Diluting Democracy: Arts Education, Indigenous Policy, and the Paradoxes of Participation

Patrick Schmidt
University of Western Ontario

This article addresses how populist discourses surrounding the notion of voice can safeguard—perhaps contradictorily—spaces for undemocratic exertion of power, influence, and privilege. I argue that managerial democracy and vocality—a distortion of the potential found in the intersection between voice and agency—have become rather apt at appropriating artistic critique and disruptive cultural strategies into existing capital forms of action, thus working to neutralize its subversive potential (Boltanski and Capello 2005). In this article, I articulate a vision of policy practices as a personal and communal enterprise that aligns with the critical artwork that Chantal Mouffe calls for as a form of hegemonic disruption. The discussion ends by situating these challenges within issues related to post-colonial relations and the urgent and timely politics of indigenization of educational practices and curricula, including those in art and in music education.

Keywords: *democratic practice, arts, music education, indigeneity, vocality*

I n this article, I address how populist discourses surrounding *vocality* (a kind of utterance as participation) can safeguard—perhaps contradictorily— spaces for undemocratic exertion of power, influence, and privilege. I am particularly interested in the impact of paradoxes of participation and the insidious ways in which the co-optation of democratic engagement into a form of *close-enough practice* is used to re-constitute and flatten one's capacity to advocate for and engage in political discourse through artistic enterprise and curricula. This paradox connects significantly to the emergence of *vocality*[1] as an unconstrained right, which often reaches disabling effects and thus presents itself as a pressing challenge to civic, cultural, and educational environments today.

Expanding on my previous work (Schmidt 2017, 2020), I explore the manner and the spaces in which such *close-enough* engagements find their way in or emerge from managerial forms of policy practices at various levels. Starting from

the recognition that "policy discourses work to privilege certain ideas and topics and speakers and exclude others" (Ball 2009, 5), I want to explore policy not simply as a "capital P" event, linked to legislative action and or established rule, but policy as a practice that in both soft (quotidian and intersubjectively) and hard forms (stated and institutionalized) permeates the lives of educators and cultural workers. Moreover, understanding Catherine Marshall's (1999) position that traditional capital P "policy formulations rarely address the complexities of people's actual lives in favor of statistical fondness for neat demographic categories of gender, socioeconomic status, and age, among others" (in Walton 2010, 136), I suggest that critical policy conceptualization might offer a fruitful way to trouble *undemocratic* and populist views and their impact upon educational and cultural environs.

In what follows, I first set the stage for both the larger politico-philosophical delineation of the challenging and multiple ways in which managerial democratic practices emerge and take hold, as well as the paradoxes aligned with such practices: the expansion of vocality and its impact upon agency-full expression. I then articulate the ways in which these phenomena are also present in policy practices and how they may impact cultural and curricular formation in the arts, focusing particularly on music education. Finally, I provide a case focused on current and growing discussions about indigenization of educational and artistic practices within school curricula, examining the challenges and possibilities of the issues above within this most significant and contentious context.[2] What I offer aligns with Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) and their characterization of indigenization policy frames in higher education, specifically their critique of how expeditious policy choices, while easily made visible/audible, often fail to provide epistemic and structural re-direction (see also Brayboy 2006, Stein, 2020). In other words, they satisfy consumption needs toward acting and being perceived-to-act "appropriately"[3]—undoubtfully an aspect of vocality—but can also and at the same time defer, dismiss, or obscure more substantive action and structural change.

Starting with Two Stories

A guy was sent from East Germany to work in Siberia. He knew his mail would be read by censors, so he told his friends: "Let's establish a code. If a letter you get from me is written in blue ink, it is true what I say. If it is written in red ink, it is false." After a month, his friends get the first letter. Everything is in blue. It

says: "Everything is wonderful here. Stores are full of good food. Movie theatres show good films from the west. Apartments are large and luxurious. The only thing you cannot buy is red ink." This is how we live. We have all the freedoms we want. But what we are missing is red ink: the language to articulate our un-freedom. (Slavoj Zizek, Occupy Wall Street speech, 2011)

We had been talking about the vile Alex Jones, whom Mr. Zuckerberg had de-clined to remove from Facebook despite his having violated many of its policies (this month Facebook finally did bar him from the platform). For some reason, presumably to make a greater point, he [Zuckerberg] shifted the conversation to the Holocaust. It was a mistake, to say the least. "I'm Jewish, and there's a set of people who deny that the Holocaust happened. I find that deeply offensive," Mr. Zuckerberg said. "But at the end of the day, I don't believe that our platform should take that down because I think there are things that different people get wrong. I don't think that they're *intentionally* getting it wrong." I was shocked, but I wanted to hear more, so I said briefly: "In the case of Holocaust deniers, they might be, but go ahead." Did he ever: "It's hard to impugn intent and to un-derstand the intent. I just think, as abhorrent as some of those examples are, I think the reality is also that I get things wrong when I speak publicly. I'm sure you do. I'm sure a lot of leaders and public figures we respect do too, and I just don't think that it is the right thing to say, 'We're going to take someone off the platform if they get things wrong, even multiple times.'" (Kara Swisher, NY Times, May 26, 2019)

The Problem and its Logics

I see the vignettes above as conceptual and lived representations of the compres-sion and distortion of democratic spaces, which are increasingly part of our lives today. My motives resonate with those of Chantal Mouffe (2013), who wishes to "assert the central place occupied by the cultural domain in the construction of 'common sense,' highlighting the necessity of artistic intervention in order to chal-lenge the post-political view that there is no alternative to the present order" (xvii). At the same time, I align with Gaztambide-Fernandez's (2013, 2020) caution when he argues that "the arts don't do anything"; that is, the concept and idea of "the arts" by itself can be an empty and highly manipulated signifier. Our work in it, critically "occupying" our cultural domains, is the work at hand then—work ren-dered more difficult by the growing presence and social pressure of *vocality*. Thus, I attempt to provide a critique and a set of considerations to the field of curricular practice that might confront such normativity (articulated below), where arts and music education can also make a contribution.

The compression and distortion I mention above are, at least in part, explained by and a consequence of the strengthening of *close-enough* forms of democratic practice. For the purpose of this article, I highlight three elements at play in such democratic dilution:

1) the deleterious weight of vocality,

2) the commodification of collaborative authority, and

3) the repression of and confusion over what it means to engage in political critique.

At the center here is the extent to which *vocality* and *engagement* operate in growingly paradoxical ways: operationalized/codified by a managerial disposition that is over-formalized, boundary-filled and flat, while presented as and equated with agency. Let me clarify in two ways: first, with a broad and abstract picture of one way to see vocality and why it matters, and second, with a connection to policy and governance practice and how vocality is made present in such environs.

Now, beyond the more immediate or colloquial ways of seeing vocality (articulated in note 1), the potential diluting consequence to democratic practice lies in the formation of vocality as a corrosive substitute for agency. In other words, I am concerned with the extent to which the illusion of voice is established through vocality and how easily it functions as a manifestation of agency. Of course, this is not unidirectional, and its manifestations can be multiple. While this is an old phenomenon, what is new is the massification of the semblance, of the dissimulation, and thus the extent to which voice becomes transformed into vocality. The perniciousness of this process, I argue, is that at the same time that the semblance of agency is made available, the tools for its dismissal are made possible. Said differently, this *speech of the many* feels performative and thus potentially empowering but is easily deprived of its power. It feels embodied, but it has little materiality, as it often dissociates from responsibility or consequence. Vocality comes to function almost as an echo, a self-perpetuating, constantly audible echo, detached from an actual initiating body and in its over presence, requires little actualization. Important, then, is to consider also that a central characteristic of vocality is that it is not individual, at least not in the sense of being personal, critical, unique. Vocality is the sound of the crowd, always already an amplification of what others have said. This is the paradox of vocality, this echo-like action that feels personal, but is no one's voice.[4]

The second example places this broad abstract in one of its many possible configurations. In 1994, McMahon wrote *Authority and Democracy*, wherein he advocated that stronger participatory structures (in work environments) be put in place. There, he called to expand c-authority (a kind of collaborative engagement), arguing it to be best maintained under democratic conditions, i.e., conditions where those who are directed by managerial decisions are involved in the very process of formulating and enacting such decisions. So far so good, particularly since his claims suggest that organizations and corporations consider that "managerial democracy is justified on the basis of fairness and welfare maximization" (McMahon 1994, 336). Twenty-five years later, the *reasonableness* of distributive and collaborative forms of engagements (c-authorities) have gained status and legitimacy. At the same time, through slow and increasing extensions, managerial dispositions and practices have become normative, with ample reach extending from social media, to politics, to governance, to curricula. Just as significantly, they have alchemized (Popkewitz 2010), experiencing significant dilution and loss of meaning, and often serving as a subterfuge whereby consultation and voice belie real decision-making capacity. Here then, vocality becomes the *close-enough* representation of a diluted democratic practice.

By way of further exemplification—and sign-posting the indigenization discussion used as a case study later in this article—I believe it would not be difficult to see the manner in which the palliative actions that characterize close-enough practices are represented at the center of Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) argument. They propose categorizing approaches to indigenization in Canadian higher education[5] in three ways: namely, *Indigenous Inclusion, Reconciliation Indigenization,* and the third, *Decolonial Indigenization.*[6] I discuss all three later, but for now I want to concentrate on the first, which they judge to be most pervasive. This first model is based on "policy that aims to increase the number of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff" and does so "largely by supporting the adaption of Indigenous people to the current (often alienating) culture of the Canadian academy" (Gaudry and Lorenz 2018, 218). Granted, this is a significant departure from the "logic of elimination" based on a settler colonialist disposition that "destroys to replace" (Wolfe 2006, 338); nevertheless, Indigenous Inclusion carries with it, or more precisely, hides within it, the "epistemological refusal to recognize the latent relations of the settler colonial triad; the covering of its tracks" (Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez

2013, 74). *Reconciliation,* on the other hand, "locates indigenization in common ground between official and indigenous ideals" moving to establish not inclusion, but platforms for new types of relationships between settler institutions and indigenous communities, while *Decolonial* framing "envisions the wholesale overhaul of institutions to fundamentally reorient knowledge production" (219). Although the perniciousness of this kind of official covering is evident[7]—embedded and visible in official policies that affected and continue to plague racialized minorities, from red lining (housing) to "stop and frisk" policies to legislation such as the Indian Act in Canada—other forms of less visible *coverings* are available in all kinds of close-enough policy engagements. Think, for example, of the shortcomings of gendered "equal pay" and those of minimum-wage policies. My concerns converge with Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) in that we are "highly skeptical of half-measures, watered down policies, and other approaches that downplayed the need for major shifts" (219). Without dismissing the reality and benefits of incremental policy, I argue that *vocality* has a growing role in making close-enough political realities palatable. To me, it is self-evident that Indigenous Inclusion kinds of policies, which aim to increase the hiring and admission of Indigenous faculty, staff, and students, are to be welcomed and lauded. The challenge is the manner in which they defer or even replace other fundamental and structural change. Do we know when that line is crossed? Can we tell (name) when close-enough policy has taken hold? Are we able to call vocality out, when the ostensibly empowering tilts into co-optation?

Vocality and Diluting the Political

Having made the points above, I do not want to give the impression that vocality always implies a cynical and/or opportunistic engagement with the world. A significant element of vocality is that it can emerge out of well-intentioned attempts to fortify plurality and build consensus (Gould 2007, Schmidt 2012). Mouffe (2013) articulates how the rise of vocality might be encouraged within traditional pluralism, as pluralism's multiple input is portrayed as a pathway to consensus, whereby "many perspectives and values"—while too many to adopt *à toute force*— "when put together, constitute a harmonious and non-conflictual ensemble" (3). The paradox that pluralism brings with it, particularly under close-enough and

managerial forms, is that by highlighting different voices,[8] it also diminishes difference, and thus conflict.[9] Mouffe (2013) offers that in this somewhat naïve view, "proper political questions" that "always involve decisions that require making a choice between conflicting alternatives" can get lost (4). The challenge and co-opting power of *close-enough* conceptualization reside not in its intransigence, but in its agreeableness. Thus, it is precisely this space of *sensibleness* that creates a distance between the frame—its common sense, face-value naivete—and the insidious manipulations of the proposition, which expands and devolves over time, fostered precisely by the "good-naturedness" of the proposal.

Further lost here is the condition for understanding hegemonic practices, not as totalizing and immutable, but as "the product of a series of practices whose aim is to establish order in a context of contingency" (10). This is significant, as Mouffe (2013) highlights that "every order is the temporary and precarious articulation of contingent practices," and in this way "predicated on the exclusion of other possibilities" (2). In these terms, we could argue that policy, for example, may manifest as the hegemony of thought on a particular issue, at a particular time. This may help us see hegemony (and policy) not simply as totalizing, requiring conformity or at minimum enforcing affirmation, but also and rather as a space of dominance that carries within it the tools for its critique and the expectation of its own eventual displacement.

Troubling in the formation of what I am calling vocality is its role in the suppression of commitment to action and engaged governance, or what Mouffe (2013) calls "the political." The growing presence of daily vocality—as the capacity and willingness to generate utterance that is seemingly reasonable but often overwrought and devoid of a commitment to enactment—amplifies *voice*, while paradoxically curtailing *agency*. Put differently, *voicing is over-present, while purposeful inter/action is diminished*. My concern is that this is a factor leading to the further rooting of hegemony and policy, not as "contingent practice" and thus transient, but as entrenched power.

If we look at vocality pragmatically—for example, in daily labor spaces where authority relationships are such that an individual directs another to act, and *power* is always already present and felt—one would think that vocality without active representational impact (such as unions once had) would be quickly dis-

missed. And yet, vocality seems to provide a veil that has become useful, particularly for those controlling labor. In other words, in the absence of structural implementation mechanisms, the promise of distributive, horizontal engagement is not simply a representation of bad faith[10] but has become the foundation for *disempowerment* and *pastoral environs* (á la Foucault 2007). Consider how public stances against, say, Tyson's [11] despicable labor practices, come to be manipulated into publicized punitive stances (public opprobrium and fines) that in turn forego or mollify the need for actual legislative and regulatory change. Vocality, then, represents a *close-enough* or diluted democracy, making that dilution material and tangible as it is deployed in rationalizing the absence of actual decision-making, constricting wages and work rights, glossing over harassment, or justifying brutality.

I do not claim this to be an overriding reality, nor *the* constitutive social fact guiding us today. But I wonder about the effects of felt validation—particularly in the opportunity to express outrage, my daily vocality exerted as constitutional right—as a contributing factor to the suppression of (real) *pedagogically mediated conflict*.[12] I wonder how vocality and the kind of diluted democracy experienced today have become self-supportive, self-reinforcing. I wonder how their political economies are increasingly determinative of the establishment (or manipulation) of that deemed "participatory," "deliberative," or even "agency-full" today. If this is so, we might, contradictorily, find ourselves and our communities less passive, while we simultaneously "become active actors of [our] own precarization" (Mouffe, 2013, 69). I believe this concern is at the center of Zizek's story and exemplified abundantly in Zuckerberg's vocality.

I suggest that cultural production developed within arts environments (from schools to community to industry) can have a positive role in pushing back against such processes.[13] But that is only feasible if we fully confront the manner in which close-enough democracy and vocality have become rather apt in co-opting artistic critique and strategies such as "the search for authenticity, the ideal of self-management, the anti-hierarchical exigency" into the existing capital forms of action, thus working to neutralize its subversive potential (see Boltanski and Capello 2005). In these terms, it seems critical that music educators consider how to move beyond notions of "giving voice," changing it from a slogan to consequential and material practice. Teacher education, for example, might have to work toward the

formation of music teaching and learning that sees participants as social agents inscribed "in a set of practices that will mobilize its affects in a way that disarticulates the framework in which the dominant process of identification takes place" (Mouffe 2013, 93). A perfect articulation of this can be seen in the work of Indigenous musicians showcased in 2019 by the Banff Centre, named "Call to Witness: The Future of Indigenous Classical Music."[14] Clearly, the kind of efforts called by Mouffe exist, but they remain marginal.

I have argued that such aims can be facilitated in alignment with and supported by progressive visions of policy practice (Schmidt 2017, 2020a, 2020b). This is necessary to transform philosophical and ethical commitments into pedagogical practice and curricular policy, placing appropriate weight on the now socially worn but still "fashionable emphasis on denunciation as the most radical forms of resistance" (Mouffe 2013, 95). As the work of the artist Alfredo Jaar helps us understand, at times of high vocality, educators, artists and "critical art that believes it is by giving people lessons about the state of the world that they will be moved to act,"[15] are set for disappointment—failing to understand one of the fallacies of vocality, whereby more speech automatically means more action/engagement/activism. It is difficult not to consider then that, today, narrow ideals of education for aesthetic expression seem not just ineffectual but misguided and at times even callous. I find this pertinent to discussions of issues related to "postcolonial" curricula and the urgent and timely politics of educational indigenization; discussed in the concluding section of this article.

Policy Paradoxes: Ambiguity Aversion and Participation

The arguments above provide *one* path to frame the overall discussion and potential significance of challenging vocality and diluted democratic practices. Before I engage with the representation and potential impact of these notions in relation to Indigenous issues and music, it is important to further situate the manner in which their reach and prevalence can be amplified as well as pushed back. Given my interest in policy, I choose to use this consequential arena as a case. To make sense of the arguments to follow, it is necessary to consider that "Policy … is not only made of texts, guidelines, rules or legislation. Policy is also to be understood as a process, part of our daily working lives that is experienced" (Schmidt 2017, 14).

This distinction placing value in both "capital P" policy and policy-as-part-of-daily-processes in any kind of institutional/organizational context (such as schools, NGOs, arts councils), emphasizes the fact that policy practice and what I have called policy knowhow (Schmidt 2020a) do matter, impacting our lives as educators and cultural workers but also serving as a sphere of action that is available to us.[16]

Policy as a form of pedagogical practice—fostering and inviting knowhow development—may combat the pressure exerted by those who push toward vocality and close-enough dispositions. Recognizing the crevices in the paradigm, exploring counter-hegemonic practices, and placing cultural workers as key contributors in this process requires attention and empirical development. This vision of policy aligns with what Laclau and Mouffe (2001) have called "chains of equivalence," wherein multiple constituents with different struggles recognize both the unique nature of their own challenges as well as the ways these struggles intersect with those of others—significant in the discussion below given that Indigenous issues, just as those related to racism, are particular but also intersectional. As Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2012) articulate, "the meaning of policy itself is frequently just taken for granted and/or defined superficially as an attempt to 'solve a problem'" (2). This "fixed" or didactic notion of policy establishes within its discursive structures an implied and expected set of behaviors, which can easily become a false representation of the practice itself. As I have written elsewhere (Schmidt 2020a), there are many ways in which this can take place: for instance, when policy text replaces policy practice, when guidelines or rules replace governance, when implementation tactics replace local input or local adaptation. Policy functions as a form of *vocality* when, for example, it is touted as "the voice" of constituents in the very act of suppressing that same constituency, or at least segments of that constituency.

I understand that to some, policy practices are embedded in perceived paradoxes: say between the need for action and decision-making and the need for consultation and participation, between the establishment of consensus as representation of majority and the ethical responsibility to include, or the tension between validating established practice and tradition and the demand to address changing norms and needs. Undeniably, these tensions make democratic governance challenging. However, my interest and concern rests on this question: how or

through what mechanisms do these tensions become paralyzing paradoxes? Just as significantly, do such misguided constructions facilitate the mobilization of the kind of speech that I have called vocality and action that motivates sectarianism, leading to further breakdown in policy process?[17]

I argue that these distinct modes of policy practice are present in various levels of action—from legislative, to governance, to local curricular decision-making—abundantly illustrated in various parts of the ideological spectrum. Consider, for instance, practices such as those surrounding *behavioral public policy* as articulated by Adam Oliver (2013), or the concept of *nudge* as developed by Thaler and Sustein (2008).[18] Evidence and literature exist on how frames such as these are widely used, often to deleterious effects, while frequently presented in mostly benign terms. The concept of *nudge,* for example, is described as a form of "libertarian paternalism," aimed at "improving democracy" by "lowering the burden of reflection and critical reflection, [while] normalizing behavioristic versions of it, as 'good enough' or 'realistic'" (Oliver 2013, 12). They fully align with the discourse of vocality and close-enough democratic practice, and more troubling, are present in systemic actions (policy) from governments, to commerce and advertisers, to community centers, to organizational leadership. In other words, they are pervasive in our daily lives.

While economic-driven social policy and behavioral politics have permeated the realms of influence in North America, what is rather conspicuously current is the capacity to operationalize these practices and to amplify them. The speeding up of interactions and its formatting—mediated by technology—creates multiple spaces of influence where rules of engagement are based on and managed by quantification. And quantification is consequential, given that a central premise of a "nudge" approach to democratic engagement is the notion of *ambiguity aversion.* Derived from economic epistemology, this notion facilitates a significant reconfiguration of agency into choice, in line with the notions of vocality and close-enough practices articulated previously in this article.

In the personal sphere, the concept of *nudge* explains how in the time of Twitter and Facebook, voice is substantively determined from a negative—against something—operating in a space where ambiguity is seen as a paralyzing threat.[19] In the realm of policy, as a theory, nudge exemplifies the over presence of decision-making predicated on the avoidance of dissensus and self-doubt, rewarding and

perhaps legitimizing the vocality of the common, and expedient—the echo I mentioned earlier. Just as absurd and also paradoxically, vocality feeds its surety from a historic investment (fomented by the natural sciences) in the "objective" or what the economist Charles Manski (2013) has called "incredible certitude," the kind of certitude that cannot be reasonably justified. Manski offers a remarkable critique of the self-perpetuating vicious cycle between public policy demands (embodied by decision makers in power), the general public, and the scientific community writ large, which he explains this way:

> [T]he scientific community rewards those who produce strong and novel findings. The public, impatient for solutions to its pressing concerns, rewards those who offer simple analyses leading to unequivocal policy recommendations. These incentives make it tempting for researchers to maintain assumptions far stronger than they can persuasively defend, in order to draw strong conclusions. (94)

The point is, over time, ambiguity aversion alongside incredible certitude have become a central ontology for communities and individuals. Perversely, this ontology now also underpins general and naïve vocality all the way to the most pernicious, conspiratorial speech such as that of QAnon. Lack of ambiguity creates the perfect space for echo chambers, walled reinforcing news feeds, and the assurance that my vocality is not simply right, but self-evidently right.[20]

I do not intend to over paint this picture, but rather to highlight the impact on society and education alike of environs where highly uncertain situations are met not only with disproportionate aversion but also fear and detachment; the first manifests through vocality, the latter through protective measures such as the adoption of *close-enough* dispositions. The political reality of the United States in 2021 suggests that the case is not overstated. Beyond the Orwellian, however, other, more subtle cases are just as revealing and perhaps more clearly link the challenges of vocality within educational contexts.

Indigenization and Cultural-Educational Action

The previous section establishes concerns about vocality and diluted democratic practice in the context of wider macro policy and political dispositions, while also offering a pivot point to consider changes in how educators can examine and combat the impoverishment of participatory agency. I am intrigued by how/if/when

the intersection of close-enough practices and vocality function *to de-amplify* our ability to recognize, engage, and express purposeful *political engagement*. I would argue that few issues present such a complex, rich, and challenging arena for exploration of these concerns as those that surround indigeneity.[21]

By raising indigenization efforts in educational environments, I highlight the tension between three factors: 1) the challenge and opportunity established by the unique demand that reconciliation places upon cultural and education practice and policy; 2) the hybridity disposition widely demonstrated by Indigenous artists/cultural workers and the contributions they make to more critically understanding and perhaps disrupting hegemonic world views and vocality[22]; and 3) the problematic "romanticization of cultural practices as the objective of revitalization" (Pupavac 2012, 166), particularly within school-level curricular and pedagogical practices.

My goal in this article is to present a set of questions that may contribute to an emerging, albeit still rather limited, conversation, particularly within the field of music education. My aim in this contextualization is also to underline how issues at the center of current global concerns with democratic dilution—surrounding rights, agency, recognition, and reparation—need to be fought conceptually without foregoing their material consequences in *real* places.

Brief Context

To anyone still unfamiliar with the discussion, Canada, like other nation states such as Sweden, Finland, Australia, Brazil and the U.S., is responsible for systemic and governmentalized discrimination against and abuse of Indigenous peoples. After a long history of systemic oppression, brutal and policy-based assimilationist action (e.g., *The Indian Act of 1876,* governmental investment in Residential Schools*, The White Paper* of 1969), reparation efforts led to the 2008 Commission and the 2015 report on Truth and Reconciliation (TRC, 2015). Remarkably, if insufficiently, those were followed by discursive, policy, and economic actions.[23] From the acknowledgment of land ownership which frames daily meeting spaces, to earnest curricular efforts such as those developed by British Columbia, we see policy change that portents more substantive re-engagement with Indigenous val-

ues, epistemologies, and cultural practices and their roles and places within colonial spaces such as arts councils and schools.

The recent, and in many ways positive, curricular reforms in the province of British Columbia (2016), radically (rhetorically) reposition Indigenous knowledge (and in our field musics) as central to regional and national identity. They call for the development of classroom materials and resources in cooperation with local Indigenous community leaders and musicians (following recommendations by the TRC, 2015). As the most progressive State-supported efforts within Canada, BC's initiatives demonstrate commitment to implement these policies in a coherent manner—that is, "consistent with agreed-upon reform objectives" (Bingham and Birch 2018, 2)—and thus arguably outside parameters of action based on vocality and close-enough practices. When we look at educational and curricular reform regarding indigeneity within the national context of Canada, British Columbia is clearly ahead (see also Prest et al. 2021).

As anyone aware of policy knows, however, policy design and language can be quite disconnected from a *commitment to policy enactment* (Riveros and Viczko 2015). This is a crucial aspect of my argument regarding vocality: not only how speech has changed recently but how the material consequences of that speech is noticeable in practice. Put in policy terms, how can we avoid the lurking vocality of policy texts and close-enough enactment?

Indigeneity and the Promise of Educational Radicality

Social, cultural, and curricular issues around indigenization offer a current example of the opportunity-challenge nexus articulated above. I see the case of indigeneity as most significant, because it situates the material and discursive in proximity, as the appearance of changed values (or even actual change in values) may be placed in sharp relief with actual changes in material conditions.

Consider two examples. First, it is important to return to the three frames suggested by Gaudry and Lorenz (2018)—*Indigenous Inclusion*, *Reconciliation Indigenization, and Decolonial Indigenization*—as they offer another manifestation of the subtle ways in which vocality in higher education can obscure action that would otherwise be directed toward actual systemic and structural change. According to Gaudry and Lorenz (2018), "in general, Canadian academy has *rhetorically*

adopted an aspirational vision of Reconciliation indigenization" but de facto only committed to Indigenous Inclusion, which means "post-secondary institutions are attempting to merely increase the number of Indigenous people on campus without broader changes" (219). The consequence here, according to Rauna Kuokkanen (2008), is that Indigenous faculty and students "leave their ontological and epistemological assumptions and perceptions at the gates of the university, [to] assume the trappings of a new form of reality" (2). Just as significantly, this kind of framing not only foregoes structural and epistemic changes but also "requires Indigenous peoples, not the academy, to bear the responsibility for changes" (Episkenew 2013, in Gaudry and Lorenz 2018, 220). Second, and related to the first case, one can consider how policy changes toward indigenization significantly rely on the assent and labor of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit People for political, pedagogical, and curricular work, often without clearly delineated parameters of reciprocity or proper consideration of the emotional and cultural labor involved. The absence of such considerations can be seen as a reimposition embedded in coloniality, which, of course, has parallels in terms of race (see, for example, Bryant and Carvell 2019, also, Wilson 2020). Music education's historical reliance on *culture bearer practice* as ways to implement multicultural curricular policy comes to mind here, and it is worth asking how many Indigenous elders and cultural workers receive(d) appropriate and sustainable support and income derived from educational and cultural policy demands.

I do not aim my argument at the reaffirmation of formal educational spaces (such as schools and universities) as colonizing spaces or grounds of contestation. There are other well established, legitimate and apt critiques (Taiaiake Alfred 2004, Tuhiwai Smith 2012). My interest is whether and how we might address the close-enough enactments that emerge out of vocality, independent of the location of said vocality in the ideological spectrum.[24] I am interested in the litmus test disposition and the dissimulations vocality and close-enough policy seem to encourage, and what educators can do to inscribe, or at least fortify, sets of practices that can disarticulate "the framework in which the dominant process of identification takes place" (Mouffe 2013, 93).

My interest in the discursive turn in policy and ethnographic approaches to its practice (Fischer and Forester 1993) stem in part out of my concerns with how educators have become marginalized from the process of school governance (Ball,

Maguire, and Braun 2012), but just as importantly, with how the "disarticulation" of such regimes is more significantly dependent on participatory policy practice (not close-enough policy) than on strident rhetorical dissidence (i.e., vocality). In other words, are we enacting practices that live up to the rhetoric that frames them? Or, to what extent do todays' musical and curricular practices remain stuck in the kinds of "representational politics" that do not "address the structural inequities that underpin inclusion," thus carrying with them *inclusion* that elides "reciprocal relations" and cultural negotiation? (Robinson 2020, 5).

Cultural Production: Ambiguity Against Vocality

Within this political space, I invite the reader to consider the curricular implications of discussion around two related but distinct cultural spaces that may impact practices in schools and arts environs (they may seem arbitrary but are intended as a pedagogical device to focus the conversation): The first contains multilayered *socio-cultural practices and knowledge*, such as songs in ceremonial or transfer protocols (Bell and Napoleon 2008). The second involves the multilayered cultural-expressive work of artistic or cultural production, which emerges from, but is not wholly bounded by, communal socio-cultural norms. Simply put, the first looks and reflects primarily inward and highlights communal practices and traditions. The second looks both inward and outward, representing the cultural and artistic work that community members develop, exploring but also extending the first.[25]

One way to clarify this distinction is to look at how they are codified in Articles 11 and 31[26] of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Article 31 looks inwardly, more strongly toward conservation, and more fully into social-communal action that is enfleshed by common cultural practice—Indigenous communities enacting and cultivating their practices and traditions. It speaks directly to the first category mentioned above. Article 11 speaks of rights toward expansion and exploration of innovation, and the document uses the term *revitalization*. I suggest this article provides a stronger link to the second cultural environment I articulate—Indigenous artists/educators developing their cultural work.

Bringing this closer to music education practice, the distinction I suggest is meaningful as the field develops knowhow and protocols to address official policy

efforts to embed Indigenous knowledge into K-12 curriculum, such as those en-acted by the Ministry of Education policies in British Columbia (BC Ministry of Education 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). As articulated in the preceding paragraph, I want to address two critical and coterminous pathways of such policy and political ac-tion. Today, the more evident efforts (linked to Article 31) are those related to the translation of cultural and social Indigenous practices into curricular realities (see Prest 2019, Prest et al. 2021). When approached critically—and that is not in any way a given—the primary concerns here are with supporting cultural integrity, epistemological trustworthiness, and respect for ownership (Tuck and Gaztam-bide-Fernandez 2013, Kauanui 2016). This curricular approach is a necessary ele-ment, designed to instruct and instigate bias unlearning. Understanding cultural protocols and how songs are not simply commodities but follow Indigenous epis-temic constructions, distinct from those framed by artistic-aesthetic norms of set-tler western traditions, is essential. As much of school curricula is preservationist[27] (Apple 1996) and aims to be relatively detached from the production of knowledge (Sleeter 2010), such a frame should be uncontroversial. While critiques of the lim-its and faults of multiculturalism (Morton 2001, Karlsen and Westerlund 2010) apply and should be seriously considered in this context, they do not seem vexing, particularly in politically progressive environs such as British Columbia. This is important work that must be supported and expanded.

The other pathway emerges less from a socio-cultural approach as from a cul-tural-artistic engagement with cultural work that emerges from Indigenous indi-viduals and spaces, but also, potentially, through substantive and sustainable partnership with committed and fully engaged settlers (with stronger links to Ar-ticle 11). Here I speak of cultural work not solely as the re-actualization of lived practices (cultural, religious, ritual) but also created to represent, regenerate and to comment symbolically. They are used to express the importance, location, and meanings of recognizable codes and tropes but also to transgress them; that is, to speak and speak otherwise (Spivak 1999), as artistic practice often does. This is the kind of work for which hybridity and resistance are central markers.

An example of this conceptual consideration may be seen in how the two-spirit, half-Cree, half-Mennonite, composer and cellist, Cris Derksen, displays hybridity in her work (and life) while consciously arguing why such complex, non-totemic,

and de-ossified ways of engaging with cultural production are critical. In an article for the online journal, *The Philanthropist* (2019), she says,

> I used to see this from a two-dimensional intersectional vantage point, but I now see how my perspectives can be translated through my work to give my audience a magnified look at themselves through my perspective. As I write commissioned work for non-Indigenous ensembles with a non-Indigenous audience in mind, I have been able to shift my own perspectives to the audience to give undercurrents of meaning that would not be present if a non-Indigenous person were writing it. (see Youssef et al. 2019)

While I suggest hybridity to highlight a model that aims at curricular integrity that is also open, it is reasonable to ask whether hybridity can invite political action but can also be used as resistance or co-optation of sorts, a way, for example, of being Indigenous and making a living within the Western classical world. Derksen again,

> using older classical tools with powwow groups is one way I can express the intersections between old and new… What excites me most about *Orchestral Powwow* is placing our Indigenous music in the centre of the European model and having Indigenous artists lead the way. (see Youssef et al. 2019)

Toward Cultural Production?

If reconciliation in music education is to be more than merely vocality, critical curricular and pedagogical practice must be in place. I suggest that one way forward would be to focus on *cultural production*, that is, a music curricular approach where teacher practice and student creation is directed so that both find discursive and artistic ways to "question the dynamics by which certain cultural practices, processes, and products come to be classified not only as *apart from* but as *superior to* others" (Gaztambide-Fernandez 2020, 17). This could privilege generative work by Indigenous and settler-students where creation—not just listening and reproduction—of materials can carry with it critical creative dialogue regarding respectful collaboration, as well as legitimization, appropriation, and the limits of artistic enterprises. To do otherwise or to simply dismiss it seems another step toward pedagogical prescription, prompting the question: "If music and music making are acceptably multiple, and education [in music] recognizably prescriptive and sequential, what is it (or perhaps who is it) that disappears in this process?" (Benedict and Schmidt 2012, 135). The four models Gaztambide-Fernandez

(2020) offers might help us, music educators, to think through the avoidance of our own professional vocality and acceptance of close-enough curricular realities. There is something *productive* here and worth our consideration:

> To speak of creative symbolic work as *productive* is to point to the ways in which particular practices and processes yield concrete (although not always or only tangible) arrangements that are produced through a deliberate engagement with meanings and materials for the express purpose of making and communicating (and sometimes interrupting) meanings. Such purposes are not always evident and are usually contested through the interactions that make the work possible and that ultimately bring it to life. They are driven by both conscious and unconscious needs and desires that evolve and find expression within specific material conditions while responding to the affordances of matter. (Gaztambide-Fernandez 2020, 8)

This frame can help the educational community to approach the artistic/cultural work of Indigenous individuals and communities less as just a matter of "inclusion," as Gaudrey and Lorenz (2018) explain. This may open up curricular development framed around Indigenous knowledge and cultural production within schools that goes beyond the acknowledgment of another Other. Examples are out there in the world. The work of many artists, including those with the acclaim of Brian Jungen or Jeremy Dutcher, pull apart broad symbols of capital and status, while speaking with a voice that is imbued with Indigenous cultural epistemes and codes. In this way, their work exemplifies a hybridity that challenges but also invites, one that clearly makes use of tradition while suffusing it with other cultural codes, and thus expanding its meaning. Just as important, this kind of cultural work can also exemplify how "musical collaboration may equally result in important instances of incommensurable and irreconcilable difference that maintain sovereign values and resist aesthetic assimilation" (Robinson 2020, 7). Why should such models not be available within school curricula?

Close-enough curricular enactment that inserts indigeneity into music education can, and I would argue mostly has, functioned solely as a hesitant and modest form of Indigenous Inclusion. This does not, at all, ensure any movement toward *reconciliation* or *decolonial indigenization*. Significantly, it also fails to move the needle in many other ways, for example, facilitating hybridity, open forms to musical practice (Allsup 2016), activist dispositions (Hess 2020), critical engagement with the political (Bradley 2012), and of course, what Gaztambide-Fernandez (2020) calls a *cultural production* approach. While such engagements are filled

with perils and ethical challenges—and may face the wrath of vocality across the ideological spectrum—they seem essential in developing whatever one may construe as a social justice-oriented music education. Just as important, curricular design and policy based on a close-enough approach to Indigeneity will continue to fail to engage histories of co-optation and profiteering over subjugated peoples' knowledge and culture. It will continue to fail to contend with issues such as "bastardization" and production rights (see Nasser, 2017).

An Invitation

I end with an invitation to this dialogue, asking readers to contemplate and add their own questions to these: Do schools and curricula have a significant role to play in reconciliation that goes beyond awareness and acknowledgment? Can the field fund models of conscientious and diverse cultural practice emerging from tangible, personal, and collaborative creative acts within schools and community? If the answer is yes, when/in what contexts might this be acceptable? How might it be supported? What role may local policy enactment play in bringing it to fruition?

I offer few answers, but I suggest that the realization of the *reconciliation* framework articulated above, demands at minimum two considerations: 1) Structurally, can schools (and universities) become spaces for community embeddedness, where indigenous artistry can find spaces for sustainable development? This would require meaningful, long-term, and potentially expensive structural change, which nevertheless has precedent in actions around urban school reform as well as local governance movements (Anyon 2005, Darling-Hammond et al. 2002, Green 2015). 2) Professionally, could sustainable partnering establish Indigenous educators as cultural workers who occupy learning spaces on their own terms, not just cultural bearers working as curricular guests? This would require significant re-orientations, for instance in terms of hiring practices and professional dispositions—perhaps even challenging now normative ideas of what constitutes a "qualified" music teacher. But it may also contribute to curricular renewal and greater access to musical experiences.

Vocality can be a key factor in delegitimizing such efforts, eliding actual cultural possibility into *close-enough* practices. A commitment to action against it

would undoubtedly require a level of critical engagement with content, pedagogical practice, and policy practice that the field still struggles to enact. Regardless, I do believe music educators can offer a capacious way forward. I hope this discussion may be another constructive step in this struggle and the significant work ahead.

Acknowledgements

About the Author

Patrick Schmidt is professor of music education at Western University. Schmidt's innovative work in critical pedagogy and policy is recognized internationally. Recent publications can be found in the *International Journal of Music Education, Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, Arts Education Policy Review*, and *Research in Music Education*. Schmidt has led several consulting and evaluative projects including for the National YoungArts Foundation and the New World Symphony, US and the Ministry of Culture and Education, Chile. Schmidt co-edited the *Oxford Handbook of Music Education and Social Justice* released in 2015 and co-edited a two-volume book on *Leadership in Higher Music Education*, published by Routledge. His books *Policy and the Political Life of Music Education,* co-edited with Richard Colwell and *Policy as Practice: A Guide for Music Educators* were released by Oxford in 2017 and 2020. He is a co-editor for the newly released *Routledge Handbook for the Sociology of Music Education*.

References

Allsup, Randall Everett. 2016. *Remixing the classroom: Toward an open philosophy of music education*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Anyon, Jean. 2005. *Radical possibilities: Public policy, urban education, and a new social movement*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Apple, Michael. 1996. *Cultural politics and education*. New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

Ball, Stephen. 2009. *The education debate*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Ball, Stephen, Meg Maguire and Annette Braun. 2012. *How schools do policy: policy enactments in secondary schools*. London: Routledge.

Benedict, Cathy & Patrick Schmidt. 2011. Politics of not knowing: The disappearing act of an education in music. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 27 (3): 134–48. https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/view/232

Bradley, Deborah. 2012. Avoiding the "p" word: Political contexts and multicultural music education. *Theory into Practice* 51 (3): 188–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2012.690296

Brayboy, Bryan. 2006. Toward a tribal critical race theory in education. *The Urban Review* 37 (5): 425–47. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-005-0018-y

Bartleet, Brydie-Leigh, Naomi Sunderland & Gavin Carfoot. 2016. Enhancing intercultural engagement through service learning and music making with Indigenous communities in Australia. *Research Studies in Music Education* 38 (2): 173–91. https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X16667863

British Columbia Ministry of Education. 2015a. *Aboriginal report 2010/11–2014/15: How are we doing?* Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch. Retrieved from: https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2015.pdf

British Columbia Ministry of Education. 2015b. *First Peoples principles of learning*. Aboriginal Education. Retrieved from: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/documents.htm

British Columbia Ministry of Education. 2015c. *Building student success: BC's new curriculum*. Retrieved from: https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum

Bingham, Andrea, and Patricia Birch. 2018. Reimagining complexity: Exploring organizational ambidexterity as a lens for policy research. *Policy Futures in Education* 17 (3): 402–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210318813269

Boltanski, Luc and Eve Chiapello. 2005. *The new spirit of capitalism*. London: Verso.

Cannon, Martin, and Lina Sunseri, eds. 2019. *Racism, colonialism, and indigeneity in Canada: A reader*, 2nd ed. Oxford University Press.

Corntassel, Jeff. 2012. Re-envisioning resurgence: Indigenous pathways to decolonization and sustainable self-determination. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 1 (1): 86–101. https://asset-pdf.scinapse.io/prod/1480663984/1480663984.pdf

Darling-Hammond, Linda Ancess, Jacqueline Ort, and Susanna Ort. 2002. Reinventing high school: Outcomes of the coalition campus schools project. *American Educational Research Journal 39* (3): 639–73. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312039003639

Derrida, Jacques. 1978. *Writing and difference*. Translated by Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Episkenew, Jo-Ann. 2013. Indigenizing university administration of Tawaw ci? (Take 2). In *Transforming the academy: Indigenous education, knowledge, and relations*, edited by Malinda S. Smith, 64–8. https://www.ualberta.ca/-/media/D2916F31E07E43B5BFF8AF3FE2923920

Fischer, Frank & John Forester. 1993 (eds.). *The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 2007. *Security, territory, population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–1978*, translated by Graham Burchell. New York & Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Frandy, Tim. 2018. Indigenizing sustainabilities, sustaining indigeneities: Decolonization, sustainability, and education. *Journal of Sustainability Education* (June 14). http://www.susted.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Frandy-JSE-Introduction-Decolonization-Issue-PDF-1.pdf

Gaztambide-Fernandez, Rubén. 2013. Why the arts don't do anything: Toward a new vision for cultural production in education. *Harvard Educational Review* 83 (1): 211–36. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.83.1.a78q39699078ju20

Gaztambide-Fernández, Rubén. 2020. The orders of cultural production. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 35 (3): 1–24. https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/view/939

Gaudry, Adam & Danielle Lorenz. 2018. Indigenization as inclusion, reconciliation, and decolonization: Navigating the different visions for indigenizing the Canadian Academy. *AlterNative* 14 (*3): 218–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118785382

Gould, Elizabeth. 2007. Social justice in music education: The problematic of democracy. *Music Education Research* 9 (2): 229–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/14613800701384359

Graham, Matthew. 2016. Heralding the Other: Sousa, simulacra, and settler colonialism. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15 (2): 146–77. https://doi.org/10.22176/act15.5

Green, Terrance. 2015. Leading for urban school reform and community development. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 51 (5): 679–711. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X15577694

Hess, Juliet. 2019. Moving beyond resilience education: Musical counterstorytelling. *Music Education Research* 21 (5): 488–502. https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2019.1647153

Homan, Shane, Martin Cloonan, & Jen Cattermole. 2016. Indigenous music policy: Australia and New Zealand. In *Popular music industries and the state*, 1st ed., 136–71. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203505700-6

Kallio, Alexis, and Hildá Länsman. 2018. Sami re-imaginings of equality in/through extracurricular arts education in Finland. *International Journal of Education & the Arts 19*(7). https://doi.org/10.18113/P8ijea1907

Karlsen, Sidsel, and Heidi Westerlund. 2010. Immigrant students' development of musical agency: Exploring democracy in music education. *British Journal of Music Education* 27 (3): 225–39. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0265051710000203

Kauanui, Kēhaulani. 2016. "A structure, not an event": Settler colonialism and enduring indigeneity. *Lateral* 5 (1): 5-1. https://doi.org/10.25158/l5.1.7

Kuokkanen, Rauna. 2008. *Reshaping the university: Responsibility, Indigenous epistemes, and the logic of the gift*. Vancouver, Canada: University of British Columbia Press.

Laclau, Ernesto, and Chantal Mouffe. 2001. *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Toward a radical democratic politics*. Second edition, London: Verso.

Manski, Charles. 2013. *Public policy in an uncertain world: Analysis and decisions*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

McMahon, Charles. 1994. *Authority and democracy: A general theory of government and management*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Morton, Charlene. 2001. Boom diddy boom boom: Critical multiculturalism and music education. *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 9 (1): 32–41. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40495451

Mouffe, Chantal. 2013. *Agonistics: Thinking the world politically*. New York: Verso.

Nasser, Shanifa. 2017. Toronto gallery cancels show after concerns artist 'bastardizes' Indigenous art. CBC News. (May 10). https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/toronto-gallery-Indigenous-art-cancels-amandapl-1.4091529

Oliver, Adam. 2013. *Behavioral public policy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Popkewitz, Thomas. 2010. The limits of teacher education reforms: School subjects, alchemies, and an alternative possibility. *Journal of Teacher Education* 61 (5): 413–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487110375247

Prest, Anita. 2019. Cross-cultural understanding: The role of rural school–community music education partnerships. *Research Studies in Music Education* 42 (2): 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X18804280

Prest, Anita, and Scott Goble. 2021. Toward a sociology of music education informed by Indigenous perspectives. In *Routledge handbook of sociology of music education*, edited by Ruth Wright, Panagiotis A. Kanellopoulos, Geir Johansen, and Patrick Schmidt. New York: Routledge.

Prest, Anita., Scott Goble, Hector Vasquez-Cordoba, and Beth Tuinstra. 2021. Enacting curriculum 'in a good way:' Indigenous knowledge, pedagogy, and worldviews in British Columbia music education classes. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 53: 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2021.1890836

Riveros, Augusto, and Melody Viczko. 2015. The enactment of professional learning policies: Performativity and multiple ontologies. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 36 (4): 533–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2015.980492.

Robinson, Dylan. 2020. *Hungry listening: Resonant theory for Indigenous sound studies*. University of Minnesota Press.

Schmidt, Patrick. 2012. What we hear is meaning too: Deconstruction, dialogue and music. *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 20 (1): 32–6. https://doi.org/10.2979/philmusieducrevi.20.1.3

Schmidt, Patrick. 2017. Why policy matters: Developing a policy vocabulary in music education. In *Policy and the political life of music education: Standpoints for understanding and action*, edited by Patrick Schmidt and Richard Colwell, 11–36. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, Patrick. 2020a. *Policy as concept and practice: A guide to music educators*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schmidt, Patrick. 2020b. Developing our policy know-how: Why policy should be part of music educator identity. *Music Educators Journal* 107 (1): 24–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432120929072.

Schmidt, Patrick. 2021. Doing away with music: Reimagining a new order of music education practice. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing 35*(3). https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/download/947/491

Sleeter, Christine. 2010. Decolonizing curriculum. *Curriculum Inquiry 40*(2): 193–204. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-873x.2010.00477.x

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1999. *A critique of postcolonial reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Stein, Sharon. 2020. 'Truth before reconciliation': The difficulties of transforming higher education in settler colonial contexts. *Higher Education Research and Development* 39 (1): 156–70. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2019.1666255

Swisher, Kara. 2019. Nancy Pelosi and Fakebook's dirty tricks: This latest doctored video proves that Facebook as we knew it is over. New York Times, May 26, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/26/opinion/nancy-pelosi-facebook-video.html.

Thaler, Richard, and Sustein, Cass. 2008. *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth and happiness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Tuck, Eve, and Gaztambide-Fernández, Rubén. 2013. Curriculum, replacement, and settler futurity. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 29 (1): 72–89. https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/view/411

Truth and Reconciliation Canada. 2015. *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf

Walton, Gerald. 2010. The problem trap: Implications of policy archaeology methodology for anti-bullying policies. *Journal of Education Policy* 25 (2): 135–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930903428630

Wilson, Barbara. 2020. I'm your black friend, but I won't educate you about racism. That's on you. *The Washington Post*, June 8, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/06/08/black-friends-educate-racism/

Youssef, Marcus, Hannah Moscovitch, Antoni Cimolino, Cris Derksen, and Mélanie Demers. 2019. The art of impact: Reflections from five Canadian artists. *The Philanthropist*, June 24, 2019. https://thephilanthropist.ca/2019/06/special-report-the-senate-wades-into-charity-policy/

Zizek, S. 2011. *Speech to Occupy Wall Street group.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liBjJPiglUk

Notes

[1] While I will explore it further, it may be helpful to articulate here a colloquial understanding of vocality. This can be easily seen, for example, in social media, where, growingly, one's unconstrained right to speech seems to supersede other ethical, civic, and even judicial contingencies. At a basic level, this is quotidian, and the "infraction" of vocality may simply be lack of grace, the over presence of ego, or social boasting. At a mid-range, we could characterize such expression of vocality as bullying and/or micro-aggression, although this continuum can also lead to racialized or misogynistic trolling. I would argue that coded speech and misrepresentation are present here too—that is, more dubious but no less harmful. The last category, unfortunately, is perfectly exemplified by the incessant vocality of the 45th President of the United States. Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than the relationship of the history of the former President's vocality (on camera, radio and through tweets) and the material consequences of his speech not just in policy (think heinous immigrant family separation, for example) but in inciting unlawful action (think the January 6th insurrection)? It is also interesting to note that all this is still permissible under the U.S. First Amendment, even though I would argue that several of the former President's tweets (as well as the aggregated history of these tweets) are analogous to what the Supreme Court has established as a "true threat," or remarks outside of free speech protections, as they veer into action that intends to cause harm.

[2] I acknowledge and accept the critique that this approach, using the problematics of indigenization as a case, as a critically important, highly illustrative, and yet arguably non-central aspect of this article, may be seen as insufficient or too modest.

I also acknowledge that this usage can be seen as colonialist, as I, the author, might have more to gain by making it than any Indigenous person. I do hope, however, that this critique may challenge non-Indigenous others to critically consider their own relationships with indigenization, and thus may prove of some use.

3 Whatever that means in the context of the interlocutors, from "morally" to righteously to "wokely."

4 The codependence of the former U.S. President and Fox News might be a perfect example of this phenomenon.

5 It is worth noting that, regardless of its shortcomings, Indigenization looks and feels much more present and hopeful in Canada than, say, in the United States.

6 I find interesting some of the intersection between the arguments here and those delivered by Charlene Morton's 2001 article on the variations of multiculturalism.

7 Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013) offer an enlightening account of the kind of covering that settler colonialism has applied.

8 Here I mean voices from perceived distinct groups but also presented in terms of numbers, as vocality has an obsession with aggregates and quantity.

9 This can further and more substantively be explained through the work of Derrida (1978) on *différence,* as well as Laclau and Mouffe (2001).

10 This can be seen in many employment contexts. California, arguably the most liberal state in the U.S., passed in November 2020 Proposition 22, a ballot initiative funded by the likes of Uber. It was written to safeguard the current terms of a section of the "gig economy" and consolidate exploitative (or market-based) labor relations between highly profitable companies and "contracted labor"—who will not actually be considered employees and thus have minimal labor protections.

11 Tyson Food is the world's second largest meat and poultry producer and its labor practices have been notoriously and historically problematic. The latest and perhaps most serious iteration of such practices happened during the 2020 Covid Pandemic. See for example: https://blog.ucsusa.org/karen-perry-stillerman/4-ways-tyson-foods-made-2020-worse. Or, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55009228.

12 This is central to the hybridity I discuss in the last sections of the article.

¹³ See Gaztambide-Fernández (2020) and Schmidt (2020) for caveats and cultural production as a replacement for the problematic and colonialist moniker "the arts."

¹⁴ Particular attention is worth to their Manifesto and the manner in which Cris Derksen and Jeremy Dutcher make their case. See https://www.banffcentre.ca/events/indigenous-classical-music-panel-livestream.

¹⁵ As I hope it is clear by now, this quote speaks to one of the fallacies of vocality; that is, that more speech automatically means more action/engagement/activism.

¹⁶ Sphere understood as a space with boundaries that one may or may not recognize as such.

¹⁷ Here I mean policy to be equivalent to equitable and democratic governance.

¹⁸ It may be worth noting that Sustein worked as a close advisor to the Obama administration.

¹⁹ I think this is also a perfect representation of how managerialism has co-opted problem solving, placing 'decisive decision-making' at a privileged position within civic and cultural life.

²⁰ Meaning correct, superior, natural, normative.

²¹ This article was not developed to present a full articulation of this issue. Rather the aim is to provide an opening, placing the exploration of meaningful challenges presented by vocality and managerial democracy within settler and Indigenous communities alike. Further, the recent developments in policy and discourse in relation to indigeneity in places like Canada (Cannon and Sunseri, 2019, Prest, 2019, Prest & Goble, 2021), Scandinavia (Kallio and Länsman, 2018, Frandy,2018), and Australia (Bartleet, Sunderland, and Carfoot 2016; Homan, Cloonan, and Cattermole, 2016) provide a critical and timely space for discussion of issues such as those framing this article. It is in the spirit of critical solidary that I, an immigrant settler and White-passing Latino from Brazil (but also a U.S. citizen and now a permanent resident of Canada) offer this writing.

²² While I use the notion of hybridity here, I recognize its limits and its potential connection to perceptions of intercultural synthesis. My aim and meaning is closer to what Dylan Robinson (2020) characterizes by the logogram "+", as in "Indigenous+art music", for example, designed to highlight "the point of encounter itself" and "employed in order to resist the conflation of difference" (9).

23 I say remarkably because Canada and the U.S. have a rather infamous history of commissions and reports on diversity that where either dismissed, when acerbic (think, for instance, of the U.S. Kerner Commission Report of 1968 where, in the introduction, the authors state: "White society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.") or used to dissimulate and diverge attention from real policy change.

24 I am grateful to the reviewers and editors who in their critique led me to read more about "resurgent education" within a decolonial framework. While I don't have the space to articulate this fully here, Jeff Corntassel's (2012) account of resurgence as a "struggle" seems an opportune link to notions of artistic hybridity, which I highlight below.

25 One way to articulate this distinction is that the first notion or practice might be understood within the bounds of re-affirmation—the claiming of space for suppressed traditions and epistemes—while the second could be called resurgence—where the claim assumes the standing and cultural wealth of these traditions and epistemes as a given, and, at least potentially, considers and adds transgression as an available space for cultural production.

26 *Article 11*
1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.
Article 31
1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.
For the full document see: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.

27 i.e., tends to privilege the reproduction of existing values and practices.