

Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education

the refereed scholarly journal of the



Action for Change in Music Education

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Electronic Article

Bowman, W. (2002). Symposium: *Music's Significance in Everyday Life. Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education. Vol. 1, #2* (December 2002).

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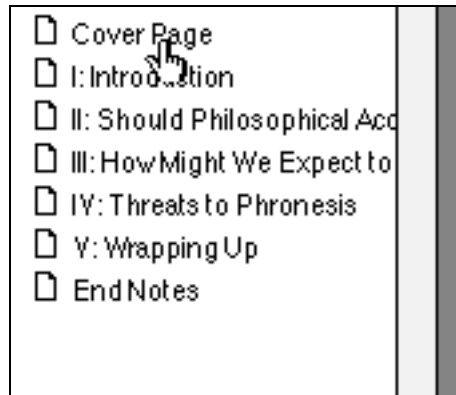



fig. i

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Symposium: *Music's Significance in Everyday Life*

The essays that follow inaugurate a feature of A.C.T. it is hoped readers will find thought provoking and useful: a series of 'symposia' involving multiple essay reviews of books. Books for review will be selected with a view to their potential relevance to music education – whether or not music educators may have been the intended audience.

Critical analysis and commentary from a broad range of perspectives is in keeping with the MayDay Group's commitment to critically exploring and expanding, rather than limiting, discourse. Inclusion of reviews by scholars both inside and outside the music education profession is consistent with the need to encourage interdisciplinary thought and dialogue on matters of potential importance to music education, and to music studies more broadly. When circumstances allow, authors will respond to reviewers' analyses, impressions, questions, and suggestions – in the spirit, it is hoped, of inclusive and expansive dialogue: the communicative exchange of ideas.

The primary concern of these reviews is not, in other words, the promotion or vilification of the book under consideration. Reviewers will be encouraged to approach the task in ways that initiate thoughtful dialogue on issues germane to our understandings of music, our approaches to curriculum, and our strategies for practice. They will be asked to consider posing questions to which the author(s) might respond. And we will endeavor to make the reviews interesting and informative in their own right – whether or not the reader is able to consult the book under consideration. Reviewers will be encouraged to advance their own thoughts in relation to the themes, issues, and

arguments raised. In each of these ways, these essays may be expected to depart from the typical academic review.

The book being discussed in this issue is *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge University Press, 2000, ISBN 0-521-62732-X) by Tia DeNora, a British sociologist from the University of Exeter. DeNora was the 1994 recipient of the *International Sociological Association's* "Young Sociologist" award. In addition to numerous journal articles, she has published the book *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius* (University of California Press, 1996) and is currently completing for 2003 publication (Cambridge University Press) a book entitled *After Adorno*.

Music in Everyday Life was chosen because it probes matters closely related to topics that have been debated heatedly among musicians, sociologists, and philosophers in recent years: issues that have figured centrally in the Mayday Group's concern to re-think key issues in music education. In particular, DeNora's work challenges us to think much more closely about the range of things implicated in our debates about "music" and "musical praxis." It shines a bright light into dimly lit corners, highlighting musical values, uses, and powers that extend well beyond those manifest in such musicianly affairs as performances, works, and pieces – the referents that seem to situate and demarcate so many of our assumptions and claims. The typical notion of musical praxis, as associated with capacities like musicianship and its quasi-professional musical traditions, differs rather strikingly from the one that seems to emerge from DeNora's more broadly utilitarian, social, and bodily accounts. Music, DeNora shows persuasively, is deeply and significantly implicated in the creation of human lives and meanings – and

in realms that include both the extraordinary and the mundane, the elegant and the prosaic.

Thanks to Daniel Cavicchi, Hildegard Froelich, John Shepherd, and Tia DeNora for pointing us in promising and provocative directions – directions with implications that beg further exploration.

Wayne Bowman, Associate Editor
Brandon, Manitoba
Canada

Editorial Policies and Practices

Topics and Disciplines: ACT solicits studies dealing with critical, analytical, practical, theoretical and policy development topics that are connected to applying, challenging or building on the issues and topics germane to the Action Ideals of the MayDay Group (see www.maydaygroup.org). Those Ideals propose areas and strategies for broadly needed change in music education, and embrace a wide range of related topics, content, questions and issues requiring focused study. The Ideals should be understood, then, as working hypotheses rather than doctrines or foregone conclusions. Therefore the focus of this journal is devoted to these seven distinct but interacting domains rather than to other topics. Scholarship from diverse disciplinary perspectives is invited and welcomed: education, music, philosophy, sociology, history, psychology, curriculum studies, and others as well. Submissions limited to highly specialized topics unconnected to the broader interests of the Action Ideals are not encouraged.

Audience and scope: The MayDay Group is an international and non-national organization. Submissions should, as much as possible, be framed in terms relevant and understandable to music educators everywhere.

Language: English is the preferred language, although manuscripts in other languages will be reviewed when reviewers are available who are competent in the language and content of the paper. This allows theoretical and critical papers to benefit music educators in places where such kinds of publication are, for one reason or another, not available. Non-English submissions must be accompanied by an extended English language abstract that will be published along with an accepted paper.

Style and format: Manuscripts must be sent electronically to the editor, Thomas A. Regelski. The use of a standard style manual or particular formatting practice is not required: The most important consideration is that format and style suit the particulars of the research and promote the effectiveness of its presentation. However, reviewers may find reason to stipulate certain changes to improve a paper. Authors are encouraged to take advantage of electronic presentation formats. Preliminary consultation with Publishing Editor Darryl Coan is encouraged prior to submission of a paper in order to determine technical practicality and choices of options.

Timing of publication: Articles will be published as they are accepted through the refereeing process and are technically ready for publication. ACT is not limited to a set number of issues per year. As an e-journal it is well suited to facilitating continuing debate and deliberation of key issues. This allows an extended series of responses concerning a particular paper or topic and promotes building constructively upon themes raised by earlier papers, thus advancing a particular topic or issue in a timely and progressive manner.

Action, Criticism and Theory for Music Education has features that are unique among music education scholarly journals today.

- Multi- and interdisciplinary content and methods are encouraged.
- The format is flexibly effective for a wide variety of presentation formats, and articles can be published in a timely manner.
- Dialogue on and expansion of themes allow progressive development and extensive exploration of topics.
- The use of international experts as referees resists parochialism and ‘insider politics’, thus promoting trust in both the integrity of the process and the results.

These features give promise of leading to a solid, relevant and useful multi- and interdisciplinary research base—empirical, theoretical, and practical (*viz.*, relevant action and applied research)—with the potential to refocus, revitalize and reconstruct the theory and practices needed if music education is to respond productively to the challenges of the modern world and to changes concerning schooling. Such research is needed to counter the professional inertia and status quo thinking that prevents addressing challenges and changes with new findings and ideas for improvement. We encourage music educators everywhere to take full advantage of this new opportunity for addressing the critical, theoretical and practical needs of music education.

Thomas A. Regelski, Editor.

Complimentary announcement:

Journal of Historical Research in Music Education

Volume XXIII:2

April 2002

Contents

Editorial

Jere T. Humphreys, Arizona State University

Articles

Creative Music Making as Music Learning: Composition in
Music Education from an Australian Historical Perspective

Peter Dunbar-Hall, University of Sydney, New South Wales,
Australia

The Influence of Japanese Music Education in Taiwan during
the Japanese Protectorate

Angela Hao-Chun Lee, Mulgrave, Victoria, Australia

A History of Music Education at Michigan State University

Jean H. Fickett, Michigan State University

Some Notions, Stories, and Tales About Music and Education in
Society: The Coin's Other Side

Jere T. Humphreys, Arizona State University

Book Reviews

Butt, John. *Music Education and the Art of Performance in the
German Baroque*

Reviewed by Brian Cardany, Arizona State University

Sudhalter, Richard. *Lost Chords: White Musicians and Their
Contributions to Jazz, 1915-1945*

Reviewed by Andrew Goodrich, Arizona State University

Frederiksen, Brian. *Arnold Jacobs: Song and Wind*, ed. John Taylor

Reviewed by Christopher M. Hulett and Barry N. Kraus, Arizona State
University

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