

Musical Value and Praxical Music Education

Thomas A. Regelski
Helsinki, Finland

Abstract

Since post-war II, music education has advocated its presumed aesthetic benefits. *Aesthetic advocacy* became instituted through the abundance of publications by Bennett Reimer (e.g., 1970, 1989, 1995, 2003). That aesthetic meme is still influential. The debate about *Music Education as Aesthetic Education* MEAE may be weakening; still, the philosophically untutored conviction remains that involvement with music *automatically* promotes an educationally valuable aesthetic experience. Hence, teachers need only to enable music experiences. By definition, however, aesthetic experiences defy explicit evaluation. This lack of noticeably improved 'aesthetic refinement' creates legitimization crises among school boards and education ministries, doubting music's value in the curriculum. Following a critique of Reimer's theorizing, I argue for a *praxical alternative* for music education. Compared to the vagueness of aesthetic experience, praxical music education promotes music as a social praxis that depends on substantial and noticeable musicianship gains capable of continuation in adult life. These demonstrate the evident social values of musicking that make aesthetic rationales unnecessary. I argue for a 'turn' in music education that regards music as a social praxis promoting *musical sociality* throughout life and society, one that is philosophically and pragmatically warranted, and where long-term practical (praxical) results are gained instead of 'activities' that terminate with graduation. A philosophy that guides music educators to promote musicking responsive to human sociality can instead foster professional *teaching praxis* that society can respect and value as with the other helping professions.

Keywords

Music, education, praxis, praxical, aesthetic

In 1999, *The Housewright Symposium on the Future of Music Education* was held at Florida State University. It resulted in a publication, *Vision 2020* (ed. C. Madsen) that included papers by six invited “illuminati” (as NAFME described them) to expound on the future of music education. One of those, Bennett Reimer, chose also to ask for short inputs from three philosophers on the topic of “Why do Humans Value Music?” to inform his response for the published document: Anthony Palmer, Wayne Bowman, and yours truly. Unfortunately, I didn’t recognize any of my input in his submitted report. Nonetheless, my short contribution was published in the *Philosophy of Music Education Review*¹ 2002 along with the contributions of the other two.

It is fair to wonder whether the 2020 publication resulted in significant change. But in the spirit of continuing that positive vision for progress, the following expands my original short essay (Regelski 2002). The present aim, then, is to update the topics of *musical value* and *praxical*² *music education* in consideration of growing interest in music education since the mid-1990s premised on Aristotle’s philosophical account of praxis,³ a philosophical (and ethical) foundation considerably different than, and at odds with, the music education as aesthetic education advocacy rationale customary among the professoriate in 2000. It lingers *today among in-service teachers who inherited it and, lacking an alternative, continue to rely on the assumption that student benefits from music are foremost aesthetic despite whatever else they claim*. This persistent aesthetic rationale for school music naively supposes that *music exists to elicit aesthetic responses* according to the “aesthetic theory of art” and that students benefit aesthetically from mere contact with music in schools (e.g., just by putting on concerts or singing childhood tunes in class). In fact, however, each music discipline has its own theory of art and music based on empirical and other scientific criteria, e.g., sociology of music, ethnomusicology, music therapy, anthropology, and so on. Yet music education has persisted in relying on a specious aesthetic philosophy of music that, if ever relevant, was suited only to the 17th–18th centuries, where it served the ‘classy’ aspirations of the rising nouveau riche merchant middle class. This period invented the concept of the “fine arts,” as opposed to the artistry of artisans. “Crafts” have, then, only recently begun to make their way into “art museums.”

An aesthetic *advocacy* (i.e., “aesthetic education”) based on the outdated aesthetic theory of art and music has been widely accepted for well over a half-century by unsuspecting music (and art) teachers and professors uninformed about aesthetics as the basis for why, what, and how they teach; the tacit mindset influences

untold numbers of school music teachers to this day. The present essay aims to inform music education students and their professors who, un- or under-informed about the problems of subscribing to an aesthetic rationale and advocacy for music education, continue to sustain it as the traditionally validated purpose of school music—those who continue to assume that mere exposure to music, in classes and ensembles, is somehow aesthetically beneficial, and that such claimed benefits warrant the inclusion of music instruction in schooling. This reliance on, in effect, an inherited aesthetic paradigm continues among teachers, despite some change away from aesthetic language in Vision 2020 and recent philosophy—little of which, if any, they ever read.

The ease of accepting high-minded, noble sounding aesthetic assumptions and intuitions is easier for beginning teachers than the philosophical thinking needed to forge a pragmatic and praxical curriculum and the materials and pedagogies needed to mount it. The institutional inheritance of aesthetic education carries on in practice, often heedless of Ivory Tower philosophizing disclaiming it. Change is slow, especially when challenging the status quo. Commitment to this paradigm may explain why Bennett Reimer, the leading advocate of what was then called “Music Education as Aesthetic Education” (MEAE), did not reflect my contribution in his Vision 2020 report. As the most popular and prolific advocate of MEAE, it is likely that Reimer found little in my original short essay advocating music as a social praxis that he could or wanted to include in that report. It is important, then, that some of his main arguments should be directly addressed and critiqued and put behind us before proceeding to my account of the praxical alternative. Despite the waning of MEAE in the literature of music education, its backbeat goes on.

Reimer’s Advocacy of Aesthetics of Feeling

While advocates and philosophers appear on the surface to be doing the same thing, they are not the same at all. Advocacy is by nature a political undertaking, not a philosophical one. (Bowman and Frega 2012, 30, n. 18)

Reimer’s aesthetic account of music and music education in books (1970, 1989, 2003) and plentiful articles have been a major source of aesthetic advocacy of the value of music as *offering unconsummated, presentational symbols expressive of the patterns and forms of feeling* (2003, 87–101). His first edition (1970) was arguably a useful prod against taking musical value for granted. Yet, by the third edition, his championing of the aesthetic value of music and music education was

increasingly rife with philosophical problems and aporia, and with contradictions from cognitive psychology.⁴ For example, he often quotes John Dewey to support his neo-Kantian aesthetic advocacy.⁵ However, Dewey's "esthetic" [*sic*] philosophy (in *Art as Experience*, *Experience and Nature*; and *Experience and Education*) was explicitly **opposed to** and intended as a **corrective** to neo-Kantian, analytic aesthetics (e.g., Dewey, *Art as Experience*) and critical overall of Neo-Kantian Idealism (*viz.*, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, 1920).

For Reimer, as with his ego ideal⁶ Susanne Langer (1895–1985) music *symbolizes feelings* (i.e., materializes them to be presented for cognition) that are beyond language (2003, 80–81, 94–101). In defense of this postulation (for which Langer has been criticized by analytic philosophers), Reimer summons several incongruent quotations that casually mention feeling and music: e.g., Leonard Bernstein, Wayne Bowman, Antonio Damasio, Leonard Meyer, Francis Sparshott. But citing Dewey in defense of art as feeling is simply wrong! Dewey's theory of emotion and the "affect *quale*" of "an experience" is not at all consonant with Reimer's argument, nor with the other accounts of "feeling" he cites, including Langer's.

Sparshott (1994), in fact, denies Reimer's premise: "First, music is music ... [T]he affective character we experience in a piece of music should be *sui generis*, not to be described in terms derived from other areas of experience... [*viz.* Reimer's/Langer's symbolic feelings]," (25). Reimer inexplicably quotes this contradiction (2003, 86). In another quotation of Sparshott, Reimer substitutes in brackets "[emotions]" for Sparshott's "subjectivity" and "[feelingful]" for Sparshott's "affectful," so intent is he to have the quotations conform to his postulations about musical feelings (2003, 87). "Affect" in psychological research is much more complex than Reimer assumes (146). Nonetheless, we are entitled to wonder why feelings need materialization as cognitive symbols (an intellectualization of feeling, e.g., Dewey's "intellectual fallacy" (Reimer 2003, 95) and are supposedly valued musically in symbolic form. Nor is why or how schooling based on the presentational forms of musically materialized feelings shown to be valuable to an educated adult's life. As Sparshott rightfully concludes, "music remains music and its affectiveness [*sic*] is distinctive of it" (1994, 25). Why not, then, just teach music praxis?

Advocacy of music education with an "aesthetic" rationale, nonetheless, has been a noble sounding paean since at least after World War II by musician-teachers/professors not trained in aesthetics. Perhaps belief in a need to *legitimate* music (and art) in schools motivated claims that music has something of *cognitive*

value (as per Reimer, symbolic ‘knowledge’ of feeling) or *moral* value (as per Friedrich Schiller who coined the term “aesthetic education” [1794] with moral character educated by the *sublime* in fine art). However, what that “something” is, in terms of observable educational benefits, unfortunately succumbs to “immanent critique” (an active form of “ideology critique”) when *its own aesthetic claims are used as criteria for empirically evaluating it*. Thus, given the *covert* (unobservable) essence claimed for aesthetic responding (and feeling states), *overt* evaluations unsurprisingly reveal that supposed “something” to be neither empirically noticeable, notable, nor noble.⁷

Nonetheless, the teaching of *concepts* (following Reimer’s misleading “concept of concepts,” 2003, 142–46) in lieu of teaching *music* (musicking) continues to be common in general musical classes, and the supposedly spontaneous experience of symbolized “feeling” in music seems to be the assumed aesthetic value of having students prepare concert literature. Thus, for many ensemble directors, the literature is the curriculum—not a multi-year focus on fostering musicianship skills that can last into adulthood and that promote lifelong musicking of one or more kinds. As we shall soon see, that would be praxical teaching.

Teaching that considers its *musical* and *educational value* to be the intangibilities of aesthetic responsiveness has produced the *legitimation crisis* facing music education today. Music education funding, scheduling (etc.) are under increasing challenge. School boards and education ministries, administrators, parents, and the public often expect results, not just advocacy rhetoric predicated on unaccountable benefits to aesthetic responsiveness. Most have experienced general (classroom) music, and many have even been in ensembles, yet music education is increasingly shortchanged as expendable—nice if you can afford it.

In contrast, praxical music education that promotes music as a social praxis results in noteworthy musicianship gains that demonstrate both the success of instruction and the progressive benefits of a curriculum predicated on the obvious social values of musicking. Given the ubiquity of musics, we do not need aesthetic rationales to propagandize the value of music to culture and society. A philosophy that guides music educators to promote musicking responsive to human sociality can instead foster *professional praxis* that, as with the other helping professions, society can respect and value. A return to music education as an education for music as *social praxis*, as “good for” promoting musicking throughout life, is thus timely.⁸ What music is in a teacher’s mind conditions what and how they teach.

Music as Social Praxis

Humans are from birth fundamentally social beings. As adults, they evolve social institutions and socially useful creations of all kinds to affirm and share their social nature—among them music praxies, musical doings of all kinds—that both demonstrate and amplify human sociality. A *praxical music education advances music as a social praxis*. Properly, it focuses on *musicianship skills* characteristic of musical praxies chosen to be of educational value for graduates who can thus participate fully in music’s sociality. It also advances basic or *general musicianship* that serves more than one praxis (e.g., music reading, harmony studies, listenership, etc.), thus expanding graduates’ possibilities for musical sociality.

Social Origins of Music

A music praxis arises originally in connection with a basic social (i.e., cultural) praxis.⁹ Music praxies promote music’s social contributions, interest, and importance in the life of a society and its musicking. As philosopher Ignacio Ellacuría observed, “In the realm of praxis (his word for human action to change reality), human beings act to realize a wider range of possibility: praxis seeks to realize a fuller praxis”¹⁰ (translator’s parenthetical clarification). A praxical music **education** is therefore based on extending the possibilities of pragmatic musicianship characteristic of one or more common music praxies, not on unverifiable claims of aesthetic benefits.¹¹ Aesthetic responding, by definition, is **covert** (unobservable) and thus incapable of (overt) evaluation needed to guide instruction. An aesthetic response is claimed to automatically result (somehow) from music experience (e.g., preparing concerts, singing songs, moving to music). In contrast, students’ ability to **engage** in a socially relevant and recognized music **praxis** can easily be evaluated and those evaluations used to formulate developmental instruction and for evaluative assessment of instruction and curriculum.

Moreover, any music praxis—indeed, any social praxis, from therapy to nursing to teaching (etc.)—comes with an **expectation of ethical competence** on the part of the practitioner. Thus, a musical praxis must competently serve the needs of particular (socio-musical) situations. For example, a highly accomplished jazz ensemble hired for dancing led to complaints. Its music, though “good for” listening (very good to my ear), wasn’t “good for” dancing (e.g., metric complexity). Praxical teaching seeks to promote musicianship gains “good for” one or more kind of musicking throughout life.

This “good for” *pragmatic criterion* of usefulness and competence, as predicated on the “music world” at large outside of school into school life (i.e., “action learning”¹²), enhances the likelihood for “transfer of learning” and use to adult life. For example, chamber music groups in schools nurture and prepare students with musicianship autonomy and social models (e.g., cooperation, leadership, compromise) that are “good for,” and promote, musicking after graduation. Duets, trios, and other chamber combinations (e.g., a cappella, vocal jazz, and barbershop groups, brass quartets, woodwind quintets) can eventually lead to adult amateur musicking in the home, local libraries, and other performance venues.¹³

As already noted, teaching music effectively first requires being philosophically clear as to what is being taught; *what music “is”* and why and how it is valued. “You cannot aim at something, cannot work to get it, unless you can recognize it once you have got it” (Rorty 2000, 2).¹⁴ The answer to what that musical something is, as often given by teachers and students, varies around the notion of “organized sound,” but music is certainly socially and personally more valued than that simplistic answer suggests. The analysis that follows in step with several points of emphasis intends to provide a philosophical answer to the question and specifically to demonstrate that music is a *social praxis*, not an *aesthetic object*. Thus re-oriented, music education is not the so-called aesthetic “icing on the cake” of a general education—“nice, if you can afford it.” Instead, it is among school’s important responsibilities to assist graduates to “commence” on paths of productive futures—for school music, through the contributions of musicking to the “good life”—valued in the personal estimation of each graduate. This lasting musical benefit, not just as a school *social activity* that concludes with graduation, is the *value of music* for humans being and becoming ever-more human (i.e., sociable) through musicking.

Valuing Music and Musical Values

In our lives, *questions of value* arise regularly in connection with choices we make. The search for things or activities¹⁵ that have value may be rooted in primitive ideas once connected with survival. Such criteria can still be relevant in modern life when “survival,” being alive, means not only health, peace, and safety (etc.), but also choices for the “good life”—the action ideal that guides people’s daily aspirations and actions. Is the “good life” fulfilled by a gigantic flat screen TV? Designer apparel? Musicking with family or friends?

In the pursuit of the “good life,” then, it is useful to consider *how and why music is valued in society* since it is not usually regarded as a requirement for staying alive (though every known society has had its distinctive music). However, in considering music’s value for a life most worth living, if value is simply asserted as the appeal of something warranted by subjective qualities that supposedly render it valuable, the resulting aporia of competing claims isn’t helpful. Questions of value thus tend to go round and round in circles of subjectivity untethered to intersubjective agreement.

The philosophical sub-discipline called “axiology” has attempted to break this merry-go-round (in addition to its contributions to ethical theory) by postulating *intrinsic values* for music: meanings that are simply and directly ‘good’ by their very nature, irrespective of whether their worth is acknowledged by anyone or agreed to by others. The claim is, then, that goodness is an *inherent* quality of the “thing-in-itself” valued “for its own sake.” (Both claims are staples for aesthetic theorizing of music’s value.) Conceived aesthetically, music is valued on its own terms, not those of associated qualities such as usefulness or as a vehicle for sociability. On this account, musical value is asserted to literally reside “in” the thing-in-itself, as the *essence* of what that thing is.

Such *essentialism* has existed since Plato argued that only ideas capture the essence of things; for example, the “essence” of “chair-ness” defines or identifies a chair irrespective of the attributes of different chairs or changing styles of chairs. In Plato’s *Idealism*, then, ‘reality’ and ‘truth’ were not results of empirical experience but of reasoning and logic, and the ‘truths’ thus reached were said to be universal and eternal. Plato’s student Aristotle disagreed. He argued that things possessed a vital *substance* (empirical, perceptual properties, not ideas) which make the thing what it is and without which it cannot be identified. Knowledge thus comes from investigations of that substance and its differences from other things.

Aristotle’s view eventually led to *empirical science*, Plato’s to the *metaphysics* of philosophical, aesthetic, and theological Idealism (e.g., the Christian idea of a “soul”; 19th century German [neo-Kantian] aesthetic Idealism). Aristotle’s recognition of the value of *aisthesis*—knowledge gained through the senses—resulted during the 17th and 18th century Enlightenment era in the rise of science, scientific societies, and empirical criteria for scientific praxis.¹⁶

Aisthesis: Sentient Knowing

The Greek concept of *aisthesis* was hijacked in the mid-18th century by the lingering Age of Reason—along the way, having served “German Idealism” and “Weimar Classicism.”¹⁷ Alexander Baumgarten (1714–1762) argued that “taste” (i.e., for beauty) was a *judgment* of the senses (aisthesis as “sentient knowing”)—in effect conferring a certain cognitive ‘rationality’ (i.e., reasoned knowledge) to the senses—in deference to Age of Reason’s (viz, Leibniz, Wolff) denial of cognitive value to the senses (Summers 1987, Guyer 1997, Dickie 1996). The debate about “taste” in the Fine Arts, confused from the first by different theories, was further muddled by the literature of aesthetic theorizing with its copious and competing accounts of beauty. Aesthetic values and the “judgment of taste” thereafter became linked with beauty. Nature, too, was theorized as Beautiful. Recognition of the “fine arts” as sharing an aesthetic essentialism corresponds in intellectual history with the rise of aesthetic theory.

Immanuel Kant contended with the unreliability of judgments of taste/beauty by hypothesizing the principle of a *sensus communis*—the subjective universality [sic] of aesthetic judgments assumed to inter-subjectively warrant collectively shared validity.¹⁸ As to Kant’s own tastes, he despised the hymns of his neighbors and wrote very little about music, except to rank its intellectual or cultural edification at the bottom of aesthetic value among the arts (poetry being at the top; music was merely “agreeable”), and, arguing that visual art should have the unstudied look of nature, considered nature themes on wallpaper as examples of beauty. However, Kant (1781) was philosophically critical of Baumgarten’s aesthetics (though he used Baumgarten’s text in his teaching of logic).

The Germans are the only people who presently have come to use the word aesthetic to designate what others call the critique of taste. They are doing so on the basis of a false hope conceived by that superb analyst Baumgarten. He hoped to bring our critical judging of the beautiful under rational principles, and to raise the rules for such judging to the level of a lawful science. Yet that endeavor is futile. (*Critique of Pure Reason* 1781; footnote, version A/24)

Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* was a resolute critique of Leibnizean rationality—the “reason” of the 18th century Age of Reason—for its attempt to model philosophy on mathematical reasoning. Leibniz influenced Baumgarten through Baumgarten’s teacher Christian Wolff, who had attempted to systematize (or simplify) Leibniz (the opposite was the result!). Kant abandoned Baumgarten’s attempt to provide a rational subvention for the senses and simply regarded

“aesthetics” as referring to matters of sensory experience (in effect, returning to the robust *aisthetics* advocated here). In his subsequent *Critique of Judgement* (1790), however, Kant stipulated *pleasure* in the free play of the imagination as the source for judgments of beauty. Thus, disavowing reason or studied cognition as bases for judgments of beauty, affective subjectivity—pleasurable feeling—was Kant’s criterion for esteeming an artwork.

However, Kant’s concepts of “free beauty” and “dependent beauty” (also translated as “adherent” beauty) led subsequent philosophers to hypothesize *aesthetic criteria* based on dichotomizing *intrinsic* (free) and *extrinsic* (dependent) beauty. *Free beauty*, for Kant, “presupposes no concept of what the [aesthetic] object ought to be,” while *dependent beauty* does presuppose a concept guiding the “perfection of the object in accordance therewith” (Kennick 1979, 517)—i.e., a concept of what the object represents: a still-life of flowers, for example. While free beauty may be purposive regarding what artists and composers intended to create,¹⁹ lacking conceptual foundations it had *no purpose*—no use, no function—other than being art.²⁰

In the hands of the *nouveau riche* bourgeoisie, aspiring in class status to *haut monde* membership, the social value of the Fine Arts in effect became their *uselessness* (a claim allied with the aesthetic criterion of “purposiveness without purpose”). Accumulating art thus displayed financial freedom from want or need. In effect, art was “good for” ostentation by this new merchant class who displayed it bountifully in their homes and sponsored musical and literary soirees for it to be seen and heard. Thus, Fine Art actually had a social function (then, and today, e.g., as shown in corporate offices), but the issue of *what music is and why it is valued* remains taken for granted.

False Essentialism of Music

The noun *music* is defined in dictionaries as having an *essence* that supposedly resides “in” everything called “music”—a collective noun that presumes to embrace all kinds of music.²¹ What that *inherent* essence is, however, has always been controversial. In fact, it is denied by disciplines such as ethnomusicology, sociology, ethnology, and anthropology of music. Some philosophers (especially post World War II) have denied philosophical validity to aesthetics, and postmodernists reject the concept of an inherent essence as an insufferable and delusive “meta-narrative” that creates power struggles of socioeconomic class boundaries and barriers. Such

anti-aesthetic theories and disciplines (e.g., those in which aesthetics simply do not figure or that roundly deny aesthetic premises) are often absent in U.S. university music schools, suggesting that their exclusion must be intended.

Most troubling to claims of essentialism is that music comes in all kinds and styles—especially the incredible diversity of world musics not based on “common practice” music theory of Europe. Thus, some music has qualities or attributes that other musics don’t. How to distinguish music from mere *noise* also challenges listeners and critics who today contend with avant-garde compositions (or, say, various world drumming traditions) that do not observe the familiar compositional methods and traditions of music history (Ross 2008).

In contrast to aesthetic speculations about *intrinsic* values based on essentialism, *extrinsic* values of music and art are said to be superfluous features not defining of the “thing-in-itself” and thus regarded as “extra-musical” or external to it. Traditional aesthetic philosophies of music therefore prioritize *inherent/intrinsic* values over *extrinsic/instrumental* values²²—or deny any value to the latter. In general, inherent/intrinsic values claim that ‘goodness’ is a property that literally inheres *in* ‘good’ or ‘great’ music and is desirable or valued *for its own sake*, rather than being relative to anyone’s subjective interests, uses, or other variables external to the sounds itself. Generations of students in form and analysis classes have been taught to try to ferret out this essence by studying the relations between notes on the page (this, they also learn, provides empirical bases for ‘goodness’—a logically legitimated ‘form’). For aesthetic formalists, the inherent essence or ‘meaning’ of “absolute music”²³—music as pure sound—downgrades the aesthetic status of the words of choral music and even art song²⁴—for including concepts of God, nature, or love—thus putting the neo-Kantian “pure beauty” of instrumental music at the pinnacle of an *aesthetic hierarchy* thereby created that prioritizes symphonies, chamber music, and solo instrumental music.

Ex. 1

AN AESTHETIC HIERARCHY OF “MUSIC”

CHAMBER MUSIC AND SOLOS—‘purely’ music; small scale, intimate audiences

—“absolute music;” size is appealing; large audience

ART SONG AND CHORAL—meaning tied to extrinsic words; “absolute” value lessened

OPERA—extrinsic interest in scenery, action, drama, humorous story-lines (words)

PROGRAM AND NATIONALISTIC—based on stories, images, and folk sources

MARCHES, CEREMONIAL, “OCCASIONAL MUSICS”*—serve associated social uses

RELIGIOUS—serves liturgy or celebrates a religious text and meaning

JAZZ—problematically not notated; entertainment not ‘art’, “good for” clubs/bars

ETHNIC—tied to ethnic tunes, dances, or words; easily appreciated by listeners

POPULAR (if allowed on the hierarchy at all)—entertainment not art**; popularity quickly fades, has words, easily understood and accessible without training

*Musics composed or used for specific social occasions; e.g., Tchaikovsky’s *Festival Coronation March* (D major, TH 50, ČW 47,) commissioned by the city of Moscow for the coronation of Tsar Alexander III, 1883.

**Regarding the arts, a distinction without a difference? Is opera not entertaining? Is *Porgy and Bess* an opera?

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I argue, instead, that traditional aesthetic accounts of “music for its own sake,” where inherent-intrinsic attributes annul extrinsic instrumental values, are neither accurate nor relevant. The language of traditional analytic aesthetics obscures and misrepresents relationships between means and ends, process and product, that are always relevant. The *value of all music* arises from and is experienced as musical sociality.

Values as Usefulness

Value is thus always relative to humanly conceived ends, purposes, and intentions. It is not some hidden property or criterion that humans must search or study to discover. Rather, to begin with, human purposes determine that something has a value. Humans create things for a purpose, and they subsequently value them (and other already existing ‘things’) by using them for the functions or purposes for which they were created or for other humanly recognized uses (e.g., ‘works’ used as film music). Clearly, valuing and ‘appreciation’ are seen in use (Regelski 2006).

In this view of mind, the question of value is thus inextricably wrapped up in the facts of human purposes, intentions, uses, and needs. It is not, then, a question of abstract value somehow attaching itself to things. Instead, in the philosophical sense that interests us concerning all music, the ‘things’ of the human as opposed to the physical world are social realities, *social facts* constructed in terms of and thus construed as “good for” human social interests.

Employing John Searle’s philosophy of mind (Searle 1996)²⁵ gives music education an altogether *new philosophical rationale for validating music as social praxis*. In his analysis, *physical* properties are distinguished from *observer relative* properties. The former are *ontologically objective*²⁶ “because their existence is independent of any perceiver or any mental state” (8). *Observer relative* properties instead are “relative to the intentionality of observers, users, etc.” (9). They are thus ‘constructed’ or *in-formed* (i.e., inwardly formed, cognitively) as ‘*in-formation*’ from the physical world of ontologically sensed (aisthesis, sentient knowing) properties, variously according to the society and language in question. They are thus *ontologically subjective* because their mode of existence is observer relative and differs according to observers’ subjectivity (and vocabulary for describing ‘reality’).

Social reality, then, is not a *brute* reality given by the physical properties of natural or humanly created things.²⁷ Perception itself (indeed, the “social mind”—or “generalized other”—described by sociologist G. H. Mead²⁸) is oriented and influenced by socially constructed cultural variables. “Pragmatic” or “internal reality” in philosophy thus holds that ‘reality’ is not “out there” in singular, unadorned form for discovery or uniform description (i.e., ready-made as ‘common sense’ assumes), but “in here,” in our mind’s concepts—i.e., cultural constructions from experiences of whatever is “out there.” Our realities are always colored, then, by *dispositions* concerning how our culture and especially its language categorizes and functions with the fact-world of the “natural attitude”²⁹ shared by a particular “lifeworld” and its “language.”³⁰ Thus, and importantly, we come to differentiate the physical properties of, say, a certain piece of *paper* and the *social fact* that it is *socially regarded*, (which is to say) is *valued*, as money. “Money,” thus, is an *observer relative value*; a *social function* added to objects such as paper and coins (and in prisons, cigarettes).

Similarly, the difference between “sounds” and music is ontologically subjective. “*Music*” is an *observer-relative function added to sounds*.³¹ Sounds become music according to certain observer relative features or qualities assigned to them or observed in terms of the personal or social functions that they serve. Thus, to begin with, that sounds are regarded as music is a social reality based on observer relative values. Such values are “intrinsic” only to the degree that mental states are unavoidable facilitators of cognitive experiences.³² In this respect, then, musical value and meaning do not inhere ‘in’ the physical properties or collections of sounds; they are a *status function* assigned to such appearances according to certain potentials sounds are socially regarded to be “good for” (i.e., valued).

Put still another way, sounds created, arrayed, and presented in service of certain social needs are considered *music in observance of those social functions*. Importantly, then, *music arises from the first according to the social needs it serves*; e.g., religion, celebrations, ethnicity, etc. Music adds social importance or gravity to those social occasions; it “makes special” and highlights them in ways that are different from other social functions.³³ Its continued use in service of those and other social functions all the more verifies music as a valued *social praxis*, not as aestheticians would have us believe of “absolute” musical purity that seems to have descended from Mars with no connection to human sociality.³⁴

The “automania” of the aesthetics of “absolute music”³⁵ is supposedly valued “for its own sake” by a “taste public” who mistakenly extol its values over other musics, unaware that “classical music” is a type, not a quality of music. Their favored music and its intellectual, contemplative pondering is often found to be less or not at all relevant by other social groups who instead favor musics related to the typical social situatedness of their lives. Music “for its own sake” claims are easily contradicted by simple reflection on the social and cultural history of music and its contributions to cultures and civilizations. We often can learn something about a culture or civilization from its musical institutions, and understanding its musicking is helped by familiarity with its social institutions. Even Western “concert music” is “good for” the functions of contemplation or cerebral intellectualizing by a small, Eurocentric “taste group.” It is *their preferred use!*

Social reality, then, is culturally constructed by the *assignment of various function(s)* to objects and events. We do not (in any important way) experience material objects per se: *we experience a world of ‘things’ under the terms of their recognized social functions.* As Searle (1996) puts it, “even natural phenomena, such as rivers and trees, can be assigned functions, and thus assessed as good or bad depending on what functions we choose to assign to them and how well they serve those functions.” Consequently, “in the case of naturally occurring objects, such as rivers and trees, we assign a function to a preexisting object. We say, ‘That river is good to swim in,’ or ‘That type of tree can be used for lumber’” (14).

In the case of human artifacts such as chairs and music, their creation is specifically intended to serve personal, communal, or common social functions. In this regard and in relation to music in particular, we can conclude with Searle that social “functions are never intrinsic to the physics of any phenomenon but are assigned from outside by conscious observers and users. *Functions, in short, are never intrinsic but are always observer relative*” (14, italics original). Music, then, is not defined by its acoustical properties or any analysis that claims to find formal or essential properties that are its ‘aesthetic meaning’ (Korsyn 2004)³⁶ to be ‘understood.’

The “natural attitude” of our communal lifeworld is, for Searle, “defined in terms of the furtherance of a set of values that we hold—life, survival, reproduction, health—in which case they are observer relative” (16). It follows that values are always relative to conditions of usefulness; they are never intrinsic, pure, or purposeless, for example, as traditional aesthetic metanarratives of musical value would have us accept—the “purposiveness without purpose” of “absolute music.”

As far as music is concerned, only an ontology of sound exists “intrinsically”; the further assignment of meaning and value is a matter of any features added (e.g., electronic amplification, improved instruments) or attended to by observers relative to certain functions and uses (e.g., music “good for” weddings).

As we have seen, *that* or *whether* sounds are called music (“music”) to begin with is relative to the interests and values of users and observers; for example, in cultures where prayer is sung (or intoned) but not labeled “music” (music), which is prohibited. Against traditional aesthetic accounts, then, musical values are always relative to the uses and purposes of socially situated people. Such *social functions are, or presuppose, the cultural addition of values to the things of the physical world*, whether natural, or created. As such, *added social values* are a primary manifestation of human *intentionality*—the “aboutness” (or directionality) of social actions and mental states; what they seek to bring about or contemplate.³⁷

Intentionality and Values

*Intentional states involve beliefs, desires, wants, needs, and the like—in a word, values.*³⁸ However, as Searle reveals (23–27), intentionality is not simply a matter of individual or private intentions of the kind that would lead, for example, to the silly relativism of “anything goes.” Rather, *intentionality is profoundly social and collective*. The *cognitive amplification* of individual perceptual experience and consciousness by culture, language, and society is, in this pragmatic and constructivist view, considerable and decisive.

A “Background” of *collective intentionality*,³⁹ as Searle calls it, therefore “is composed of culturally saturated skills and capacities, such as knowing what culture-specific objects are for [“good for”: e.g., edible], recognizing culture-specific situations as appropriate or inappropriate for certain types of behavior (e.g., shaking hands, or the depth of a bow, and so forth).”⁴⁰ *Social Background* entails a communal (i.e., cultural) set of pre-intentional dispositions, intuitions, and tendencies within which individual intentional states function and by which individual intentions are influenced, even steered. These Background states need not be a *conscious* part of the intentionality of the moment,⁴¹ but are the necessary precondition for the motivational dispositions that in(wardly)-form or cognitively configure or amplify our conscious perceptual experience. They amount to the cognitive readiness, selective attention, or value scanning we take toward perceptual phenomena and, as such, are partly constitutive of those phenomena. For example,

the social facticity of music is partly constitutive of what we experience as—and what we are cognitively predisposed by our social Background to consider or label (and thus value)—“music.”⁴² Searle points out, in fact, that “the linguistic element [e.g., culturally *calling* something “music”] appears to be partly constitutive of the fact” (12); in the case of “music,” it will be regarded as music, not noise.

Furthermore, what Searle calls “social objects” (e.g., ‘works’ of music—whether a score, recording, or performance), are likewise part of larger social processes involving collective intentionality and other governing conditions of Background. Searle cautions, then:

It is tempting to think of *social objects* as independently existing entities on analogy with the objects studied by the natural sciences.... In the case of social objects, however, the grammar of the noun phrase conceals from us that fact that, in such cases, process is prior to product. Social objects are always ... constituted by social acts; and, in a sense, *the object is just the continuous possibility of the activity.* (36, emphasis original)

In the case of music, the “continuous possibility” for future performances is provided by a social object such as a score or aural tradition.⁴³ For this reason, among others, the need has arisen to replace the word “music” as a collective noun, with a gerund, such as “musicking” or “musicing” in order to more accurately acknowledge the processual and temporally unfolding nature of such actions and activities.⁴⁴ For similar reasons, the collective noun music has slowly given way to *musics* in denial of any essentialism and in recognition of the differences of music in response to its ubiquitous social uses and undeniable sociality. Dictionaries and some copyeditors, however, have been slow to recognize this evolution.

With the assignment of the socio-functional values of music (or of musicking), a new **status** is created by virtue of the collective intentionality governed by the relevant social Background—including various guiding traditions and past practices involved. A Background of past practice must be acknowledged (along with the present Background): even in a case of authentic invention *de novo*, what is new or creative is recognized only by comparison to past praxis. But whether it is necessary to attend to (understand, appreciate, contemplate, etc.) the *history* and traditions of a musical praxis (e.g., opera) in order to derive a *present* value is arguable. I will certainly value a praxis differently as a result of more extensive familiarity—though not necessarily, I think, to any sense of absolute advantage.

However, knowledge and mastery of past praxis is fundamental to understanding a particular praxis enough to *engage* competently with it (e.g., Baroque ornamentation, jazz harmonies). And, an education *for* praxis attends to such accumulated and even variable musicianship for proficiency in a praxis. Just playing the notes, for example, in the next concert is not enough. A music education is predicated on the progressive growth of independent musicianship that can serve musicking in life outside of school and after graduation.

In conferring a *Backgrounded social significance* on present sounds, the **status function** of “value” in effect is created; which is to say, we bestow on it a newly valued status as a *social fact*. Conferring the *status function* music on those sounds, then, grants them **a social facticity** associated with institutional functions and status of music. Thus, as Searle indicates, the decisive factor “in the creation of social reality is the collective intentional imposition of function on entities that cannot perform those functions without that imposition” (41). In consequence, he continues, “the key element in the move from the collective imposition of function to the creation of institutional [social] facts is the imposition of a collectively recognized [social] status to which a *function* is attached” (40–41, italics original). This *status + function*, then, is the collectively recognized *value* socially attached to the thing or things of its type. So rather than a search for intrinsic ‘goods’ or values that supposedly inhere aesthetically in objects, we should look instead for the human *functions* for which such things tend to be used and how (or why, how frequently) they are used. This means, once again, that *appreciation is use* (Regelski 2006).

Appreciation Seen in Use

To ask why people value music is in effect to question what functions (uses) in their lives their typical musicking is “good for”—how and for what reasons they find it “worthwhile” (“good time” = “worthwhile”) and choose it to enhance their lives. That is to say, what is called music is a social praxis that qualifies an infinite variety of musics in use. It is inextricably concerned with questions of “right results”⁴⁵ for individuals, groups, and society.

Correspondingly, to remark on the musical values of an individual or group (adolescents, for example) is simply to describe the typical musicking engaged in their normal social interactions. Such functions of music can encompass an ex-

traordinarily wide range, from the most esoteric intellectual pleasures of cognoscenti to the most mundane of daily enjoyments of the untrained; from religion and ceremony, to dancing and all kinds of entertainment. Consider, for example, how musical “taste groups” among adolescents become (or reinforce) adolescent *social cohorts* (peer groups)—not especially what such music is “for”—but by providing a cohesive social relationship as appropriated by adolescents, musical choice becomes a natural feature of that social energy. Often, it seems, the appeal of this or that music is social, not strictly musical (as though “absolute music”). All forms of musicking, then, are socially valuable (even for adults), each in its own way, relative to their unique function(s) in human life. Ignoring or downgrading adolescent musical sociality is foolhardy and ignorant of music as social praxis.

As has been shown, in contrast, traditional accounts of *aesthetic value* ‘in’ music presume a single hierarchy of value with “absolute music” at its pinnacle (e.g., Ex.1). This is declared as somehow distinctively pure, profound, ennobling, ideal, sublime, or beautiful⁴⁶—along with a host of other criteria and values about which academic aestheticians and other critics constantly disagree. Little attention is given to the much larger part of the musical spectrum, except to assume that it is somehow not *aesthetically* valuable (in the sense of not possessing presumed intrinsic values to be contemplated for their own sake), or not as aesthetically valuable as whatever is taken to be at the very top—usually pure instrumental music, such as string quartet and solo literature. Recent research of Popular music often takes a postmodern stand in assuming that the *lack* of or contradiction of the typical aesthetic properties (e.g., the aesthetic attitude) is what makes such music popular, more accessible to all listeners.

An account of music as a social praxis, rooted in the construction of social reality, rotates the vertical Aesthetic Hierarchy (see section “False Essentialism of Music”) to a *horizontal continuum of musics* (Ex. 2) where each is accorded its own distinctive status: a value, which always involves some valued social status function assigned to it and thus experienced in connection with it.

Ex.2

A continuum of musics valued as social praxies

Classical>jazz>ethnic>country western>rap>gospel>rock>world>steel drumming> heavy metal> opera> pop> etc.

Individual columns created under each music on such a continuum will evidence the genesis and continuing relevance of each as a social praxis (as defined herein), and they

are thus best not compared for musical ‘quality.’ Each (and more than fit here) exemplifies unique values by its praxical role in the “music world” outside of school. In fact, people can be attuned to one or more; e.g., the “omnivores” (Peterson and Kern 1996) studied by sociologists who have wider range of ‘tastes’ in comparison to those attuned to mainly one or a select few musics.

In each case, if so inclined, a personal hierarchy of criteria for ‘good music’ of its type can be developed for a favored column (e.g., good jazz, easy listening preferences, favorite operas, etc.). And each will have its own socio-musical history from its genesis to present day.

Creating such individual columns and criteria would be a good assignment for students to develop for their favorites (and at least one other?).

For students (or adult aspirants), each will have its own musicianship competencies for apprenticeship and mastery. Curriculum based on multiple inclusions from such a continuum, will amount to musics education.

In this way, music assigned (or perceived as having) the status function of intellectual cerebration according to hypothesized ‘purely’ musical meanings *can have value for aesthetes whose intentionality so predisposes them*. They will “hear” what *they* understand the music they enjoy is “good for.” I don’t, on the other hand, go so far as to suppose that such “disinterested” contemplation confirms the disembodied, metaphysics of beauty or sublimity claimed by various (and conflicting) traditional aesthetic criteria, given lip-service by some hoi oligoi (“classy”) aesthetes as testimony to their ‘elevated’ sensibilities over those of the hoi polloi (masses). Such “right results” for this exclusive “taste group” are simply conditioned by the particular status function they recognize according to the predispositions of their cultural Backgrounding.

Aisthesis, the “intelligent sentience” or, with music, the senses tuned toward affective awareness and use (*depending on the society and the use*),⁴⁷ then, is decidedly not the “purposiveness without purpose” guiding the “aesthetic attitude” (i.e., “aesthetic distance”), the need, according to aesthetic theory since Kant, for distancing or divorcing musical and artistic responding from life and its personal indulgences. An attitude of *disinterested delight* (i.e., again, “purposiveness without purpose” enjoyed for “its own sake” is claimed to be without purpose or use; but “delight,” nonetheless, is a “purpose” sought in music’s use in personal listening or attendance and “good time” in concert attendance).

In contrast, the role of aisthesis is consequential for experiences of all musics. We might better refer, therefore, to responses to music, art, and nature as **aies-thesic**; i.e., *sentient knowing*. Thus, those whose intentionality concerning music is directed towards affects and emotional responses (frissons, chills, etc.) that aesthetics *disavows* for triggering *bodily responses* rather than evoking *intelligence* (mistaking “embodiment” as the cognitive contradiction of intelligence), in fact experience, i.e., value listening to (or performing) musics that especially elicit those feelings. And, when music is valued as “mood enhancement” or social bonding, as often is the case for teens, or as background for adult cocktail parties, or where it functions *as* (not simply *in*) *worship*, the values attached are all conditioned through cooperative aisthesis by the status function of the value(s) socially assigned and *shared* at the moment.

Each of the *types* of functions along the continuum of musicking will have its own set of criteria of “good for” by which suitability for the functions (values) at hand are typically adjudicated. For example, given their usual function at least, lullabies are expected to be quiet and calming. If a lullaby is intended for just listening (e.g., Brahms, Op. 49, No. 4), it will require additional details to occupy the interests of listeners. As the function changes from calming a baby to engaging an audience, so will the criteria of goodness. *Such responsiveness to the functional criteria and conditions of situatedness is characteristic of all musicking!* Such shared criteria and intentionality also mitigate against “anything goes” claims of “goodness.”

Within each praxis, then, there will often be various types or styles available according to the various unique ways individuals, musical cultures, nations, eras (etc.) have fulfilled the function served by the musicking in question. Each of these *styles*, too, can be considered its own praxis (or, if one prefers, sub-praxis). Each has its own defining traditions and other socially created criteria relative to its unique status functions, each demanding its own range of knowledge and skill for competent participation. Different styles of jazz, for example, share some similarities but uniquely appeal to different taste publics and engage a different range of *participatory criteria*.⁴⁸ “Nationalistic” musics have their own national favorites: e.g., Sibelius in Finland, Grieg in Norway, and even national differences: Argentinian/Guatemalan Tango is seductive and sensual, but Finnish Tango is usually in a minor key, and its lyrics deal with sorrow, nature, and the Finnish countryside. Adepts at one are not naturally competent in the other.

“Good music,” then, is first and foremost a consideration of whether musicking of a particular type or style serves the human ‘goods’ (i.e., *social functions*) *that called it into existence to begin with, or into present use* (i.e., recalling Searle, the “ongoing possibilities of sociality” that it is “good for”). “Good music” is a “good for” served well by its associated music. Sometimes this is very “practical,” as when, for instance, music created to invoke ancestral spirits has that “right result.”⁴⁹ In contrast, it may just seem “impractical” when some listeners who seek intellectual indulgence⁵⁰ (i.e., as their preferred “good for”) listen with pleasure to technical disposition of musical materials and other details of a performance or of a “work” with no other ends in mind. Note, however, such a “good for” value of connoisseurship gratification sought from listening is nonetheless a *use* promoting their contemplative intentionality—the “good time” listening praxis *they* judge as “worthwhile.” Thus, such use is still praxical in its social nature and value. *Listening is its own praxis*, then, and is properly addressed in a praxical curriculum, even in ensembles!⁵¹

Within a given praxis (as a type or style), it is, of course, always possible and even natural to judge *relative degrees of excellence* according to judgments of how well the ‘good’ in question is served. The *degree* of excellence or expertise (i.e., fittingness, goodness of “right results”) according to which that *function* is served, then, becomes a criterion that may affect the “status” in question: e.g., “good for” dancing versus “good for” listening. A “good performance” of a score (e.g., a Mozart choral ‘work’) as part of the *curricular function* of a school group, then, will be naturally different than a “good performance” of the same score by professional artists whose *artistic function* is to be “good for” audience listening pleasure. An elementary school band concert, lacking the musical refinements of more experienced musicians, may not yield much *listening* pleasure *as music*, but can evidence pleasure to admiring parents, relatives, friends, and administrators in the audience considerable progress in musicianship and practiced skills.

The status or “goodness” of the situated value, therefore, of any musicking is governed in large part by the *use*, the “good for” function served, and is not some purportedly ‘aesthetic’ or even artistic absolute. The “goodness” or excellence of *school performances*, then, is not simply determined by how closely they approximate ideals or conventional criteria of ‘aesthetic’ or artistic excellence—as critics sometimes complain about concerning the lack of ‘aesthetic’ merit of school music performing ensembles and their literature. Rather, “goodness” is governed by its

situation (function) in a praxical music education *curriculum*, a matter of how accomplished students' *musicianship* is for the musical praxis in question—especially how notable progress is over time.

Similarly, wedding or worship music are not judged simply by how closely they approximate or attain singular ideals of artistry; the conditions of excellence that obtain in a concert hall may be inappropriate to the situatedness of a particular wedding or worship service.⁵² And conspicuous excellence—a fittingness so beyond normal expectations that it attracts attention to itself—might be colloquially described as “beautiful” in this regard—though I am at pains to distinguish it from traditional aesthetic positing of faceless, placeless, and timeless *beauty*. It is more like a “beautiful” play in sports (another social praxis) that is notably exceptional.

Closing Summary

To wrap-up, musical value has been argued as thoroughly imbued with sociality (i.e., social value), and thus *as a valued social praxis, not as an aesthetic object*. Traditional aesthetic accounts of beauty and goodness have been contested with an account that is rooted in the construction of a pragmatic social reality called music, with its attendant social values. In this account, we have seen that musical values are relative to the social functions that sounds, as music or musicking, serve.

Correspondingly, lingering aesthetic advocacy, assumptions, and criteria are an empty and meaningless promise, no matter how noble sounding they may be. The *aesthetic metanarrative* and *ideology* discredited by postmodernism describes aesthetic responsiveness as covert, a supposedly inner experience. Therefore, its presence, absence, or improvement in relation to musical schooling literally cannot be assessed for educational purposes. Moreover, if the metanarrative is a “hidden curriculum” proviso for school music as promoting “good taste” (a troublesome concept itself, allied as it is with the *dubious claims* of aesthetics), it seems not to be succeeding!⁵³ Similarly, claims to teach for musical ‘understanding’ are misplaced. As Dewey argued, intellectual ‘understanding’ is not at stake but, rather, what musical experience *does*.

Dewey didn't put it quite this way, but the most important issue as to musical value is not what music *is* (e.g., NOT a source of aesthetic experience), but what it *does to and for human sociality*—for the human spheres of personal existence and collective meaning in which people find its use to be relevant for living the

good life. *Praxis* means *doing*! And what it does everywhere in the world is to reflect, create, and promote a wide range of social values—those “made special” by music according to past and present Backgrounding.

The social appeal of large ensembles as “school activities” is typically outgrown with the maturing of adolescence (if that ever happens?) and by facing new social conditions of adulthood, such as work and family. This proves to be a serious weakness when presumed aesthetic values are the basis of advocacy for school music, especially for *curriculum* design, because the noble sounding benefits proclaimed are just not evident in, at least, U.S. society. Other societies, operating on other social values for music, produce more, less, or different “cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1984—*culture advantages you can ‘spend’ in a society to get ahead or keep up*). Chamber musics, if propagated by their regular presence in schools, at least in addition to large ensembles, hold forth greater promise for being integrated into busy lives. The lasting value of so-called “aesthetic education” on most graduating students is otherwise minimal or non-existent. They have no idea what it was all about, only another school ‘activity’—chorus instead of cheerleading or sports). Both end with graduation.

Thus, in the eyes of the public music education is in a weak position in relation to other curricular subjects, which are expected to bring about lasting personal and social results. This is seen today in the mounting resistance to funding music education and to finding a reasonable place for it in the weekly school schedule

In contrast, praxical music education is easily subject to assessment and progressive guidance, and thus as educational justification for school music. It will provide and promote chamber music opportunities as instructionally beneficial: 1–3 or 4 students per part overcomes the averaging effects of large numbers (where large ensembles always sound better than individuals within them) and are more conducive to helping individuals grow musically. Chamber opportunities also model, while in school (and because of school), the adult values, interests, and pleasures of chamber musics for adult life.

In all its phases, praxical music education promotes musicianship that is progressively autonomous. Students become progressively self-sufficient in meeting basic musical demands. Such musicianship also opens doors—musical and social (though the two often overlap)—for graduates wherever they may be and can provide a key ingredient for the “good life” lived well in part through musicking.

Musical values are altogether more diverse and down-to-earth than the disembodied *asocial* (neutral, abstract, faceless, and placeless) values hypothesized by

traditional aesthetic theory. Musical values are observed wherever musicking is notable in fulfilling music's key role in creating, engaging, and advancing sociality. The facticity of music as a valued social praxis—as a characteristically human institution—is perfectly evident. A praxical music education seeks to further this sociality by endowing students with musicianship skills and knowledge that can serve them in adult life and, through their musical contributions, the musical life of society.

Coda

Worth addressing in connection with music as a social praxis is a sense in which aesthetic doctrine has become an *ideology* (Dissanayake 2011). Ideology involves a belief or value structure held so strongly that it often dupes adherents into ignoring contrary evidence. They either hold on to their erroneous beliefs, or if they are members of a dominant social group their values are foisted on others, supposedly as in the other's best interest and whether or not the others approve. This can be at stake if university faculty and school music teachers (especially those narrowly trained) impose their musical values on students—for example, choices of literature (that interest the director more than students), boring repetitive drill in rehearsals (perfecting new literature at each stage of rehearsing), a diet heavy in technical exercises (rather than music), and imposing their musical decision on students: “Don't breathe there.” [Learning “why not” teaches musicianship!]

In such situations, of course, many school students drop out. University students rarely question the prevailing aesthetic ideology and either submit to it (without even knowing what “it” is or that “it” is indoctrinating them), or they hide their affinity for many other values and musics. Studio lessons often lead to graduates who can't articulate the difference between a “piano lesson” and a “music lesson.” Those who disavow any difference are not likely to teach “music” as discussed here.

The effects of aesthetic ideology can be significant and problematic when school dropout rates are high and dropouts are denied an alternately meaningful music education (e.g., composition software, guitar class, steel bands, drumming circles, etc.). To the degree that aesthetic dogma influences us as music educators as a by-product of our university music training (where the aesthetic ideology is

typically untroubled by challenges from sociology of music, ethnomusicology, cultural studies, etc.), we risk devaluing and ignoring the more generally accessible values that musicking of various kinds and styles can offer individuals and society.

As a result, “school music” has become disconnected from the more socially diverse Backgrounding functions of music in the “music world” of daily life, music as part of the “natural attitude.” Rather than carry over into or otherwise contribute to the music world outside of school, then, *school music has become its own isolated music praxis*, with a shelf life of 12–13 years! This only adds to the legitimation crisis, since other school subjects are expected to have lasting benefits for adults and society.

Not surprisingly, then, *school music* too often fails to extend to any predictable or notable degree of musicking beyond the school years. After years of membership in ensembles and of listening lessons and other activities with ‘good music’ in general music classes, graduates are too unlikely to seek out (or create⁵⁴) community performing ensembles.⁵⁵ Carryover into the adult lives of graduates must be cultivated, then, by curriculum in school that most closely approximates opportunities for musicking in out-of-school community situations or in the “music world” at large.

That would amount to music education *as* and *for* praxis—as a professional praxis, for advancing musicking as a social praxis. Instead, as a result of the insularity of “school music,” the value of school-based music education—which is to say, its status function in and for society or a local community—can be doubted (e.g., as it is by taxpayers and administrators). What are the demonstrable “goods” it contributes to the lives of graduates and society? What is music education as aesthetic “good for”? Fortunately, the ubiquity of musicking in all societies and cultures demonstrates that music is widely valued; but, unfortunately, too often *despite* music education!

An account of music as social praxis reminds us that musical values are matters of valued musical purposes and functions and, thus, that we always need to take these centrally into any philosophical account for curriculum. A praxical music education aspires to the status function of a pragmatically useful *professional praxis* committed to promoting music as the amateur praxis⁵⁶ of graduates who regularly integrate the many inviting uses of musicking in their lives. Remember, the value of music is in what it DOES.

About the Author

Thomas A. Regelski is Emeritus “Distinguished Professor” (SUNY rank, 1978). He earned his BM in Music Education (1962), a Master’s degree in choral conducting (1963) and a PhD in Comparative Arts/Aesthetics (1970). He taught choral conducting, and music education methods and foundations courses at SUNY Fredonia (1970–2001), at Aichi University in Nagoya, Japan, the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland (on a 2000 Fulbright award), is a Helsinki University docent (2002–2013), and was a research fellow at the Philosophy of Education Research Center at Harvard University (1991). He is the co-founder of the MayDay Group (with J.T. Gates) and until 2007, was editor of its e-journal, *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* (ACT). In 2017, he founded a second MayDay Group journal, *TOPICS for Music Education Praxis*. He has over 145 refereed journal articles, invited chapters in regarded books, is author of seven books, and is listed on Wikipedia for his international accomplishments.. This article is the brief culmination of his research plan that began with a 1995 *Prolegomenon*, and before that on *Action Learning* 1975. His monograph, *Curriculum Philosophy and Theory for Music Education Praxis* appeared in 2021 is the culminating and last word, until necessary.

Acknowledgments

My thanks to Hildegard Froehlich, J. Terry Gates, Richard Colwell, and Wayne Bowman for helpful responses to an early draft of this article, and for the comments of three anonymous reviewers. Mistakes and confusions are mine.

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Notes

¹ Regelski (2002). Herein, single quotes denote “so-called” or “supposed(ly)” (e.g., ‘good’ music), thus not giving the word too much credibility. Double quotes are as usual.

² See n. 10 on “praxical” vs. “praxial.”

³ In his *Nicomachian Ethics*, intended as instruction for his son. See Regelski (1995, 1998). These articles apply to music education, the *ethical* premise of and other details of praxis (e.g., practical wisdom of phronēsis, Eudaimonia, etc.). See also Elliott and Silverman (2014), Smith and Silverman (2020).

⁴ See, e.g., Regelski, ed. (2003). Recent research in cognitive psychology finds feelings (emotions, affects), to begin with, to be types of cognitive consciousness. This research, carefully considered, cancels the claims of Reimer and Langer for “symbolic presentation” of feeling. See, to start: LeDoux and Brown (2017). As to Reimer’s 2003 reliance on Antonio Damasio, Google “criticism of Damasio.”

⁵ Reimer’s aesthetic posture is Neo-Kantian through his model Susanne Langer (Reimer 2003, 91, note 30; 80–81). Langer was a student of the Neo-Kantian Idealist Ernst Cassirer (philosopher of symbolic forms as underlying all culture). Beginning with Reimer’s inaugural book, Langer has been Reimer’s inspiration for the claim that music is the symbolic (cognitive) presentation (materialization) of forms and patterns of *feeling* (Reimer 2003, 85–101). However, Langer notoriously and mistakenly criticized Dewey’s *philosophical naturalism* as *behaviorism*—egregiously committing Dewey to a stimulus/response psychology, absent mind. Thus, Langer did not even understand, let alone recommend, Dewey’s distinction of “an” experience from “to” experience, and thus his aesthetics [*sic*]. Reimer reflects no awareness of this contradiction.

⁶ “Noun. In psychoanalysis, the part of one's ego that contains an idealized self based on those people, especially parents and peers, one admires and wishes to emulate.” *Wordnik* online, from *American Heritage Dictionary*, 5th ed.

⁷ Thus, the injunction “play more aesthetically” is laughable, even for teachers who continue to subscribe to aesthetic education premises for music. “Play more musically” *can* be reasonable when, *but only when* students already have in mind from past experience and instruction what the criteria of “musically” are to which they should attend in order to improve. Such independent musicianship is the goal of a praxical music education! In contrast, aesthetics has been, variously, concerned with beauty and (and/or) taste. Neither are typically addressed in music education. In any case, feelings *can* be described with adjectives (e.g. Kate Hevner’s “adjective circle,” 1937) as we do in everyday language. Why, then, don’t teachers of literature, poetry, and drama—arts of language—feel the need for aesthetic justification and rationales? “Musicing,” a verb form of “music,” is noticeable and thus whether or not progress is notable is noticeable and can be evaluated. See n. 48 for the coining of the verb form.

⁸ Sections below individually critique aesthetics in general and aesthetic premises for music education. For a praxical alternative to the aesthetic meme, see Regelski (2015; 2021) and Elliott and Silverman (2014).

⁹ For efficiency, I will indicate a sampling of examples *once*, to which future references herein of music as social praxis apply: any social praxis in which music is central or a defining element of its sociality; *without which, the social praxis is fundamentally changed*. Thus, all kinds of celebrations, worship, patriotism, dancing, amateur musicking (at home or with others), solidarity (political, social, etc.), ethnicity, nationalism, jam sessions, “garage bands,” school ensembles as social activities, concerts (i.e., audiences), music for ambience (parties, live music in clubs/bars), mood enhancement, radio and TV offerings, as supporting physical activity (aerobics play lists governing changing degrees of energy, running, etc.), intellectual sharing, interests and activities of “taste groups,” teaching (and not only music), music criticism, related intellectual interests and dialogue, listening *alone* (that shares in sociality of taste groups catered to by industry, and the various roles of sociality involved in producing recordings), concert audiences (“good for” their entertainment; social practices, such as clapping), human behavior/ethology (emotions, sexuality, aggression, power), and group forms of composition. Add your own candidates. I shall not expand on music for politically valued causes except to note that “political” comes from “polis,” meaning “people,” thus fitting the understanding of music as social praxis, political being one. See note 10, then, for the “Singing Revolution” in the Baltic States c. late 1980s and other examples of music being enlisted for social and political ends. Selected musics function to bring people together in pursuit of shared causes. I will not join the debates over “culture” and “Culture” as engaged in by various disciplines.

¹⁰ “Ignacio Ellacuría,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ellacuría follows a Marxian theme of action (praxis) undertaken to foster emancipation from oppres-

sive ideologies. The premise nonetheless demonstrates how the multiplicity of music praxies has inexorably led to ever-greater possibilities for musicing in society (e.g. cross-over musics, ever new musical technologies)—including as a force for *political change*. For example, the “Singing Revolution” in Estonia led to freedom from oppressive Soviet rule (Google singingrevolution.com). This Marxian side of praxis theory (*viz.*, Critical Theory) is also central to efforts in music education praxis to overcome poverty, social inequality, racism and other oppressive conditions. Note: Ellacuría’s translator refers to “praxical” bases for effecting change—rather than the adjective “praxial.” The close relationship of “praxical” to “practical” is a useful reminder that, properly understood, *praxis is pragmatic in its results*, I have therefore newly adopted it hereafter to brand my phenomenological sociology (see Alfred Shultz) of musical praxis from other praxial theory that mainly stress the inevitable differences between musical praxies and the need to account for these differences in education.

¹¹ Regelski, *Music and Music Education as Social Praxis* (2015). An argument from philosophy and phenomenological sociology for a philosophy of music as social praxis and *against* the advocacy rationale that music education is an education of aesthetic responsiveness.

¹² Regelski (1981, 1986, 1999, 2021). Basing schooling directly on an out-of-school praxis (e.g. studio art) requires adapting it to the *situatedness* that characterizes schooling. For example, artistic creativity outside of school is not fragmented into 40-minute periods. Similarly, the *educational function* of jazz in the curriculum is stressed over its typical out-of-school praxis.

¹³ See Regelski (2007). *Amateur*, despite its Latin root as “loving” (*amat*), often gets a negative reception or reputation among trained musicians. But musical *amateurism* as a key social praxis should be the primary goal of praxical music education. It is, at least, a foundational beginning for those who aspire to the hallowed status of “musician.” Chamber groupings are far more easily scheduled in busy adult lives than large community ensembles which, in any case, are too few in number. Why are there so few community ensembles, given the hegemony of ensembles in music education? Chamber groups also benefit greatly from Vygotsky’s premise of ZPD, where students learn from one another.

¹⁴ What music “is” to the question of recognizing musical performance and learning for their essential sociality NOT as created to elicit aesthetic experiences. Questions of musical sociality entail keen awareness of and connection to the originating conditions of particular musics and their relevance to the contemporary social mind; e.g., cantatas versus spirituals.

¹⁵ ‘Things’ throughout this discussion refer not only to nouns, but also processes, events, states of mind, actions, and the like that are more usually referred to with gerunds and verbs; for example, musicking, amateuring.

¹⁶ The important distinction of *sentient intelligence* (aisthesis) from knowledge gained solely through reason is a variation on the traditional distinction in philosophy between so called *synthetic* knowledge (synthesized from experiences) from *analytic* knowledge (based on self-evident reason). For an extensive philosophical account of *sentient knowledge*, see Xavier Zubiri, *Sentient Intelligence*, 1999; out of print, but available free online from The Xavier Zubiri Foundation of North America.

¹⁷ See, for example: Roth (2020, 191–229); “German Idealism,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://iep.utm.edu/germidea/>; “Weimar Classicism,” ([https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Weimar Classicism](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Weimar_Classicism)).

¹⁸ “[H]uman beings talk about the beautiful as if it is a property of the object or something which is logically necessary. In our judgment of taste ... [we] expect others to have a similar experience, a similar feeling, a similar judgment.... So, according to Kant, our judgment of taste is subjective and nevertheless involves at the same time a claim to being valid for everyone. Our judgment of taste is subjective and at the same time universal. This subjective universality ... is rooted in a subjective principle, which determines only by feeling rather than concepts, though nonetheless with universal validity, what is liked or disliked. And this principle is called by Kant *sensus communis*... [I]t explains why we assume that our aesthetic judgements will be shared by others, why they are transcendently necessary.” www.galerie-inter.de/kimmerie/framebraeemb.htm. In England, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury also hypothesized a *sensus communis* as a keystone of his aesthetic theory.

¹⁹ Even this assumption led to a contentious and ongoing debate in aesthetics as to whether an artist’s intentions are relevant to judging (valuing) an artwork. Aestheticians favoring absolute music assert the “intentional fallacy” to rule out the artist’s intentions (or, often, details of the artist’s life), and thus the *work alone* is the basis for understanding and judging its merit, not its relation to human life, ideas, and uses.

²⁰ See, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-aesthetics/#2.5> for an account of Kant’s theory, especially the contrast between pure and dependent/adherent beauty. It seems that Kant judged most visual art familiar to him as “dependent” for being representational. As mentioned, aesthetic discourse of the time coincided with the coalescing in cultural history of the Fine Arts (e.g., the so-called “Sister

Arts” that shared the family resemblance by having aesthetic properties). Importantly, by this time, the value of Fine Arts was specifically to exhibit high-minded aesthetic properties that occasioned aesthetic experience, in distinction to craft arts that were merely useful. Thus was born the delusive “aesthetic theory of art” swallowed wholesale by aesthetic education claims and “highbrow” social elites. However, it is but one theory of what art is and is “good for” and is increasingly judged by philosophers of art as lacking philosophical rigor. Contemporary artists simply ignore it.

²¹ The distinction between music [*sic*] as a collective noun, and “musics” is the same as that between “food” and “foods,” or “law” and “laws.” But to acknowledge the social facticity of “musics,” herein I shall indicate the *collective noun* “music” with the Arial light font (music). However, common expressions, such as music education or “absolute music” will remain undifferentiated. Herein, in following good scholarly style, occasional reference to “music” in double quotes (and not music) refers to the word as a word.

²² “Instrumental” in the sense of serving as a means of or conducive to *uses* the music is “good for.”

²³ Music as pure sound and formal construction; lacking extra-musical reference or use. See Dalhaus (1994).

²⁴ Kivy (1991). Even art song ‘suffers’ aesthetically from its words. This premise had long been the case since Kant, for whom “concepts” (of words) denied the status of *free beauty* (discussed above).

²⁵ Searle (1996). John Searle is a leading philosopher of mind, whose social philosophy (among other contributions) is resonant with George Herbert Mead’s “social mind,” and thus directly relevant to the theory of music as social praxis, Searle’s philosophical argument for *social reality* (in two books, and many articles) is not the same as for the “*social construction* of reality” advanced by sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman (in their book of that title, 1991—which is worth consulting as well). Searle describes *pragmatic (internal) reality*, not the relativism of utterly subjective worlds understood sociologically.

²⁶ *Ontology* is the sub-discipline of philosophy concerned with *being*—the conditions of existing—and related concepts. It studies what it means for something to exist.

²⁷ “[R]eality does *not* have an existence and character wholly independent of human practices [praxies], beliefs, and evidence for the simple reason that human practices, beliefs, and evidence are a very large part of the reality we talk about,

and reality would be quite different if they were different” (Putnam and Putnam 2017, 62, italics original).

²⁸ Mead (1962). In philosophy, ever since Kant’s categorical conceptualism (e.g., “categories of understanding” of the mind itself), perception was regarded as conceptually pre-disposed by intuitions of space and time, thus partially anticipating the findings of contemporary cognitive science.

²⁹ A basic concept of “phenomenological sociology.” See, e.g., Schütz (1967). Wikipedia has a useful summary. To simplify, it is our shared, “common sense” reality.

³⁰ The color green, for example, was not distinguished with a word in Japanese until well into the Heian era (794–1185). A Japanese word that might today be translated “blueen” conflated the blue and green parts of the color spectrum. Some languages identify colors using the names of trees or plants in their environments that have certain hues. These identifications—e.g., “green” as the name of a local tree—are meaningless outside of the language group. Thus, does language bias perception.

³¹ This distinction is creatively highlighted by John Cage in his 3’44” (of silence). In fact, there is no silence, but the sounds escaping from the street or nearby environment are audibly framed as music by the *social institution of a concert audience*, and their unavoidable hearing of “ambient sound” is thereby highlighted. See, too, composer R. Murray Shafer’s (1994) book, which stresses values of attending to our sonic environments.

³² Human biology and perceptual capacities (e.g., range of hearing, sight, etc.) Searle calls “Deep Background.” In distinction, “Local Background” (social, cultural situatedness) is described in the general discussion of Background that follows.

³³ For example, typical funeral music (i.e., excluding Requiem Masses) vs. wedding music. On “making special,” see Dissanayake (1992, 1990), ethological studies of art. Even just listening to music “makes special” the quality of *time* thereby experienced: the time is not wasted or killed but “worthwhile” (the word “worthwhile”—U.K. worth-while—literally means “valued time”). “Making special” is also known in ethology and anthropology as “artification” and accounts for the human impulse to create art and music, including cave paintings and drums.

³⁴ Regelski (2017). The idea of music descending from Mars is from philosopher Aaron Ridley, in *The Philosophy of Music: Themes and Variations* (Edinburgh University Press, 2004). It is a metaphor he uses in discounting the possibility of “absolute music.” Also see note 36.

³⁵ Thomas A. Regelski, “Resisting Aesthetic Autonomy: A ‘Critical Philosophy’ of Art and Music Education Advocacy,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 53/2 (2019), 184–98. “Automania” is also Ridley’s neologism for musicology’s fanaticism for absolute music (see note 37) as an object of scientific study by musicologists.

³⁶ Korsyn critiques music scholarship for pretending to arrive at singular reductive analyses that are only subjective conclusions of different researchers making personal claims to ‘truth’. For example, “Schenkerian Analysis,” perhaps the acme of essentialism reached by adherents of “absolute music” and “formalism” (historically advancing merits of ‘classical’ German nationalist-Romanticism against Stravinsky and other modernists) and its disciples and disciplines. This essentialism is still taught in many doctoral programs, though its relevance for most performing artists should be doubted. See Cook (2013).

³⁷ However, intentionality can contemplate what we don’t intend, such as pain. For sociology, *social actions* are those that take into consideration the reactions and behaviors of others *in their completion*. For Searle, perception itself relies on intentionality (Searle 2015), an argument for “direct realism.” Direct realism rejects intervening variables such as hypothesized cortical impressions or mental representations (etc.) *between* the source of a perception and the perception itself. *The perception is still culturally amplified!* Thus, indigenous cultures perceive attentive (attentional) qualities in nature that are relevant to their survival (e.g., plants “good for” food, medicine), perceptions that “advanced” cultures are not culturally induced to observe. The ‘Sami university’ in Finland preserves and studies knowledge of the indigenous Sami people of Finnish Lapland, thus according it recognition as valuable.

³⁸ As already noted, perception itself, in the constructivist and pragmatist view of consciousness, is inherently value-laden (culturally biased) and cognitive; it is a matter of selective attention guided by *cognitive categories* of a culture that arise to begin with in terms of the needs, values, language, and other social habits and institutions of that culture, its social mind, and “natural attitude.” For the latter, see notes 29, 39.)

³⁹ This Background is Searle’s “Local Background” (for “Deep Background” see note 32) and overlaps Pierre Bourdieu’s “habitus” and Jürgen Habermas’ “life-world.” All three account in key ways for the creation of *social reality*. Note the important difference from the social creation of reality. Additionally, in all three, “situatedness” is more than taking into account the historical or cultural “context” of music—as music history texts sometimes attempt. Rather, values and experiences are “situated” in terms of a *Local Background* of collective intentionality and

other cultural variables governing a particular *present* set of social and other circumstances of the “natural attitude.” Central to *phenomenological sociology* is the difference between the “natural attitude”—common sense acceptance of the straightforward fact-world of communally experienced ‘realities’ as situated in a given lifeworld—and self-conscious awareness of the directionality and structures of one’s *personal intentionality* within that shared lifeworld—in the present case, towards the *social facticity* of music on a given occasion. **Background** is a proper noun for Searle (i.e., capitalized) and also involves conditions (skills, education, experiences, etc.) of the perceiver.

⁴⁰ For more on ‘Background’ see: Internet *Dictionary of Mind*, or Google “John Searle, Background” (which leads to that dictionary entry).

⁴¹ “Not all consciousness is intentional, and not all intentionality is conscious,” but “every intentional state that is unconscious is at least accessible to consciousness” (Searle 1995, 7).

⁴² Thus the utterance itself, the mere labeling of an aural event as “prayer” rather than “song” or “music,” creates the important *social status* at stake, one of importance to religions that make that particular distinction. It thus involves what in the philosophy of language is called a “performative,” where words such as “I thee wed” or “please leave” create a new *social fact* (or social reality): a marriage, aloneness. Likewise, application of the word “music” to sound creates a *social fact* called “music.” The word “music” applied in a social context is performative in creating “music” out of what others from a different culture might call “noise,” or at least regard as “meaningless.” Not sharing their Background, we often regard the musics of other cultures in a likewise manner.

⁴³ The problem some aesthetes seem to have with improvised jazz is there are no future possibilities of performance compared to notated “works.” For these aesthetes, this denies the hallowed status of a “work.” However, even the possibilities of notated musics—including ‘classical’—are always variable according to gaps in notation filled in by a performer (e.g., exact tempi, dynamics, articulation, length of fermatas, rubato, phrasing, etc.). Possibilities for these gaps are among the important variables that need “to in-form” students’ musicianship for a notated praxis; e.g., *reasons* for choices of phrasing, articulation, tone quality, tempi, and other such musicianship decisions—unfortunately usually made instead by the director. Philosophically, these variables lead some postmodern theorists to consider performance (itself) as “the music,” not *of* music (the ‘work’). This notion of a score (‘work’) as a “social object” finds support in praxical theory and its acceptance would make major changes in music tuition at all levels. Musicking becomes an act of creation, not of repetition or instantiation.

⁴⁴ Christopher Small (1998) coined the neologism “musicking,” thus spelled, as a play on the old English “musick,” as *pre-dating aesthetics* and profoundly social. His *phenomenological sociology* takes “musicking” to embrace a wider part of the social spectrum than just the sounds of the moment. David Elliott (1995; Elliott and Silverman [2014]) had earlier referred to (and spelled) “musicing” as referring to performative aspects and social traditions by which music is composed, executed, and heard. Herein, I have preferred “musicking” simply to stress the social phenomenology of music as praxis.

⁴⁵ In Aristotle’s account of praxis, “right results” are values sought in meeting the needs of those served. Since such needs are variable in nature and extent for different people, groups, and even times (occasions), specifics cannot be articulated. However, a formal curriculum, per se, attempts to state anticipated right (musically desirable) results for the students and serves as the criterion of learning and teaching success. See: Regelski (2021). Outside of school, “right results” are those considered “good for” personal or group choices for musicing.

⁴⁶ *The sublime and the beautiful* are important markers in aesthetics. In *On the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), Edmund Burke famously tried to differentiate the two: the sublime was an all-consuming force beyond beauty that compelled overwhelming power and rapture. For Kant (who differed), it expands awareness beyond fine art “into the moral realm, lifting it from the sensory into the non-sensory sphere” (Wicks 2014, 203.) The transition from 18th century neo-Classical *beauty* to 19th century Romanticism’s *sublime* (and Schiller’s 1794 premise of the experience of fine art, following Kant, as cultivating morality: see (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/schiller/#LettAestEduc>) reveals the fickleness of aesthetic theorizing. However, such incompatible aesthetic speculations cannot legitimate 21st century school music education—but Reimer tried (see Reimer 1995).

⁴⁷ Again, *aisthesis* is knowledge gained by the senses; i.e., “sentient intelligence.” But, as also explained earlier (see note 16 and the connected text), perception as cognitively amplified by a culture typically has *aisthesis biased* (not ‘pure’, whatever that could mean) according to cultural variables or other *attensive properties* (those that “stand out” for them: e.g., clarinetists find clarinet parts of a symphony more attentive than, say, percussionists do) depending on the Backgrounding functions assumed by different musics or other perceptions (e.g., identifying genus and species in biology; qualities of snow for skiers, truck drivers, etc.). See Mandoki (2007), Chapters 7–8. Chapters 1–4 provide uncompromising critiques of traditional aesthetics. The attentivity of certain musics propels movement, such as dancing or just foot-tapping (e.g., to Irish tunes). This tendency to movement has been turned to advantage by cultures that favor (for cultural reasons) movement

as central to institutional dynamics—e.g., funerals, weddings, coming of age ceremonies, etc. all characterized by other cultures as “dance” but that come closer to sociality enacted gestures through music and even as religion.

⁴⁸ For example, Dixieland, swing, hard bop, modal jazz, progressive jazz, free jazz, smooth jazz, jazz-rock fusion, R & B, Afro-Cuban jazz (etc.), each arising from different social histories, yet each appealing to different taste publics or even geography: Dixieland, for example, associated with New Orleans, Paul Whitman’s big band with San Francisco. Interestingly, many of these styles came into prominence in different ages of social history—influenced in key ways by social changes and historical conditions of each era.

⁴⁹ In one instance, a classically trained American percussionist who studied drumming traditions of Ghana in the US with a Master drummer was later studying further in Ghana with that Master. On one occasion he was asked to leave the ensemble by the individual for whom the musicking was intended. His participation, although apparently competent enough that his teacher allowed his inclusion, was distracting her from the important function the musicking was to serve: the summoning of an ancestral spirit. It is important to observe in this example that “the music” was not simply an *accompaniment* to a non-musical socio-religious purpose; it was that purpose *wholly*. Furthermore, her dancing and vocalizations were part of “the music,” as were the activities of those in attendance whose role was not simply that of audience but involved participatory clapping and shouts of support. She might also have been discomfited by the presence of an outsider in the ensemble suspected of not joining in the social mind of that culture.

⁵⁰ For lack of a better term to describe such contemplative preferences; in truth, all single-minded preferences amount to indulgences.

⁵¹ For example, solos, duets, and other chamber musics (e.g., brass quartet; madrigal) assigned for independent rehearsing, with results presented during an interlude of an ensemble period as a brief recital. This creates an opportunity for ensemble members to listen and discuss, not just give concerts. And such experience during the school years is an entry to the pleasures of chamber literature that promotes carryover to adult musicking. Listening *may* be a matter of “what to listen for in music” that Aaron Copland wrote about in his book of that title in 1939. But the explosion of musics since then requires that sentient intelligence for a particular listening praxis be attuned and in-formed differently by different musics. And that means being responsive to the sociality connected with each, a process best informed by experience with a particular type. Musics education best conveys the challenge for praxical music education, whether to foster amateur performance of, or acclimated listening to different musics.

⁵² Though, once I saw the bride, a former student, turn around to admire or acknowledge the performance of her former classmates (many, by then, members of the Metropolitan Opera Chorus or Greg Smith Singers) emanating from the choir loft behind her.

⁵³ Confirmation for this is complaints from teachers and professors, cognoscenti, aesthetes, and musical intelligentsia about the supposedly 'low' caliber of the public's musical taste, as evidenced by the media, commercial preferences, declining audiences for orchestras and opera, and music criticism (e.g., increasingly ignoring 'serious' music in favor of 'commercial' musics), the Grammy awards (no longer include polka music, etc.), and the like.

⁵⁴ Where a student's participation in ensembles was as a "school" *activity*, mainly meeting social needs, there seems to be little inclination as a graduate to initiate community ensembles or to seek out companions for chamber musicking.

⁵⁵ This may vary according to country. Still, the relative popularity of such groups in Estonia or Finland engages a small percentage of the total graduates of (comprehensive) school music education and depends largely on graduates from "community art and music schools" supported by government funding. Sales of choral and wind band CDs, however, are limited everywhere; and many symphony orchestras face financial distress due to declining audiences. Google "symphony orchestra audience decline." Most grads find little or no *use*, no "good for" symphonic and other 'cultured music' (opera, chamber music, solo recitals, etc.) in their lives.

⁵⁶ On *amateuring* as a primary concern of praxical school music education, again see Regelski (2007) and note 13 above.