from the term's meaninglessness. How can I be anti- something whose existence is dubious? I'm not so much anti-aesthetic as anti- the notion that "aesthetic" names something necessary and sufficient to musical experience, something useful in its description, something that contributes in important ways to processes of music education. We can talk, think, and act more clearly as music educators if we use other language. Aesthetic based accounts of music and rationales for music education are infinitely more trouble than they're worth. (2010–11, personal communication)

Alperson (2010, 184–90) and like-minded music educators appear to take for granted that, without reference to the profound-sounding language of "aesthetic this, aesthetic that, aesthetic whatever," the ample affective attractions and pragmatic efficacy of music and musicking cannot be adequately explained; and that the rationalization of an underlying aesthetic essentialism somehow makes praxial theories more robust. However, and to the contrary, the ungrounded abstractions, speculations, aporetic dead-ends, and the circularity of such aesthetic theorizing actually distract from a proper and full recognition of music's praxial fecundity and therefore deflect attention from music's pragmatic value as personal and social praxis.

Affect and Anesthesia

Aesthetic speculations and abstractions are simply not needed to account for music's obvious affective appeal and for its manifold praxial functions. They not only obfuscate matters, they risk *an*esthetizing musical experience. For example, Schopenhauer wrote that music

> does not . . . express this or that particular or definite joy, this or that sorrow or pain, or horror, or delight, or merriment, or peace of mind; but joy, sorrow, pain, horror, delight, merriment, peace of mind *themselves*, to a certain extent in the abstract, their essential nature, without accessories and therefore without their motives. (Schopenhauer 1883, 338; italics original)

Contemporary aesthetic accounts of 'feeling' (expression, emotion, etc.) in music continue to advance similar *cognitivist* notions. For example, in an article devoted to Susanne Langer (a primary influence on Reimer's longstanding advocacy of music as aesthetically educative; e.g., 1989a, 2004), Mary J. Reichling claims that "the feeling expressed by the music, the *conception* of a feeling, the feeling that Langer identifies as that which one does not actually undergo but recognizes more objectively" (2004, 22; italics added) involves "symbolic expression of ideas or images" that have a close "logical form" or "logical similarity" (23) to actual feelings-felt.

In accordance with such anesthetizing of actual feeling, one of the few points on which many rationalist aestheticians tend to share some agreement is the positing of the oft-mentioned 'aesthetic attitude'[26] that requires "disinterested and sympathetic attention to and contemplation of an object [or musical work] for its own sake" (Carroll 2008, 148[27]). Consequently, rather than music's relation to personal experiences and emotions, individual works are the focus of attention (Hospers 1972, 37) and are the source of the supposedly timeless and impersonal, intellectual, *an*aesthetic values to be contemplated in their abstract 'essence'. Personal involvement or personalizing of response that is *for* the self—such as the enjoyment of music for "personal reveries" (Hospers 1972, 37), emotional catharsis, or affective delight (especially 'visceral' responses)—is deprecated as aesthetically or intellectually unseemly.[28]

Aesthetic formalism in particular is rife with such distancing of music from life, 'felt' emotion, affect, and socio-political agency; it focuses, instead, on formal structures (see, e.g., Alperson 2010, 179; Higgins 1997). Theories of music's expressiveness, on the other hand, are equally beset with endless confusion about the exact nature and different possible sources of supposedly "aesthetic emotions" (see, e.g., Gaut and Lopes 2002; Juslin and Sloboda

2001; Kivy 2004).[29] Thus, and again, we no more need the terms and speculative concepts of aesthetic theorizing to account for music's perfectly evident affective appeal (its so-called "attensiveness"[30]), or for its consequent effectiveness in wide range of socio-musical practices, any more than we do for the appeal of food—although the aesthetician Carolyn Korsmeyer has done just that (1999; 2008).[31]

Regarding music's potent affective attractions, the cognitive psychologist Steven Pinker has famously asserted that "music is auditory cheesecake" (Pinker 1999, 534), an ear-candy that stimulates the brain's pleasure zones and generates "ersatz emotion" (537). However, more recent neuro-cognitive research finds that the stronger the *musical* pleasure experienced,

> the stronger the areas of the brain . . . that play a part in general emotional and motivational activity were activated. It could be inferred that there is no specific brain mechanism or structure for musical pleasure or musical emotions, but that there is something very similar in all emotional processes independently of the sense modality or the cause of such processes. (Tervaniemi 2009; quoted in, and translated by Naukkarinen 2010, 13).

David Elliott—another praxial theorist Alperson accuses of being anti-aesthetic (2010, 183–84)—has therefore been concerned (among other factors) to overcome the anesthesia often associated with aesthetics by leading philosophers[32] and the resultant distancing of "aesthetic emotion" from "general" emotional experience mentioned just above. The traditional argument in aesthetics—that "aesthetic emotion" is somehow cerebral and empty of bodily feelings and thus "ascetic" (Shusterman 2000b, 20, 182), or that forms of feeling are presented for *aesthetic cognition*[33]—is what Elliott seeks to overcome in focusing educationally on music's affective potential. Thus, when quoting Elliott's argument that "musical experiences are not rightly conceived of (or engaged in) as aesthetic experiences" (2010, 183; citing Elliott 1995, 124)," Alperson gives the misimpression that Elliott is *denying* music's affective appeal when it is precisely overcoming the anesthesia of aesthetic asceticism that is Elliott's concern. Thus, Elliott is at great pains to detail the "flow," emotion, affect, and pleasure that arise from musical experience (1995[34]).

> The musical designs and performances of many (but not all) musical works are rightly heard as being expressive of specific emotions (e.g., musical expressions of sadness or happiness) and/or musical expressions of such broad affective patterns as tension and release, conflict and resolution, and so on. Indeed, making and listening for musical expressions of emotion are eminently musical things to do, depending on the musical practice and work involved. (Elliott 2005, 96)

He concludes "that an important value of music making and listening inheres in the human use of musical patterns for emotionally expressive purposes" (Elliot 2005, 100).

Elliott's supposed anti-aesthetics, then, attempts to restore to *musical* experience the affective dimension that aesthetic formalists are ideologically predisposed to deny and that expression theorists debate interminably. Regarding music education, Elliott concludes that

> music teachers ought to make a central place for engaging students in listening *for*, reflecting on interpreting, performing, and creating musical works that are expressive of emotions. (…) Indeed, learning to make and hear musical expressions of emotions is not something that happens automatically for all students. We must teach-*for* this kind of awareness, ability, and sensitivity. (2005, 102; italics original)[35]

Thus Elliott's emphasis on the emotive and "flow" aspects of music and embodied musical experience is hardly lacking in robustness and does not rely on abstract speculations about aesthetic this and that.

Aesthesis and 'Making Sense' of Music

What seems to be at stake, then, is the attempt by Alperson and like-minded aestheticians and music educators to "save" speculations about aesthetic experience by proposing that *expressive terms* are evidence of "aesthetic this and that." To this end, then, Alperson asks if listeners are not delighted

> in the sheer sensuousness of musical sounds, for example, the deep richness of Johnny Hartman's voice, Glenn Gould's crisp precision, the sonorities of the Kronos Quartet, the impish improvisations of Ella Fitzgerald, the profound sorrow of Barber's *Adagio for Strings*? (Alperson 2010, 185)

He presumes to offer these adjectives as "an ostensive argument" for the "matter of fact" status (184) of aesthetic experience—a seriously specious philosophical strategy. First of all, he fails to demonstrate or warrant how "sensuousness," "richness," "crisp precision" and "profound sorrow" (etc.)—all perfectly ordinary expressions—are ostensive (i.e., empirical) evidence of aesthetic experience or aesthetic properties.[36] And, as the philosopher Pentti Määttänen writes of claims of this kind,

> there is no empirical way to examine the nature of this experience. One says: "Oh, I have a wonderful feeling when listening to this piece of music," and another one says" "Yeah, me too." And that is all there is to the mystery (Määttänen 2003a, 66).[37]

Instead, the qualia that Alperson wants to denote as "aesthetic" are properly matters of *aesthesis*, the "judgment of sense" of ancient Greece (Summers 1987; Porter 2010).

In her exhaustive critique of "the labyrinths of aesthetics," the artist and philosopher Katya Mandoki (2007; 1–42) begins with what Alperson only admits in his concluding

sentences to be the (still) unresolved concern of philosophical aesthetics (Alperson 2010, 190[38]): the question of defining the object of analysis.

> The term "aesthetic" has been used to designate an experience, the quality of an object, a feeling of pleasure, classicism in art, a judgment of taste, the capacity of perception, a value, an attitude, the theory of art, the doctrine of beauty, a state of the spirit, contemplative receptivity, an emotion, an intention, a way of life, the faculty of sensibility, a branch of philosophy, a type of subjectivity, the merit of certain forms, or an act of expression. What this large heterogeneous list clearly indicates is that *aesthetics has not been able to define its object*. In some cases it refers to certain characteristics of the subjects or effects on them. In others, it deals with the qualities of the object, the qualities of an act, or the analysis of a social practice such as art . . . (Mandoki 2007, 3; italics added[39])

In avoiding and overcoming the various "problems," "fetishes," "myths," and "fears" of aesthetics (1–42), Mandoki instead undertakes an extensive analysis of the phenomenology of *aesthesis*.[40] She begins by *re-defining aesthetics* as the study of "the condition of aesthesis" (45).[41]

> Aesthesis refers to the particular nature of subjectivity that makes it sensitive, receptive, or porous to its environment. Subjectivity implies sensibility. (…) What is worth exploring here are not those privileged moments denominated "aesthetic experiences" but this condition of being alive that consists of openness and permeability to the world. (48)

Rather than the abstractions and speculations of aesthetic asceticism, then, she returns to the root meaning of aisthesis as sense perception: as experience, knowledge, and cognition linked to the senses, to sensation, and to the range of terms

> which exhibit family resemblances with the common root "*sen*" all of which are related to the basic concept of sensibility: *sen*timent, *sen*sation, *sen*sual, *sen*sitive, *sen*sible, *sen*tient, *sen*sorial, *sen*sational, *sen*suous, (common) *sense*, *sense* as meaning, *sense* as reason, *sens*ing as feeling, and so on. (46; italics original)

Indeed, at one time the term "aesthesics" was proposed as the study of feeling (Williams 1976, 33) and the symbolist poet Paul Valery (1945) coined the term "esthesic" to reassert the primacy of feeling that had been anesthetized by rationalist aestheticism.

Such recourse to aisthesis and aisthesic experience readily accounts for the appeal of music and its many praxial benefits.[42] Moreover, what is novel and helpful about Mandoki's account is her use of the expression "latching-on" as a metaphor for the powerful effects and affects of aisthesis. Her reference is to "the act of *latching-on* to the nipple and thriving from it. Instead of mystic 'contemplation' that cancels the somatic condition of the subject," Mandoki (2007) extends "this primordial archetype of bonding between mother and child" (67) to the strong affective appeal of certain heightened experiences in daily life.[43] Such latching-on,

she argues, "sharpens one or several senses simultaneously: hearing is tuned more than any other sense when we are captivated by music" for instance, and "there is a certain orality, metaphorically speaking, in aesthesis when we nourish ourselves through the world" (67). In consequence,

> the notion of "disinterested delight" [viz., the 'aesthetic attitude'] so common in aesthetic theory, is denied by the concrete experience of the vehement appetite in aesthesis. Let us imagine for a moment what our life would be like without any opportunity for *latching-on*, . . . (…) [N]ot only since we are born but also when we wake up every morning, moment by moment we seek objects for *latching-on*. (68)

In sum, "the term *latching-on* implies fascination, seduction, impetus, nutrition, and appetite, more closely related to the phenomenon that interests us" (68) and entails a "vital energy" (63–64) that is decidedly the antithesis of a 'disinterested aesthetic attitude' (68). Thus, Mandoki's metaphor of aisthesis as latching-on effectively explains the affective attractions of music that promote its abundant praxial uses, and does so without recourse to metaphysical speculations or aesthetic essentialism.

Moreover, she acknowledges "collective *latching-on*" (70), thus accounting for the appeal and functionality of music in all manner of social settings, from concert halls to churches, and thus for the potent role of music as a vital social praxis. Music is, as the cognitive psychologist William Benzon describes, "a medium through which individual brains are coupled together in shared activity" via "interactional synchrony" (Benzon 2001, 23, 28). Collective latching-on thus accounts for "affective being together" (Mandoki, 70[44]) through music:

> For individuals sharing a common musical culture, there is a strong and systematic similarity between the tonal flow of music and its neurophysiological substrates that allows a tight coupling between the brains of those individuals. While participating in the music those individuals constitute a community of sympathy. (Benzon 2001, 44)[45]

Mandoki's concept of latching-on is also instructive concerning the highly dubious topic of "aesthetic properties." She writes that the "most deep-rooted and problem-ridden fetish of aesthetics" is that "the term 'aesthetic object' [and the putative aesthetic properties thereof] is already an oxymoron since the aesthetic[46] denotes, by definition and etymology, the capacity to perceive, appreciate, enjoy, and experience" (10). Using the same reasoning and recourse to aisthesis, we may therefore wonder what is named or identified by frequent references to aesthetic properties and qualities? If such references only assert that some qualia are more *musically* salient, why refer to them as "aesthetic" rather than as "musical"?

Alperson offers no answer and, along with like-minded aesthetic ideologues, simply takes aesthetic experience, properties, and related qualities and values (etc.) for granted (2010, 184–85). However, in another connection he approvingly cites Theodore Gracyk (188) but not Gracyk's *Listening to Popular Music* (2007). In that study Gracyk argues that popular music is aesthetic (but seems non-committal on whether or not it is art) and includes an entire chapter (73–99) on aesthetic properties that might help explain the frequent references Alperson and others make to such properties.[47]

To begin with, Gracyk notes that "aesthetic *terms* pick out aesthetic properties" (77; italics added), and that "aesthetic terms are defined as terms used to support an aesthetic *evaluation*, requiring an appreciative stance toward an experience. On this approach, aesthetic terms support evaluations without recourse to [aesthetic] principles" (77; italics added).[48] However, Gracyk denies that evaluating music thus requires technical aesthetic terminology and argues only that "evaluating music requires learned habits of listening" (77).[49]

Gracyk goes on to stipulate that "aesthetic properties" (examples of which he gives as "expressive power, formal ugliness, and monotony"—all non-technical expressions[50]) "are contextually relative to what the listener finds salient, which depends on a disposition to regard specific features as standard" (84). Why these properties need description in aesthetic terms is again left unexplained: a disposition that regards salient "features" of certain musics "as standard" for those musics is what 'standards' of musicianship, artistry, and technique (etc.) involve as they are *typically expressed in the non-aesthetic terminology of those musical practices* (and not even necessarily in technical musical terms). However, Gracyk concludes that the need to attend to whatever is salient "is a principle for evaluating listeners, not music" (85)!

The issue of aesthetic properties is further complicated by the admission that competent listeners do not have the same evaluative responses each time they listen to the same music and that competent listeners do not necessarily share evaluative responses (86). But if equally competent listeners have contrasting or conflicting judgments, then, according to Gracyk, they must be using different aesthetic *principles* (86). However, he cautions:

> The basic problem with appeals to [aesthetic] principles is that evaluation becomes a two-step procedure: we plug salient information into a principle, then the principle leads us to our verdict about the object of evaluation. Someone hears the music and notices various features, then "weighs" the overall value. (87)

"So," he concludes, "the most obvious problem with [aesthetic] principles is that the resulting evaluation is not necessarily an aesthetic one" because "evaluation can be separated from the experience of what is being evaluated" (87). Further complications arise from his assertion that "many aesthetic properties are only apparent when the experience is directed by extramusical knowledge" (93)—such as historical information (97)—possessed by the ideal listener or critic. However, after detailing the "serious problems with postulating an ideal listener" (99), Gracyk concludes his entire twenty-six page chapter on aesthetic properties and principles with recourse to a praxial account:

> Rather than endorse the one best response (whichever conforms to evaluative principles, or the response of the ideal critic), we should explore ways that different musical categories serve different nonmusical *functions*. Because a single musical performance or musical work can belong to many different musical categories, different aesthetic properties will emerge in different functional [i.e. praxial] contexts. (99; italics added)

Thus it appears warranted to conclude that aesthetic properties are actually perceptual or attensive *musical* features, aspects, or qualities that are salient for listeners according to their familiarity with different musics and depending on the unique particulars of situated listening contexts. This, is, of course, exactly what praxial theories address when stressing the different kinds of musicianship, artistry, and listenership that distinguish particular musical practices and account for their pragmatic effectiveness in the situations that elicit them!

As Mandoki points out, then, the "battle to prove the existence of aesthetic aspects or qualities [i.e., properties] would perhaps have a better prognosis if fought instead for artistic (rather than aesthetic) aspects, and that would consist in what spectators perceive . . . " (24)—in the present case, *musical* qualities. Concerning such aspects and qualities:

> Aspects, like percepts and concepts, are not things in themselves or entities objectively existing in the world, but a linguistic conversion of verbs into nouns, namely, of the action of "aspecting" (like percepts of perceiving and "concepts" of conceptualizing). In other words, they are perceptual or conceptual constructs which result from an act of perception or conceptualization. (…) Equally, a "quality" is the substantivation of the act of qualifying. This action performed by the subject upon the object has gradually been reified, creating the illusion that the naïve realists take for reality; namely the existence of aspects, concepts and percepts (or qualities [or properties]) independently from the subject. As time goes by, reified terms seem "to create" a strange effect of authority and independent existence. (25)

The "authority and independent existence" of the purported aesthetic properties upon which aesthetic experience is claimed to rely is thereby denied, and references to *musical* salience are more informative and educationally appropriate. In sum, the speculations of aesthetic

theorizing are simply not needed to account for music, musical experience, and music's praxial value, or as a basis for music education philosophy, curriculum, and praxis.

Praxis Redux

The term "practice" is often used as a synonym for "praxis." However, useful philosophical distinctions can be made between the two terms (e.g., Vazquez 1977; Balaban 1990). First, reference to a "practice" can focus on any skilled undertaking. While skills are central to creating and performing music, it is less clear that a recognized body of skills exists as regards teaching. And concerning such skills, musicians and music teachers rarely have the scholarly background needed to understand aesthetic theorizing or its (im)practicability for teaching. Oddly, while critics wrongly characterize praxial theory as being "for performers only" (Reimer 1996), the aesthetic rationale for music education (at least in North America) has led performance ensembles to become the tail-wagging-the-dog of school music education on the taken for granted assumption that just performing music is aesthetically educative. The obvious risk, then, is that music teachers can seize upon the aesthetic rationale in order to allow them to continue what they already prefer to do: to enjoy "performing" their ensembles and classes.

Secondly, the word "practice" often can apply to *mindless* habits; habits based on status quo routines, traditions, and customs. Consequently, descriptions of music education practices can indiscriminately identify routines that lack professional or ethical rigor.[51] Similarly, customary performance practices can be gratuitously 'standardized' by pedagogies to a degree that threatens to negate the very notion of musical artistry and creativity.

In contrast, the third sense of "practice" is akin to the *mindful* habits of pragmatism: that when past habits are inadequate to the uniquely situated new problems that teachers typically face, a mindful process begins that leads to a new solution.[52] This problem-solving cycle is reprised when formerly successful habits are again and again challenged by the demands of ever-new teaching decisions. Unfortunately, aesthetic speculations and certain other premises—notably, *Perrenialism* in educational philosophy[53]—disincline many music teachers from such problematizing of teaching and thus from appropriate *reflective practice*. Most music teaching, then, is typically regarded as 'good enough' if it uses 'good methods' (as pronounced in advance of their use and any observable benefits) and 'good music'.

"Praxis" also has three meanings. First, the word is most typically translated from Greek *not* as "practice" but as "action" (Peters 1967, 163; Vazquez 1977, 1–2), and thus it is centrally involved in the *action theory* of philosophy, social theory, and social science.[54] In this regard, actions that follow from an intentional choice—in Greek, *proairesis* (Peters 1967, 163)—fall within both the practical and ethical spheres. Following Aristotle, for example, 'right ends' are *first* decided on by philosophy according to both ethical and pragmatic criteria and, *thereafter*, 'right means' decided by intellectual virtues that promote appropriate diagnosis and analysis of the practical needs at hand (Aristotle 1988, 154–68).[55] Accordingly, curriculum is properly a philosophical concern that deals with the important question of value: what, of all that can be taught, is most worth teaching?

The absence of philosophically warranted 'right ends' too often leads to all manner of "methodolatry" (Regelski 2002) in pursuit of routinized, taken-for-granted ends and values. Among these are the sacralizing aesthetic rationales to which many music teachers unwittingly subscribe. If the 'right ends' supposedly at stake are simply 'having' aesthetic experiences, this allows teachers to qualify their facilitating of *any* musical experience (or 'activity') as 'good teaching' on the assumption that all such musical experiences are automatically aesthetic. And, once again, rather than the erroneous claim that praxial music education is "for performers only" (Reimer 1996), praxis is instead properly understood as *any* "doing" or "action" (Aristotle 1988, 142–43) undertaken on behalf of or by people (in the case of teaching, students; in other praxis, serving the human needs at stake). In contrast, a singular focus on performance is the domain of *techne* and its ethical activity of *poiesis*, or 'excellent making' (Aristotle 1988, 141–42; Vazquez 1977, 1, 262–63). Simply put, then, focusing on praxis emphasizes *all* forms of "musicking" (Small 1998), not just performances dominated by technical standards. Thus, students are empowered to avail themselves of more of the considerable praxial potentials for musicking in a society.

One such potential involves the neo-Marxian concept of praxis as action undertaken in and on one's lifeworld to improve it for one's self and, by extension, for others (see, e.g., Bernstein 1971; Vazquez 1977). Thus conceived, music is a source of personal and social *agency*. It is therefore recognized by sociologists and other social theorists for its important role in *performing sociality* and for creating socio-musical worlds (Blaukopf 1992; DeNora 2000; Martin 1995, 2006; Shepherd 1991).[56] Thus understood, *culture itself is praxis*!

> [T]he concept of culture, whatever its specific elaborations, belongs with the family of terms standing for the human praxis. (…) The concept of culture, therefore, transcends the immediate, naïve datum of private experience (94-95) [and] the community rather than mankind . . . is therefore the medium and bearer of praxis. (Bauman 1999, 95).

Culture, in this regard, involves the *creativity* "of active assimilation of the universe, of imposing on the chaotic world the ordering structure of the human intelligent action—the idea built irremovably into the notion of praxis" (95).[57] Thus, praxis involves "the freedom to change the human condition" (95), and it creates or engages the network of social practices by which chaos is turned into order or that replaces one order with another.[58] Social activities (such as music) and institutions of all kinds (such as music education), then, are "multi-faceted and multi-leveled human praxis" (61) at work in and on the lifeworld and are both structured by and structuring of it (85–144).

The important role for music in this understanding of culture as praxis is among the strongest reasons for acknowledging its powerful and key role in everyday life and its importance in education; a down-to-earth role that is for the most part ignored, downplayed, or denigrated by the speculations of conventional aesthetic theorizing and rationales for music education. Directly put, on a daily basis the praxis of music is an important defining and shaping ingredient of any culture or society. The other-worldly speculations of rationalist aesthetics and of aestheticist rationales and advocacy simply divert musicians and music educators from this realization and from a praxially robust pragmatic role in that sociocultural defining and shaping.

Finally, but again in a philosophical sense, praxis also invokes ethical criteria (Peters 1967, 163). Its active form is *phronesis*, a concept that—in conjunction with *proairesis*—focuses on the need for ethical foresight and prudence. When understood simply as a "practice," this ethical dimension of teaching is altogether obscured. Professional ethics in teaching is a rather new scholarly field, however, and we can hope that teaching—including music teaching—will someday escape the radical relativism that all teaching is ethically 'good enough' (see ACT, forthcoming 2012; Regelski, forthcoming 2012).

The primary advantage of the concept of praxis for music education, unlike the vagaries of aesthetic rationales and legitimations, is its direct practical application both to music and to teaching. First of all, instead of being regarded merely as a subset—one among many instantiations—of aesthetic experience, music is instead regarded as praxis, with all of

the down-to-earth socio-cultural values pointed to by social science, social theory, and philosophy. These values go well beyond the ideal, 'disinterested' listener posited by orthodox aesthetic theory and, instead, connect with the 'social mind' identified by pragmatists Dewey, Peirce, and Mead (see, e.g., Mead [1934] 1967). And the capacity for collective synchrony and "latching-on" is thus recognized—indeed, it is highlighted and extolled—by praxial theory, but typically forsworn by rationalist aesthetics with its single-minded paradigm of solitary mentation and its denial of the social constitution and nature of consciousness itself.[59] Furthermore, music teaching as praxis focuses on the ethical requirements of the profession. Professional accountability therefore becomes a matter not of just 'right ends' stipulated only in musical terms but also in terms of ethical criteria; and it therefore stresses the need for a long-term contribution of music education to a range of human values, not the least of which is the value of a life well-lived through music.

No: praxial theories of music and music education not only do not need aesthetic speculations to be robust; they are vastly more robust without them. They are more robustly effective without the hocus-pocus of the aesthetic ghost in the machine.[60] They restore music teachers to what they do best, which is to educate *musically*! Teachers are thus not side-tracked by the conflicting speculations, vagaries, and rationalist/rationalizing abstractions of aesthetics and can instead focus on *music*, understood in the distinctive musical terms and 'standards' of its different practices. Music is thus regarded as even more profound, more relevant, and more important personally and socio-culturally for being down-to-earth in its values and virtues. In accordance, then, with Noël Carroll's *Beyond Aesthetics* (2001), and its Aristotelian "favoring of practice over theory,"[61] music and music education should continue to embrace and advance a post-aesthetic paradigm—a praxial one that, unencumbered by the unnecessary ballast of "aesthetic this, aesthetic that, aesthetic whatever," can lead in freshly beneficial and newly emerging praxial directions.

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Notes

[1] The 'music world', of which music education is one part, is such an extended community. On the "practice turn" in contemporary social theory see, e.g., Bauman 1999; Bourdieu 1993, 1990; de Certeau 1988; Schatzki, Cetina, and Von Savigny 2001; Schatzki 2002; Tuomela 2002.

[2] Herein, references to traditional or orthodox "aesthetics" are to speculative Western aesthetic theories that, in various analytic and neo-Kantian traditions, have sought to rationalize *aisthesis*—the basis of knowledge in sensation—which, throughout philosophical history, was deemed unreliable in comparison to knowledge reached through reason. Such aesthetic theorizing has speculated in rational terms on musical experience and value and has advanced a contemplative, intellectualized, and often cognitivist stance towards music and its appreciation that has ignored, rejected, or diminished music's clearly praxial value for individuals and society. Typically it has been used in defining art, a social praxis that it traditionally has argued exists to give rise to aesthetic experience and that, using circular thinking, is thus warranted in aesthetic terms. Philosophers in the traditions of pragmatism (e.g., Dewey [1934] 1980; Shusterman 2008a), phenomenology (e.g., Berleant 2002, 2010), "everyday aesthetics" (e.g., Mandoki 2007; Saito 2007) and philosophers of art concerned to critique, deny, or displace speculative-rational aesthetics (e.g., see n. 9) are not critiqued in the account presented here: instead, their own critical analyses of orthodox aesthetic speculations are often cited against it. In general, rationalist philosophy has attempted to reach 'truth' about, or to justify the world *as it is*. Philosophies that seek to *transform* the world are less concerned with understanding or explaining the world as it is and instead stress

the creative, constituting role, and pragmatic effects of human agency and praxis in and on the ever-changing world. See, e.g., Bauman 1999, Joas 1996, Vasquez 1977. Herein, as well, "praxialism" will be used as a general reference to praxial theorizing that is, in fact, not the monolithic or singular "program" Alperson claims (2010, 172) and others assume it to be.

[3] Or from *musical* experiences.

[4] Or from *musical* properties.

[5] For just such a dubious attempt to define aesthetic experience analytically and distinguish its ontology from other experiences, see Reimer 1989a, 100–10.

[6] All too typically, then, the contributors to this volume disagree extensively on key points and terms.

[7] And related concepts about aesthetic experience, qualities, properties, principles, meanings, values: the "aesthetic this, aesthetic that, aesthetic whatever" (Bowman 2010, personal communication) in the title of this paper.

[8] "Aesthetic this and aesthetic that" is the title of a chapter in Sparshott (1982, 467–86) concerning the extent to which "aesthetic" gets stretched into an all-purpose qualifier. Interestingly, Alperson studied with Sparshott.

[9] The so-called "anti-aesthetics" literature, by whatever name, is large and rapidly growing. Alperson and proponents of aesthetic rationales for music education give no acknowledgement of this contrarian, often postmodernist, literature and make the accusation of "anti-aesthetic" seem blasphemous. For a sample of such critiques, see: Carroll 2001, Dixon 1995, Foster [1983] 1985, Krims 1998, Rancière 2009, Schaeffer 2000, and Sim 1992. Mandoki's 2007 extensive critique of "the labyrinths of aesthetics" is particularly damaging (1–71). Her appraisal and alternative is discussed below.

[10] Again, this again amounts to the fallacy of equivocation mentioned earlier. To this list of authors can be added those more recently collected in Shusterman and Tomlin 2008 and those included in the special issue of *Philosophy of Music Education Review* (12, no. 1, 2004) devoted to the many discrepant accounts in aesthetics concerning feeling, emotion, or expression in/from music.

[11] The Greek word *aporia* refers to difficulties, questions, problems (etc.) that are insolvable, "with no way out" (Peters 1967, 22). As to the extent of these among aestheticians, compare entries between, e.g.: *A Companion to Aesthetics* (Cooper 1995); *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics* (Gaut and Lopes 2002); *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics* (Kivy 2004); and *Problems in Aesthetics: An Introductory Book of Readings* (Weitz 1970). Eaton 1988, Feagin and Maynard 1997, and Shusterman and Tomlin 2008 were cited earlier. It seems warranted to wonder if traditional aesthetic theorizing is itself for its own sake—or for advancing

academic careers—since it makes no *practicable* difference in why art and music are created or how and why they are appreciated.

[12] This dependence on other artistic trends and philosophical systems has led to the proliferation of aesthetic speculations over history—often "by philosophers trying to plug gaps in their metaphysical schemes, or by critics who cannot resist the temptation to generalize"—and therefore to a distancing of such theorizing from music as praxis, often lumping music together with the other arts or regarding music as the paragon of aesthetic experience. "What so frequently has resulted have been philosophical works of great generality and abstractness, with very little in the way of examples or references to any actual works of art: perhaps the paradigm case here is Kant's *Critique of Judgment*" (Proudfoot 1988; 838, 833 respectively).

[13] This mention of "the [aesthetic] attitude appropriate to its [aesthetic] contemplation" in fact flies in the face of Alperson's otherwise strong acknowledgement of music's many praxial functions—practices that *do not* involve a 'disinterested aesthetic attitude' since they are not contemplated for 'their own sake' but are experienced directly in relation to the specific praxial needs, functions, purposes (etc.) that elicit them. Traditional aesthetic theorizing typically advances the *spectatorship* theory of art and music (see, e.g., Schaeffer 2000), thus ignoring or denying value to all other types of musicking (see n. 20 below). In effect, music is regarded as existing 'for listeners alone'—where "alone" means "only" for listeners *and* as though each audience member is somehow alone ("alone together," as the song title goes) and sequestered from the shared effects (and affects) of the 'social mind' stressed by pragmatists (e.g., Mead [1934] 1967) and cognitive science (e.g., Zerubavel 1997; Rochat 2009). More on this follows.

[14] *Apodeixis* is a demonstration or proof (Peters 1967, 22).

[15] For details supporting this conclusion, see 6–7, 49–64. For a shorter argument, but similar conclusion, see Carroll 2008 (and n. 20). These (and the following) details from formal logic may be of little interest or practical consequence for musicians or music educators, but they demonstrate the weak philosophical logic of such aesthetic theorizing and demonstrate why it has so many detractors among analytic philosophers: in fact, its speculations are often not rational (i.e., meeting standards of logic) or reasonable!

[16] For details of the various problems of descriptive, analytic, evaluative, persuasive definitions in aesthetics, see Schaeffer 2000; 7, 107, 113, 284–87. Concerning aesthetic terms as merely subjective and evaluative interjections, see Wittgenstein (n.d.); 1–36. Proudfoot notes: "It has often been remarked that the phrase 'work of art' has an evaluative meaning as well as a descriptive meaning. That is, to say that something is a work of art is often to praise it, as well as categorize it" (1988, 836).

[17] As to "more or less purely aesthetic experience" [?] and the "extra-aesthetic" aspects of music, Alperson tries to save both (2010, 190) without clarifying what the differences are supposed to be. Noted musicologist Leo Treitler (1997) reports that the differentiation of a

domain of 'music itself' from the domain of the extramusical itself has a historical genesis rooted in *aestheticizing discourse* about music that was *ideological* in intent: "The duality of the musical and the extramusical was a creature of the project of redefining music undertaken around 1800 by those who aim was to elevate the status of music that was independent of language, mimesis, and functions related to the institutions of church and state authority. The distinction, as an opposition, was created with the declaration that high-valued music could be free of nonmusic" (43). The historical genesis of this duality and the resulting acontextualizing "ideology of elite egalitarians" (Meyer 1989, 163–217) thus serve to rebut Alperson's remonstration against the "genetic fallacy" discussed just below. On the discrepancy between "inherence" of musical affects and their "delineation," see, e.g., Reimer (2004) who concludes "how complex the issue of musical affect is and why, despite so much attention to it over the centuries [by aestheticians], we have not reached a definitive resolution and perhaps never will" (7)! On the interaction of language, metaphor, and emotion, see Kövecses 2000.

[18] See, e.g., Reimer 1995 on "profundity in music."

[19] And, thus, the copious discourse about the existence of aesthetic properties, qualities, experiences, meanings, values, and other kinds of "aesthetic this and that."

[20] Moreover, "the standard characterization of aesthetic experience, which is the *sine qua non* of the aesthetic theory of art, is an essentially contemplative affair" that "suited the bourgeois practice of art consumption perfectly, since the standard concept is above all a *spectatorship* model of aesthetic experience" (Carroll 2008, 153; italics original). See Schaeffer 2000 for an extended account and critique of the spectatorship paradigm. Praxialism, instead, accounts for all forms of praxis, not just audience listening. And, in any event, listening is not regarded as a simple matter of individual 'reception' but, instead, is "an irreducibly social phenomenon, even when only a single individual is involved" (Cook 2003, 206). Also see, e.g., DeNora 2000; Johnson 1995; Shepherd 1991.

[21] In particular, the belief that visceral responses—chills up the spine and 'gut' feelings—to music *are* bona fide aesthetic experiences, whereas most traditional aesthetic theories are at pains to distinguish "aesthetic emotions" (or "refined emotions"; see, e.g., Higgins 2008) from such visceral experiences and 'felt' bodily emotions (see, e.g., n. 31). Shusterman (e.g., 2008a) coins the term "somaesthetics" in order to *re*introduce the body to the experiencing of art and music, and others argue endlessly about the nature or even existence of "aesthetic emotions" (e.g., Davies 1997, 2003; Juslin and Sloboda 2001; Levinson 1997). See the special issue of the *Philosophy of Music Education Review* (12, no. 1, 2004), for the proceedings of a symposium on musical affect and its educational implications that, it seems warranted to conclude, resolves nothing and only further muddies the waters. It also contains a review of Shusterman 2000a.

[22] However, the theoretical bases of praxialism do not need to be understood *per se* by teachers in order to be translated into practice since it is exactly musical praxis—tangible and clearly accepted musical 'doings' of various kinds—that it argues should be the proper

concern of music teachers. Unlike the aporia of aesthetics that can never be settled in theory let alone systematically put into didactic practice, such musical 'doings' *are* clear-cut and *can* be effectively taught by competent musician-teachers.

[23] A legitimation crisis arises when benefits claimed are not matched by actual results. It is created, then, when 'music education as aesthetic education' in schools fails to make a difference in the pragmatic *musical* lives of graduates—taxpayers, elected school officials, and administrators who have personally failed to experience the supposed aesthetic benefits promised and who are thus increasingly amenable to reducing resources for school music. For a 'value-added' pragmatic concept of "making a difference," see Regelski 2005.

[24] An already unclear matter expressed in terms that are even less clear and that only further obscure the concerns at hand—in this case, obscuring *musical* meaning and value understood in terms of musical 'standards' and terms, not aesthetic speculations, abstractions, and rationalizations.

[25] Unless noted otherwise, Bowman's quotations are drawn from the unpaged "Musical Experience as Aesthetic: What Cost the Label?" 2006, *Contemporary Aesthetics,* http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=388#FN3 (accessed February 2011). An earlier and longer version of that argument was published as an editorial introduction to a special issue of *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* (5, no. 1, 2006; http://act.maydaygroup.org/php/archives_v5.php#5_1, accessed February 2011) dedicated to Carolyn Korsmeyer's *Gender and Aesthetics: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

[26] See, e.g., Carroll (2008) for details supporting the claim that the theory of a 'disinterested aesthetic attitude' "is probably the one shared, either consciously or subconsciously, by a very large number of philosophers of art" (148; also see the quotation in n. 32). That includes analytic (and other academic) aestheticians committed to the ideal of 'aesthetic distance' and to "aesthetic emotion" as involving "feelings of disinterested pleasure" (Carroll 2008, 147; also see n. 29 below). However, pragmatist and phenomenological traditions are concerned to overcome such claims and, as a result, stress such new concepts as "everyday aesthetics" and "environmental aesthetics" that, in the spirit of Dewey's "art as experience" ([1934] 1980), recommend *everyday experience as artfully lived*. See, e.g., Berleant 2010, Johnson 2007, Mäattänen 2003a, Mandoki 2007, Saito 2007, Shusterman 2008a.

[27] This sentence is in quotation marks and appears to be cited (unpaged) from Jerome Stolnitz, *Aesthetics and the of Criticism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1960). Note that Alperson's attempt, cited earlier to save "the ideas of aesthetic experience and of the *attitude appropriate to its contemplation*" (2010, 179; italics added), demonstrates his continued reliance on the idea of a 'disinterested aesthetic attitude'. However, such 'disinterestedness' ('purposiveness without purpose', as the cliché goes) is contrary to the decidedly 'interested' (purposeful) praxial uses of music that Alperson otherwise extols and that is contradicted by Mandoki's account of *aesthesis* (2007) summarized in the next section.

[28] However, the rationalist speculations of aesthetics decidedly support intellectual and cerebral pleasures that *are* "for the self." Indeed, the ennobling of such rationalism, cognitivism, connoisseurship, and intellectual delectation over what aesthetes see as 'merely' emotional or supposedly 'superficial' sensory delights may well be the rationale behind the genesis of the aesthetic ideology and its historical (and especially bourgeois) aspirations to 'classy' taste (see, e.g., n. 31). Proudfoot cautions about "a tendency [of aesthetics] to ignore the sensory properties of music. . . . The sound itself is important, the 'sound-itself-at-a-time', as well as the 'sound-as-part-of-a pattern' " (Proudfoot 1988, 845).

[29] Levinson (1997) characterizes the typical understanding of aesthetic emotions as being "totally different from the emotions of life and occasioned only by the perception of works of art" (218)—a view he finds implausible regarding music. See the entries on "aesthetic emotion" and "aesthetic pleasure" (and similar topics) in reference works on aesthetics to confirm the aporia that have raged unresolved since Kant. Also see Davies 2003, Eaton 1988, Ridley 2004, Stambaugh 1989, and Tormey 1978. Regarding "musical emotion," while Levinson (1997) claims to provide a "comprehensive answer" (215) to the many competing aporia about emotion in music (or emotion responses of listeners, which is not quite the same object of analysis, though frequently either confused or equated), critiques of his chapter originally published in 1990 in another collection obliges him to append a 1996 postscript in answer to his critics. However, in the 1997 collection he is nonetheless further taken to task by Davies (1997). Davies (2003) surveys the many competing expression theories (121–69), ending with his own cognitivist conclusion that "pieces present emotional characteristics, rather than giving expression to occurrent emotions" and, thus, "when we attribute emotions to music we are describing the emotional character it presents, just as we do when we call the willow sad. . . ." (181). However, cf. Treitler (1997) for an analysis and critique of "metaphorical transfer" and "metaphorical exemplification" in relation to "musical properties" (36–37), leading to the conclusion that "musical metaphor works directly within the musical domain, not indirectly through signifying processes that refer to 'extramusical domains' " (49). For his part, Guck (1997) claims that "metaphorically, music-structural features . . . are assimilated to qualities of human behavior" (209) which are, of course, extramusical. See, also, n. 32.

[30] A neologism describing the "intens*ive*" selective "*atten*tion" that music elicits.

[31] Her premise is also relevant to the present analysis: the 'higher' or 'distant' senses of sight and sound, "unlike the 'bodily' senses [of taste, touch, and smell], direct attention to the [distant] object of perception and do not register a felt sensation at the site of the receptive organ" and are thus regarded as objective (Korsmeyer 2008, 129). "Pleasures of the subjective, bodily senses are considered likely to lead to indulgence in physical sensation—sexual and gustatory experiences being the typical exemplars of this temptation" (130), and thus the 'lower' or 'subjective' senses of taste, smell, and touch have not typically figured in aesthetic discourse, and the full role of *embodied experience* has been—problematically, Korsmeyer argues (contrary to Alperson's claims; 2010, 188–89)—correspondingly *devalued* by the speculations of rationalist aesthetics. However, to complicate matters even more, Shusterman (2008b) argues for sexual (erotic) experience as potentially aesthetic!

[32] "Rejecting what he calls the traditional 'strong and cold' 'grip of aestheticism on the philosophy of art', [Arthur] Danto joins [Nelson] Goodman and many others [!] in what might be termed a radical *anaestheticization of aesthetics*. Felt experience is virtually ignored and . . . aesthetic experience is now 'hermeneutered' " (Shusterman 2000a, 31–32; italics original). This appears to go unnoticed by Alperson and leading advocates of aesthetic rationales for music education. As already mentioned in n. 29, Davies argues that "music conveys to us what an emotion characteristic 'sounds' like" (2003, 151). However, according to Davies, emotions that have *no characteristic physical appearance*, such as hope, cannot be expressed (144). Thus, it is not emotion per se that is expressed or experienced, according to Davies, but "emotion characteristics" that are *understood* or *recognized* (re-cognized, i.e., conceptualized). Thus, while Alperson tries to argue that it is *not* the case that "acknowledgement of the aesthetic aspects of music in any way ignores the embodied nature" of music (2010, 188), Määttänen notes in contrast that "the sense of disinterestedness [i.e., the 'aesthetic attitude' that Alperson wishes to save] which is based on Kantian transcendental reason . . . is isolated from practical affairs in general because reason, in this approach, is isolated from embodied existence" (Määttänen 2003, 67). See, also, n. 33.

[33] For *cognitivist* versus *hedonic* conceptions of aesthetic experience (i.e., those stressing sensuous pleasures) see, e.g., Korsmeyer 2008; Davies 2003. In brief, cognitivist accounts assert that aesthetic experience is "a distinctively 'aesthetic' brand of cognition" (Korsmeyer 2008, 140), one that provides non-trivial *knowledge* of emotional states. For a (typical) critique of Susanne Langer's theory that art and music convey *cognition* of emotions via "presentational symbols" of emotion states, see Davies 2003, 131–33, 151, 176; Price 2004. NB: Langer is a primary source for Reimer's claims (e.g., 1989a, 2003) that music educates the feelings; for pointed philosophical critiques of Reimer, see Määttänen 2003a, 2003b. However, despite his critique of Langer, Davies seems to advance a somewhat similar anesthetic cognitive process when he writes that musical emotion "is divorced from the sort of contexts in which it usually occurs" and therefore the listener "may come to a new *understanding* of it" (2003, 151; italics added; see n. 32 again for more details). Both Levinson (1997) and Davies (1997) give cognitivist accounts wherein musical "pleasure" stems from understanding, but otherwise disagree substantially on the details and warrants.

[34] See, e.g., the index of Elliott 1995 for the ample references to discussions of those topics throughout the book—topics that, by the way, are hotly contested among, even denied by, many aestheticians. NB: Alperson's account of the "anti-aesthetic turn" that he attributes to praxialism comes perilously close to a *straw man* tactic. Despite the ample literature of praxial theorizing, Alperson takes a problematic "as I understand the view" (182) stance that fails to represent that diverse literature adequately or accurately. Reimer's 1996 mischaracterization of it as "for performers only" is even more egregious; see Elliott 1997 for the corrected record.

[35] For protocols of music teaching that focus on "listening-for" see Regelski 2004, 109–89. NB: Elliott cautions: "Please note that this is *not* a recommendation to assign emotive

descriptions to all music everywhere. There are reasonable ways of knowing when musical patterns are expressive of emotions" (2005, 103; italics original).

[36] Also at stake is the "Affective Fallacy" at work in many aesthetic theories: a basic and significant confusion between a work of art/music and its psychological effects for people; see Proudfoot 1988, 839.

[37] Määttänen is one of the philosophers Alperson cites (2010, 67) as having divergent views on the term "aesthetic"—as Määttänen in fact does by instead following Dewey's critique ([1934] 1980) of neo-Kantian aesthetics and Dewey's totally contrary, pragmatic account of the experiencing of art and music. Määttänen's quotation is in reaction to Reimer's Langerian conception of aesthetic experience but applies as well here to Alperson's putative "ostensive" evidence.

[38] He writes: "The question here is not simply how accounts of aesthetic and extra-aesthetic experiences can be *reconciled* in cases where such a relation is *postulated*. The concern is broader, asking what the object of philosophical inquiry into music ought to be. This is an issue that goes to the heart of the question of the nature, methodology, and aims—not only of the philosophy of music and the philosophy of music education—but of philosophical inquiry itself" (2010, 190; italics added). In fact, the "postulated" relation between aesthetic experience and extra-aesthetic experience that he and others only hypothesize is neither "reconciled" nor demonstrated, but is simply taken for granted, and the question of "what the object of philosophical inquiry into music ought to be" remains unanswered (see n. 39). Recall from n. 17 that, according to leading music historian Leo Treitler, the aesthetic versus extra-aesthetic duality arose around 1800 in connection with the rise of the aesthetic ideology. Now we see an attempt to bridge or repair the legacy of that putative gap—another of the conundrums in the traditional aesthetic literature.

[39] Mandoki later notes: "From the start, one of the problems that aesthetics has been dragging along is the conflation between the object of analysis and the theory that analyzes it." Thus, "authors interested in this field often speak of 'aesthetic objects', meaning literally objects that are sensitive (when what they really mean is 'objects of aesthetics') (48)—that is, objects of the conditions of *aisthesis*. For more on such "objects" and about "objectivity, objectuality, and objectivation" in relation to "subjectivation," see 53–57. Alperson's frequent mention of "aesthetic properties" seems to posit them as inherent qualities of or in 'aesthetic objects' (Mandoki's "objectuality") and, at the same time, to the feelings of pleasure (Mandoki's "subjectivation") experienced by listening subjects—one of the aporia in aesthetic theorizing that Mandoki critiques in the preceding quotation.

[40] When not quoting, hereafter I will use the alternate spelling "aisthesis" in order to more clearly distinguish the concept from "*ae*sthetics" and to stress "*ai*sthesic" as an adjective.

[41] For details, see 45–52; 61–71 is an entire chapter on the "Conditions of Possibility of Aesthesis." These include *space-time* as the basis for both subjectivity and intersubjectivity,

the central role of the *body*, *vital energy* that directs intentionality, and *cultural conventions* that qualify the first three conditions.

[42] Mandoki distinguishes "aesthesiology" as "the study of the physical operation of the senses," and "aesthetico-semiotics" as the "semiotics of the senses or of taste" (xi) in stressing the interdisciplinary nature of such studies.

[43] She also discusses "latched-by" (67–71) which she regards as more passive and, thus, as not necessarily positive. See Kövecses 2000 on the centrality of metaphor to emotion states and, thus, the relevance of the emotional implications of the metaphor of "latching-on." Furthermore, according to ethnologist Ellen Dissanayake (2001), music originated in interactions between mothers and infants and thus Mandoki's "*latching-on* to the nipple" may have more historical force than just a metaphor. NB: Mandoki italicizes all variants of "latched."

[44] Mandoki quotes this expression from Parret (1993), page number not cited. In focusing on individual mentation and solitary experience, most aesthetic theory is mute about such interactional synchrony in connection with musical praxis. See n. 45.

[45] Davies discusses the importance of cultural setting to musical expressiveness (2003, 184–85), and Mandoki discusses "cultural conventions" as one of the "conditions of aesthesis" (64–65). However, Palmer (2010) appears to argue that culture can be transcended musically, thus apparently denying the 'social mind' acknowledged by pragmatism (e.g., Mead [1934] 1967), social constructionism (e.g., Vygotsky 1978), the socio-cultural concept of mind (e.g., Wertsch 1991; Zerubavel 1997), analytic philosophy (e.g., Searle 1995, 1998) and, most recently, developmental psychology (Rochat 2009).

[46] Recall that Mandoki re-defines "aesthetics" as the study of the "conditions of possibility of aesthesis" (2007, 61–71; see n. 41).

[47] If Alperson might wish to disassociate himself from Gracyk's account of aesthetic properties, then he owes the reader his own account. If aestheticians have different meanings for the same terms, however, the usual precision expected in analytic philosophy is forsaken and the fallacy of equivocation is committed again and again. As already noted, aesthetics is rife with such imprecision and confusion.

[48] However, Gracyk insists that, absent a listener's musical competence, "some appreciative responses are unjustified"; apparently, one needs "good reasons" (94) to appreciate music properly! Even this connoisseurship claim, however, does not require *aesthetic* reasons or terms; evaluative and appreciative responses can be 'reasonable' in referring to properties, qualities, or aspects understood in *musical* terms or common language, as Mandoki argues in the quotation that follows; see, also, the examples in n. 50.

[49] We are left to wonder in what 'terms' these habits are learned and applied, or if these properties are in any sense stable. And, we are again confronted with the basic unresolved

aporia of whether aesthetics is concerned with aesthetic objects, with an aesthetic attitude, or with other variables affecting listeners, listening, or listening contexts?

[50] Elsewhere he offers as examples of aesthetic properties "beauty and ugliness" (76), "monotony, incompleteness, and originality" (83), and "unity, complexity, and intensity" (91).

[51] "Best practices" are pronounced 'to work' regardless of the always unique particulars of different teaching situations and usually amount to "methodolatry" (Regelski 2002). At best, however, a 'method' developed via action research (e.g., research-based practice) can serve as a *model* for other teachers to adapt, not adopt; and such adaptation always involves considering and accommodating many theoretical and situated variables.

[52] Thus, too, the world's greatest musical artists continue to "practice" in search of ever-more ideal performances. Musical 'works', then, function in effect as action ideals that are never perfected or realized in a single instantiation (see, e.g., Cook 2003, Strohm 2000).

[53] In education, Perrenialism focuses on 'great works', and schools are seen as places where supposedly perennial values are *transmitted* (viz., in status quo terms) rather than places where learning is constructed, meanings are created, and individuals and society thereby *transformed*. Aesthetic theory perfectly fits the ideological agenda of Perrenialism. In contrast, when regarded as praxis, music is seen as shaping and being shaped by the dynamics of contemporary life, and it offers plentiful agency for personal and social transformation. See, e.g., DeNora 2000; Martin 1995, 2006.

[54] In action theory, an "action" is distinguished from mere "activity" or "behavior" by its *intentionality*: what the action is 'about', or is otherwise 'for'; the telos it is directed towards accomplishing or realizing. Mere activity lacks this sense of 'aboutness' and goal-directedness (Searle 1983). Regarding the intentionality of praxis, see Vazquez 1977, 149–61, 259–65; cf. Balaban (1986, 1990) for an interpretation of "praxis" as "actualization" where ends and means coincide and are not temporally separated. But, see Aristotle and Peters in n. 55.

[55] Aristotle writes that philosophical wisdom "makes us aim at the right mark, and practical wisdom [i.e., phronesis] makes us take the right means" (1988, 155); "the one determines the end and the other makes us do the things that lead to the end" (158). Thus, according to Peters (1967, 163), *proairesis* first involves a suitable philosophical deliberation of the 'right ends' to be sought (Aristotle 1988, 149–51), *then* the careful choice of means judged to bring about those ends. Hence, what Dewey called "ends-in-view" guide the means chosen and serve as the criteria for reflective practice. Aesthetic theories of music education, in contrast, claim a variety of noble-sounding but conveniently covert, intangible benefits and therefore have no pragmatic ends-in-view as potential empirical evidence of their value or virtue. Thus they are incapable of guiding—at all, let alone robustly!—the means of teaching praxis or of serving to evaluate either teaching or learning. On the other hand, proponents of 'best practices' and 'what works' methods *start* with the choice of means (i.e., methods) and 'right

ends' are ignored or taken for granted. In effect, the curriculum amounts to teaching the *method*, as though for its own sake (see Regelski 2002).

[56] Even philosopher Nicholas Cook concludes: "To call music a performing art, then, is not just to say that we perform it; it is to say that through it we perform social meaning" (2003, 213).

[57] On the creativity of praxis see Joas 1996.

[58] As to social order and change, for a detailed analysis of the role of praxis see Schatzki 2002.

[59] As to the "social origins of self-consciousness" itself, see Rochat 2009; on the social nature of emotion, see Kövecses 2000.

[60] As to the "ghost in the machine" fallacy, see Ryle 1970.

[61] Quoting from Peter Kivy's "Forward" to Carroll 2001, xiv.

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