# Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education

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## Electronic Article

## Musicianism and the Ethics of School Music

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Introduction

Axiology is the philosophical discipline that studies questions of value. It is centrally concerned, then, with both the arts and with ethics and morality.[1] Music teaching clearly involves questions of musical value and, because the wellbeing of students is at stake, teaching engages a wide range of ethical responsibilities. However, music education as an ethical endeavor is not typically emphasized in philosophies of music education, as part of music teacher training, in curriculum theory, or by accountability practices.[2] There is, therefore, reason to think that music educators need to become far more aware of the ethical implications of their choices and actions.

To that end, following a brief introduction to ethics, I present some ethical dimensions of teaching as a helping profession. Then the three major ethical theories are surveyed, with applications to school music. Following that survey, I propose a condition called "musicianism" to explain why music teachers can sometimes fail to meet important criteria of an applied ethics of teaching. In conclusion, a set of five principles for an applied ethics of school music teaching is recommended.

### INTRODUCTION TO NORMATIVE AND APPLIED ETHICS

*Normative* ethics involves formal theories that pose either a single criterion or a set of interrelated principles for guiding and judging ethical actions. *Applied* ethics, instead, analyzes ethical issues of individual or typical cases, and attempts to derive ethical principles relevant to the particulars of these cases that usually function normatively for a profession.[3] Medical ethics, legal ethics, business ethics, military ethics, and environmental ethics are all examples, each addressing issues that are even sometimes in conflict with other fields.[4]

*Professional ethics* fall into the domain of applied ethics because they vary according to different issues faced by each profession. However, some ethicists seek to avoid *relativism* by, following Plato, positing universal grounds that are said to only take different appearances according to the practices of different professions.[5] In general, among other

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resources, applied ethics involves analyzing the premises and practices of a profession in relation to principles and criteria suggested by normative ethics, and I follow that approach here in highlighting key ethical dimensions of teaching music in schools.

The idea of *educational ethics* is relatively new. The first issue of the journal *Ethics and Education* appeared only in 2006. Thus, the preparation of teachers has not included the attention given to ethics typical of the other *helping professions*—professions that exist to promote people's wellbeing; for example, law, medicine, therapy, social work, nursing, and the ministry. Some concern for ethics in those professions is statutory: laws to protect the public. But other matters involve ethical traditions and codes; for example, these are often the premise of plots for novels, TV shows, and films dealing with these professions.

Teaching is evidently a helping profession. On one hand, teachers are aware of common sense ethical criteria—such as not being romantically involved with students. Otherwise, they often think that professional ethics is mainly a matter of not speaking ill of peers[6] and of simply meeting daily teaching responsibilities (e.g., being on time to class, ending on time, being prepared, maintaining order in the classroom, cooperating with other teachers, etc.). Many professional codes and principles are posted on the Internet.[7] Most, however, are observed by teachers without much thought. On the other hand, notable for its typical absence is mention of an ethical responsibility for the demonstrated *learning* of students—the 'help' for which the profession exists! In contrast, doctors or lawyers who typically produced negative results or no consequential benefits for patients and clients would soon be out of business or removed from professional practice by peers.

Key, then, to any consideration of an applied ethics of teaching is the status of teaching as a *profession*. However, what a profession is and the criteria and conditions of being a professional need clarification in order to serve as bases for an applied ethics of teaching music in schools.


PROFESSIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

A profession is often regarded as any specialized occupation. However, many occupations— from sports to plumbing to automobile repair—require only limited specialization. Occupations directly involving the welfare of people usually require certification or licensing to protect the public. Teaching music, of course, qualifies as a profession on these bases since

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it is clearly a specialized occupation. And teaching it in schools (in many but not all countries) typically requires certification to ensure that teachers are competent.

Teaching shares two basic ethical criteria with the other helping professions: the need to promote benefits that those served would otherwise lack; and, in the process, to "do no harm." Thus, the service in question meets an obvious and important *need*: if we go to a doctor we expect that the service is clearly helpful, not harmful.[8] The primary criterion of applied professional ethics, then, rests on unequivocally meeting the need for which the profession exists.

Functionalism

This expectation of providing a clear benefit is, then, a primary condition that sociologists influenced by functionalist theory recognize as characterizing a profession:[9] professions provide (a) a helpful public or individual *service* that (b) is valued *by those served*. According to sociologist Max Weber, " 'ideal typical' " professionals,

> were self-employed providers of services, they entered their profession because they were 'called' to it out of some deep personal commitment, and their qualifications were based upon their possession of 'expert' and esoteric knowledge. In addition, their knowledge base could be acquired by only a select few who underwent long and rigorous study. Their services dealt with serious, often life-or-death matters, and they were remunerated by fees from clients. Communication between professionals and their clients was legally privileged so that courts of law could not require its disclosure. Most important, entrance to these professions was controlled by professional peers, who set requirements for entry, training, and certification. Boards of peers also developed review processes to maintain standards and competence. (deMarrais and LeCompte 1998, 150).

Clearly, teaching falls short on several of these criteria. However, other recognized helping professions (e.g. nursing) also fail to meet several of Weber's conditions, many of which have been modified by institutional changes in society. Nonetheless, Weber's "ideal" suggests some ethical issues worth briefly considering.

First is the issue of entering music education as a calling—that is, for altruistic reasons, rather than mainly for personal musical gain or other self-serving reasons.[10] As sociologists deMarrais and LeCompte note,

> a profession is considered a lifelong calling. However, . . . teaching is treated as an interim career by family-oriented women, to be practiced at the convenience of marriage and child-rearing, and as an entry-level occupation for men and women who aspire to administrative jobs or other, more lucrative and less stressful careers. While many people do make teaching their life work, and while the rate of quitting decreases the longer a teacher remains in the profession, teachers on average have

among the shortest career trajectories of all the professions. Individuals who actually begin teaching remain for an average of no more than about five years. (1998, 152)[11]

Quite clearly, many seek careers in music education simply because they are 'good at' music and like 'doing' it but do not want to face the challenges of making a living as performers or composers. Instead, they make music with students in the autonomous and sheltered world of school music.

From the inception of schools as we know them today, teaching has been a middle class profession that was safe and secure. However, the idea of teaching as a calling was often used to excuse not paying teachers well: they were expected to sacrifice personal affluence for professional rewards. Despite widespread agreement among teachers that they do not get respect—including salaries—commensurate with their professional training, university schools of education continue to attract aspiring teachers who are impressed enough with the prospects of a teacher's *lifestyle* to seek teaching careers. Music teachers are certainly not unique in this respect. However, in addition to such lifestyle advantages, of teaching (e.g., frequent vacations, being home when children are home from school, etc.) the autonomy music teachers typically have over their own programs and students[12] and their freedom from the competitive pressures of the commercial music world are attractions that can take precedence over—or eventually replace—altruistic motivations.

Furthermore, most entering the profession have thrived as students in the autonomous world of school music. Many often want to be 'just like' a favored music teacher, without giving much thought to the motivations that may have influenced their models.[13] While many music teachers care deeply for their students, surely everyone has known of some who give the appearance of using students to fulfill their own musical needs rather than, or more than, meeting their students' long-term musical and educational needs. Keeping in mind such temptations of self-interest over altruism, the reasons music education students give for entering the profession are worth addressing, since "justification in terms of self-interest alone will not do," as ethicist Peter Singer notes:

> Self-interested acts must be shown to be compatible with more broadly based ethical principles if they are to be ethically defensible, for the notion of ethics carries with it the idea of something bigger than the individual. If I am to defend my conduct on ethical grounds, I cannot point only to the benefits it brings to me. I must address myself to a larger audience. (Singer 1997, 10)[14]

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Thus, whatever their original motivations, the need to orient prospective music teachers along more ethically altruistic lines follows from accepting that music teaching is a helping profession and, thus, is an inherently ethical endeavor.

Secondly, as to Weber's criterion of expertise, music teachers typically develop far more musical expertise than teaching competency. Some musicians even argue that musical excellence alone provides the most important requirements needed to teach music.[15] However, this assumes that students must submit to such musical demands and that those who do not or cannot show appropriate devotion or discipline can be left by the wayside with no ethical concern on the part of the teacher. Conceptions of music as a discipline and fine art thus leave out—even contradict—much of the musicking that people find valuable. And teachers clearly need expertise concerning, for example, the growth-typical characteristics—biological, intellectual, social, etc.—of students, and concerning the learning process.[16] Uninformed teaching practices too often produce negative results.

Critical social theories

In contrast to the functionalist perspective that professions altruistically provide specialized and valued services to society, some critical social theorists see professions as *special interest groups* that are, despite any services they may provide, self-serving in ways that belie the usual criterion of an altruistic calling (e.g., Kleiner 2006). When teachers or nurses go on strike, then they risk being seen by society as ignoring their calling and of selfishly pursuing their own needs instead. In creating an autonomous world of school music world in which they are the musical authorities upon whom students are made dependent and to whom students are obliged to show musical obeisance, music teachers are freed from the kinds of pressures of the music world at large outside of school—pressures and other conditions they often have intentionally avoided by entering teaching.[17]

Furthermore, allegations are sometimes leveled—especially in regard to funding expensive ensemble programs—that school music too often serves mainly an elite few students. Thus, music in the general education of *all* students—the underlying premise for the profession (e.g., MENC 1951, but a typical premise of most education ministries)—too easily gives way to music for the select or self-selecting few. Ensemble teachers are usually the only subject teachers who have the option of teaching only students they accept or retain. Moreover, teachers who are mainly serving their own musical needs can be largely

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unconcerned with students who fall behind or drop-out, rationalizing that they are unworthy or uncommitted. So even if they do not take active steps to be rid of such students (e.g., by strict audition standards, or other criteria[18]), they often do little (or nothing) to attempt to 'rescue' such students. They are like a doctor who complains that all the patients in the waiting room are sick! Thus, an expectation of working mainly with high-achieving students needs ethical reorientation: if anything, students who are less musically 'healthy' have more need for, and more to gain from, a teacher's best efforts.

Finally, music teachers may easily succumb to the notion that the *music* of school music—the 'good music' with which the music teacher is most familiar and competent—is somehow special, or is more valuable than the music in the larger music world outside of school, and it is thus addressed to the exclusion of other musics. However, attempts to 'convert' students to more 'classy' musics typically fall on "deaf ears" (Green 2008) and, if anything, reinforce tendencies of adolescents to define themselves by their differences from adults—especially on the basis of musical tastes (Zillmann and Gan 1997). Such attempts at musical 'redemption' are as ethically dubious as they are philosophically suspect.[19] And, in any case, such intentional distancing of the supposedly 'special' world of school music from musics that are common outside the school risks a sense of irrelevance that threatens the existence of school music—an irrelevance that, in failing to provide the pragmatic benefits for which the profession exists, raises ethical challenges from the three main normative ethical theories.

<div align="center">NORMATIVE ETHICS: A SURVEY</div>

Normative ethics has been analyzed into three main types: duty, virtue, and consequentialist theories. Despite key differences, there are points of overlap and all have something to offer to an applied ethics of music teaching.


Duty theories

Duty theories (also called deontological, from the Greek *deon* for duty) propose *norms* for ethical conduct; for example, the Ten Commandments or the Golden Rule. These obligations are due *regardless of consequences*—thus contrasting duty theories with consequentialism (discussed below).[20] Duty theories are also rooted in the concept of *rights*: one person's rights imply the duties of others.[21] Civil rights and animal rights, for example, entail that

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certain ethical conduct should be observed[22] and students' rights are obviously central to teaching ethics.

Many duty-based principles have relevance for music teachers. Briefly:

- The oft-cited criterion of "do no harm" requires avoiding physical damage—e.g., not directly contributing to overuse injuries, hearing loss, and the like. And any teaching that regularly 'turns off' students (to certain kinds of music, to continued study, etc.), amounts to harm done.

- Safety, as a right, involves not simply freedom from physical danger but also the duty of teachers to avoid causing or risking psychological harm, such as humiliation or other extreme and emotionally harmful mental states.[23]

- The right to fair and equal treatment means not favoring one student or one group for preferred treatment to the exclusion of others. Music education that favors the elite few over the middling many, or that favors one kind of music to the exclusion of other kinds, fails on this ethical criterion.

- The right of students to express themselves means they deserve opportunities to express their musical (and other) ideas. Teachers who simply impose their musical (and other) ideas on students risk not observing ethical "due process"[24] on this account.

- On deontological bases, the duty to meet the musical (and other) needs of students, in contrast to telling students what their needs are or should be, is relevant. This implies diagnosing, then addressing, the varying musical needs of different students.[25]

To these should be added the duty to "make a difference" (Regelski 2005) in the musical lives of students.

- This duty follows from the criterion that a profession exists to provide an important service, and thus school music should make a notable difference in the musical lives of students and to society.

This duty, however, shares important common ground with consequentialism: the right of every student to a meaningful music education dictates the responsibility to promote just such pragmatic and beneficial consequences.

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Consequentialism

Instead of duties prescribed in advance, consequentialism uses consequences to judge ethical conduct. The theory is a modern descendent of the utilitarianism[26] of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill which propounded the normative ethical principle of *utility*: that ethical action produces "the greatest good for the greatest number," as the adage goes. An action is good that is more productive of happiness or pleasure, or more preventive of unhappiness or pain, than alternatives. Rather than pleasure and pain, however, in its modern consequentialist form such actions are understood in terms of their contribution to the *wellbeing* of those affected by an action.[27]

Understood broadly—since variations exist, usually differing according to a key criterion[28]—consequentialism involves two ethical principles:[29] first, the need for analyzing the potential (or most likely) positive *and* negative consequences of an action; then, determining whether, overall, the positives outweigh the negative possibilities. In applied ethics, two further variables typically apply: whether the consequences, overall, will benefit the wellbeing of those who will be affected by the action (including, sometimes, the agent) and, generally, for society. These issues are particularly central to the applied ethics of professions since, as already noted, professions exist to provide valued services to individuals and society.

Teaching as a profession, then, is in certain central ways (differently for each subject) governed by the ethical responsibility to provide a valued service—which is to say, to provide clear and pragmatic benefits to students and society. Schools exist on the premise of such functional benefits.[30] Music education, then, entails the ethical requirement for promoting consequences that are clearly beneficial, clearly valued contributions to the wellbeing—especially the *musical* wellbeing[31]—of students and society. That this is *not* the case is seen in the need to increasingly resort to the politics of 'advocacy': if the benefits of school music were clear and clearly valued by individuals and society, the sociopolitical need for advertising its value would be correspondingly less.

Consequentialism, thus, provides important food for thought concerning the status of music education in general and in particular locations. It highlights the ethical relevance of differences between the *benefits promised* by school music and those actually *provided*. Where the promised benefits are consequences that are so intangible or otherwise incapable of "making a difference," as pragmatists would say, the *action ontology criterion* of ethics is

raised.[32] This criterion requires that actions result in some overt consequence (i.e., empirical evidence) that can be used to warrant and weigh their ethical justification; in other words, a state of perceptibly improved wellbeing that confirms the promised ethical virtue in question. Actions that have no such discernible consequences *make no difference* from an ethical perspective! Thus, in situations where making a beneficial difference is the purpose of a teaching action, the lack of discernible consequences for students' musical wellbeing amounts to ethical irresponsibility.

As a result, when the services promised by music education—the benefits promised—fall short of the action ontology criterion of having the potential for making a notable difference, two problems arise, one pragmatic and the other ethical. First, an 'anything goes' kind of relativism—even anarchy—results where any teaching can be said to be good enough since no empirical indicators exist to give evidence of teaching effectiveness. Moreover, such relativism avoids the professional ethical responsibility of providing consequences that are both discernible and obviously beneficial to students' future musical functioning—in contrast to what would be the case without instruction. Since the profession exists to provide a clear and valued service, when results are neither clear nor make clearly beneficial changes to the future *musical* lives (choices, actions, capabilities, dispositions, etc.) of students, music education fails to demonstrate its functional worth to society and, thus, fails to meet its ethical responsibilities as a profession.

Also stressed by consequentialist ethics: music teaching, to be fully professional and ethical, ought to promote consequences that clearly meet *important* needs, those essential to the present and future musical wellbeing of students and thus to the contribution of music in the life well-lived. In sum, consequentialism requires that results be *consequential*—that is, significant and substantial.

In this regard, a "need" is understood as a lack of a necessary or otherwise required condition. On one hand, of course, there is what students think they *want*; on the other, however, is any *deficiency* in their present musical abilities and dispositions that is likely to stand in the way of the fullest potential for their lives well-lived musically. Schools exist not just to meet students' present interests and wants, of course; but these are ignored at the peril of, for example, discipline problems or of force-fed learning that is quickly lost for lack of its use (or lack of its relevance for use). But students' needs also involve certain musical means they presently lack that are *required* to fully avail themselves of what music has to offer the

good life. This often includes an awareness of the options, beyond their presently favored ones, by which music can enhance their lives.

Diagnosing students' musical needs is, then, a first step in analyzing the promised benefits—the good and important consequences—that are to be the professional contribution to students' musical wellbeing. However, music teachers frequently get into ethical quicksand when they *dictate* needs and requirements; particularly those that, in the teacher's value system, are said to be 'required' to preserve high 'standards', that are in the best interest of the program (rather than of individual students), or that mainly serve the teacher's personal musical needs.

Especially problematic are the ethical implications of one-size-fits-all methods that assume that all students' musical needs are the *same*—or that they should be. Furthermore, lessons are typically predicated on membership in the ensemble program, not on the skills and other requirements that would facilitate and empower the pleasures of lifelong amateur musical involvement of various kinds.[33] Thus, students typically fail to develop either the independent musicianship or the dispositions (or both) needed to seek or take advantage of opportunities to perform as adults.

General music classes—by whatever name in various countries—are also often similarly limited and limiting. The emphasis on 'creativity', singing songs (to teach pitch matching, music reading, and singing in parts), listening lessons, and playing classroom instruments does not seem, overall, to typically produce much in the way of long-lasting or useful musicianship or skill. Yet, the benefits that are claimed and that motivate the one-size-fits-all methods often adopted are claimed to somehow have advanced aesthetic responsiveness and 'appreciation'—despite the absence of clear and convincing evidence (i.e., the action ontology criterion) that the 'activities' and 'experiences' of such classes make any notable contribution to the choices, tastes, and other aspects of the average adult's musical wellbeing in the home or community (see, e.g., Asmus n.d.).[34]

The ethical need to place the musical needs of students and of society at the center of teaching and of promoting consequences that clearly 'make a difference' in graduates' musical lives is also at the center of the concept of teaching as *praxis* and to the *virtue ethics* first formulated by Aristotle.[35]

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Virtue ethics

For Aristotle, there are two kinds of virtue. *Ethical* virtue depends on personal traits, such as temperance and patience.[36] *Intellectual* virtue requires knowledge and skill. Among these are three primary virtues: *nous* (intelligence) and *epistēmē* (knowledge) combine over time to produce *sophia* (wisdom). *Epistēmē* is itself divided into three types: *theoria*, *techne*, and *praxis*.

*Theoria* involves speculative reason, theoretical understanding, and metaphysical inquiry concerning truth and beauty.[37] The active form of theoria is contemplation and, for Aristotle, is the source of happiness. However, Aristotle considered ethics to involve *practical reason*, not theoretical speculation (Aristotle 1998, 154–58 [1143$^b$18–1144$^b$29]). Ethical reasoning, thus, decides on how to act when faced with vexing practical needs. An action is ethically virtuous *when it serves the purposes or needs that occasion it*. Such needs provide the *criteria* for judging the value and excellence of an action. Thus, an action is good (ethical and 'right') to the degree that the need it is 'good for' is served, thus avoiding radical relativism, subjectivism, or emotivism.

Practical actions that produce 'things'—also including events, performances, or productions—involve the cognitive and manual skills (*ars* or 'arts') Aristotle termed *techne*. The active form of this craft-like, technical knowledge is *poēisis*, or 'excellent making'. With techne, mistakes can just be discarded with little more than a loss of time, and no ethical responsibility is usually involved.[38]

However, technical 'skill drill' in music can have ethical consequences. By subjecting every student to the same regimen, it can fail to consider differences between students' individual needs and interests—particularly differences in the reasons they study in the first place; differences in the musical pleasures they seek. It thus risks 'turning off' students who sought to study music in the expectation of acquiring the needed skills from the music itself[39]—for example, the learning-by-doing way they acquire skills for sports, computers, and other interests.[40]

*Praxis* involves actions that serve the particular needs of different people, not the routinized production of conventional 'things'.[41] Since their wellbeing is at stake, a two-part ethical criterion is involved: (a) to promote 'right results' for those served; and (b) to avoid negative consequences. In Aristotle's virtue ethics, 'right results' are judged in terms of the needs of *those served*—the particular benefits to the wellbeing of those for whom the action

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is undertaken. Thus praxis is understood as 'right' or 'virtuous action', and it is ethically responsible for promoting clear and clearly needed benefits on behalf of those served. Failure amounts to *dyspraxia*; to ethical and, in the case of the helping professions, to professional *mal*praxis.

Professional *practice* in the helping professions, then, is properly a matter of *praxis,* not simply the competent employment of passed-on conventional skills or standardized techniques that qualify as techne.[42] Approached as techne, teaching becomes a *technical system* of 'delivering' stock lessons: a one-size-fits-all "methodolatry" (Regelski 2002) or recipe-like craft that treats students more like interchangeable 'products' on an educational assembly line than a professional praxis that demonstrates ethical concern for diagnosing students' individual needs and differences and promoting 'right results' on their behalf.

The active ethical disposition of praxis, Aristotle termed *phronesis*: the virtue of being prudent—wise, far-sighted, and care-full [*sic*]—in ensuring clearly beneficial results and in doing no harm. This ethical disposition depends upon Aristotle's four second-order intellectual virtues (that, in fact, are central to "due care" and thus are not really secondary). Resourceful deliberation (*euboulia*) involves acquiring knowledge needed to make effective decisions; judgment or diagnosis (*gnomē*) deliberates about what is 'right' and just for those affected; understanding (*sunēsis*) is needed to analyze relevant conditions and particulars; and cleverness or versatility (*dēinotes*) copes with the individual and changing needs of students and with the uniqueness of each situation.

Applied to teaching music (or any teaching), phronesis thus entails an *ethic of care* that involves, first of all, *caring for students* and their needs (at least as much as caring for musical 'standards', the needs of the program, teacher's preferences, etc.); and, secondly, being *care-full* in all choices that involve curriculum, pedagogy, methods, materials, and assessment (see, e.g., Noddings 2005). This ethical disposition, thus, requires (a) diagnosing students' unique musical needs—the musical learning that is clear and clearly valuable to enhancing their future musical wellbeing—not dictating them; (b) next, analyzing the complex variables at stake; (c) then deciding on the best course of action; and, finally, (d) reflecting on results so that remedial steps can be taken if needed. Accountability, thus, is essential to the ethical *disposition* for 'right action', not simply a formal duty.

Here virtue ethics resonate with consequentialism: 'right results' are qualified by *curricular action ideals* that are most likely to lead to clearly beneficial and valuable

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consequences for typical students,[43] and 'right [virtuous/excellent] action' addresses those guiding ideals through care-full, responsible, and accountable choices of methods and materials. A corollary is that—assuming appropriate choices of curriculum, pedagogy, and didactics—music teachers should 'practice' improving their teaching just as they have practiced music.[44] Furthermore, teachers' curricular and pedagogical choices require constant updating to meet students' changing needs and the ever-new developments in music and modes of musicking—for example, by using new software, and technology. This reflexivity, along with the tangibility of projected curricular ideals—viz., the earlier mentioned action ontology criterion, and the corresponding need to "make a difference" that is a noteworthy pragmatic contribution to students' musical wellbeing—enables teachers and the profession to improve.

Such *praxial knowledge* is always gained in terms of the uniqueness of the teacher and the particular teaching situation—as guided by phronesis—and is situated in terms of the teacher and students in *that* teaching situation. Changes of teaching circumstances rarely allow teachers to 'carry on as usual'. Imposing a 'fixed' method—whether from a teacher's own school days, from student teaching, or some kind of methodolatry the teacher has adopted or personally developed—always risks turning teaching into a technicist undertaking (i.e., into assembly line techne) and, thus, risks failing to observe the ethical criterion of "due care" for 'right results', as judged in terms of the musical wellbeing of individual students.[45]

As mentioned, Aristotle's ethics also recognizes 'right action' as resulting from good habits of *character*. He attributes such habits to good ethical upbringing but as nonetheless capable of being cultivated: by taking note of models[46] or, under the guidance of phronesis, by using reason and 'practice' to promote their improvement. He also stresses that ethical virtue requires observing a mean between extremes of character and that such moderation requires self-discipline.[47] Both moderation and self-discipline are required in reconciling the often competing needs of students and the other demands music teachers face regularly—particularly the tension between musical values and students' musical and other needs.

In this latter regard, Aristotle taught that different fields—for example, different professions and occupations—are characterized by different degrees of "precision" (Aristotle 1998, 2 [1094$^a$19–$^b$12], 14 [1098$^a$15–$^b$5]) and, thus, that what is true or good cannot be known absolutely or exactly, but only "roughly and in outline" given the inevitability of limiting conditions (Aristotle 1998, 3 [1994$^b$12–1095$^a$6]).[48] Coupled with the virtue of

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moderation, this helps music teachers to focus on the musical and educational benefits that are the *raison d'être* of school music—namely its contribution to general or comprehensive *education* within the situated particulars of *universal schooling*—rather than on the musical 'precision' (i.e., artistry, etc.) required to *train* professional musicians.

Finally, good intentions are not are not always 'good for' the people or purposes at stake.[49] Thus, despite virtuous or dutiful intentions, where consequences are clearly negative, negligible, or nonexistent (or where the goodness of intentions cannot be judged because consequences fail to meet the "action ontology criterion"), the criterion of 'right results' and of the ethical "due care" required by phronesis have not been met. Whether such intentions are curricular goals or plans for particular lessons or rehearsals, 'right' or 'virtuous action' is a matter of "acting in the right way, for the right reasons and at the right time" (Saugstad 2005, 356) in bringing about 'right results'.

From the foregoing survey, some overlapping principles for an applied ethics of school music can be summarized. In general, the emphasis is on 'right results'—clearly advantageous future musical consequences—for students that are the benefits the profession exists to promote. These are thus the bases of its professional responsibility and ethical accountability. While duty ethics address a wide range of important obligations, consequentialism and virtue ethics focus on pragmatic benefits for individual students and, thus, on the action ontology criterion that benefits should be notable and consequential. Claimed benefits that do not make a notable difference are equivocal as to their ethical virtue and, thus, any teaching is too easily rationalized as being good enough.

<div align="center">MUSICIANISM</div>

As a result, then, "good teachers" are often simply identified as those, at the time, whose ensembles excel, whose lessons students enjoy, or who are well-liked. However, such traits, good intentions, and status quo criteria of a 'good program' can fall short of fully meeting important ethical criteria pointed to by duty, consequentialist, and virtue ethics. Since most music teachers observe ethical standards in their lives that *are* predicated on the action ontology criterion of making an actual difference—for example, as spouses, parents, friends, citizens[50]—it seems natural to wonder why or how this criterion can be overlooked in their teaching?

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One possible answer is that it is not overlooked: the action ontology criterion can be observed in relation to music—when *music* is the calling—rather than, or instead of to teaching music in ways that clearly benefit students and society. A reason for this condition may be a disposition I shall call *musicianism*: a tendency to place *musical* choices and values before or above *educational* options and values—especially in situations where the latter, viewed from other pragmatic and ethical perspectives, might well deserve equal or even more weight.

A case could be made that the habits and dispositions involved can, under appropriate circumstances, be the conditions of being a good "musician." However, under inappropriate circumstances[51] and, of course, when taken to negative extremes,[52] musicianism can be problematic and can compromise important educational ethical needs, duties, and virtues. And that is the concern here regarding music education as an ethical undertaking: ethical criteria and conditions relative to the promised professional benefits of school music can too often be ignored, dismissed, denigrated, or otherwise overlooked under the influence of certain kinds and excesses of musicianism.

An example of taking musicianism to an extreme in inappropriate circumstances—particularly in school music—are situations (far from rare) where music teachers use rote, authoritarian, fear tactics, and other coercive means to insure high quality performances by their ensembles; where, in effect, they 'perform' their ensembles with attention strictly to musical criteria (and, it often seems, with the reputation of their programs and their professional status as musicians in mind[53]). Or where their choices of literature, materials, and the like (including in general music classes), favor the 'good music' of academe, and where little or no concern is shown for any significant and lifelong educational and musical benefits for graduates.

I coin the term "musicianism" in line with references to any "ism" that becomes ideological, hegemonic, dogmatic, and self-serving.[54] Such value systems rely on uncritical acceptance of authority, tradition, dogma, paradigms, and related substitutes for the reason, thought, and judgment usually assumed by ethical theory. The values of the ideology are cherry-picked; inconvenient or uncomfortable alternatives are ignored, downplayed, or denigrated. Those observed often become a mono-fixation—with consequences (including ethical ones) that are often incongruent or inconsistent with other components of the ideology and that are thus ignored or rationalized away. Such incongruities too often end up denying or

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contradicting the very *raison d'être* of the value system, and conviction often breeds intolerance of other views or values.

"Musicianism," as understood here, similarly manifests many attributes of such a doctrinal—and almost religious—creed that often is at cross-purposes with educational virtue. And when taken to extremes or applied under inappropriate conditions, it often stimulates the kind of backlash that creates contrarians who just as actively resist it. Thus, the out of school musical choices and values of most students who are subjected to excesses of musicianism are frequently and decidedly contrary to those of their music teachers.

The primary source of musicianism, of course, is the university music school or department that prepares music teachers first and foremost to be competent performers. Four or more years of highly disciplined immersion in that high level music world—a world largely autonomous of the pressures and realities of the music world outside of the Ivory Tower—is somewhat like entering a monastery. In this monastery students are acolytes and professors the priests of what numerous cultural critics and historians have called the "sacralization" of music: it has become quasi-sacred, thus venerated "for its own sake" and its values regarded as deserving of a kind of spiritual respect.[55] In this monastery, every attempt is made to produce "musicians." Whatever the success of this objective, the attempt can promote a tendency toward musicianism[56] on the part of many music education graduates.[57]

However, because these monasteries are isolated from the wider musical values of the 'real world', the music venerated "for its own sake" is not in fact as valued, valued in the same ways, or valued at all by the general public. This inspires music teachers who are strongly disposed to musicianism to adopt—however unwittingly, and more often than not it is an uncritical acceptance—a kind of missionary or evangelical zeal that, if not actively intending to 'convert' the masses, at least creates the *institution* of school music as an island of (supposed) musical virtue set off from the (supposed) banality of the at-large music world.

In accordance with the above characterization of "isms," any residual musicianism lurking at the heart school music faces a minefield of ethical challenges. It risks being *ideological* when it is imposed as good for everyone, whether students like it or not. Those who enjoy it may 'go along'—but only until graduation. If they drop out (including mentally in general music classes), the program—as an end in itself, as a factory-like process, or as a pre-determined format into which students are 'fit' (often force-fit)—is seen as better off for

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not being dragged down by their lack of discipline or devotion. It risks being *hegemonic*, because music teachers are in a position of authority to dictate everything from the music deemed suitable for inclusion to its interpretation. It risks being *dogmatic* by insinuating that the music offered by school music programs is somehow more special or otherwise more important than music outside the school, thus deliberately excluding other musics. It is *self-serving* to the degree that the musical requirements of the program or needs of the teacher are served, not those of individual students and society. And the *authority*, traditions, and 'scripture' that governed the teacher's own acceptance of musicianism—especially the taken-for-granted aesthetic theories enshrined by traditional music theory and history texts, and the 'works' in the canon of 'good music'[58]—are for the most part transported or translated to school music.

This 'trickle-down' of musicianist assumptions, values, and associated practices thus threatens to dominate school music. Under its sway, school programs often become shadow images, reflections, even outright imitations of university programs. Incongruously, this paradigm is accepted—indeed, embraced by teachers who succumb to musicianism—despite the fact that the educational purposes of specialized *career training* in higher education (i.e., the ends for which professional musical training exists) are clearly different—often even at odds with—the purposes of music as a part of the *general education* provided to all students by schools. Not surprisingly, then, certain paradigms that might be suitable for training professional musicians are imposed almost as formal rites in school music, despite being unsuited to both the younger age-group and to the different functions on which school music is premised.[59] Musicianism in school music is often in direct violation of Aristotle's earlier-mentioned principle that different undertakings exhibit different levels or kinds of "precision" (e.g., in music, artistry, virtuosity, perfection, dedication, etc.): that is, an action is virtuous when it is performed in accordance with the kind of excellence [virtue] that is appropriate to it (Aristotle 1998, 13–14; 1098[a]15–[b]5]), and what is musically and educationally virtuous for training professional musicians is not suited to the educational function for which school music exists.

Furthermore, the single-mindedness of the insular music world of school music too often has the same off-putting effect as any over-zealous or obsessive ideology. There is no question that the vast majority of students in any school who are untouched (in the most affective sense of that word) by their required music classes and who find no compelling

value to joining (or remaining in) elected ensembles have been 'turned off' by the practices of school music and the musicianism often at the root of these practices. After graduation, even most who participated in ensembles show few if any lasting benefits to their musical choices and lives. Thus, enough adults have qualms about the impact of such studies on their own lives that school music finds itself increasingly having to defend its continued existence.

In sum, then, music teachers under the influence of the dispositions, habits and assumptions of musicianism appear to care and are care-full more in regard to *music* and the limited and basically artificial world of school music than to the musical needs of students or of society. Those for whom the "musician" axis of their professional identity dominates the "teacher" axis typically exhibit the musicianism described here (see Regelski 2007b, 13–19). There is also a great risk that such teachers serve their own musical needs—needs nurtured by the musical experiences they enjoyed as collegiate musicians and that they earlier experienced in their school music programs, and that they seek to replicate in their own programs.[60]

The issue, therefore, is not a lack of virtue; it is that such teachers are propelled both by the (a) musicianism into which they were inducted by the intense secondary socialization into "musician" status promoted by their university training and (b) by the existing and very engrained paradigms and practices of school music they inherit when beginning their teaching careers.[61] The danger is that musicianism promotes either the loss of any altruistic visions teachers had for enriching the musical lives of their students in tangible, consequential, and lasting ways; or they assume that the 'high' route they personally submitted to is the only 'true' path—or both!

Their focus, then, is mainly on musical virtues and, thus, on the 'standards' of their music programs, not on the contribution to musical wellbeing of individual students that is the *raison d'être* of the profession.[62] Music is often taught, then, with a view to *protecting* it (or their programs) *from* students. Not only is amateurism, which should rightly be a valid curricular goal (Regelski 2007a; Booth 1999), decried and ignored by excesses of musicianism; often steps are taken to actively be rid of students who do not share the veneration for the music of school music that musicianist teachers demand. Students who are the most 'converted' (at least during the school day and years) to the values of school music get plenty of attention in select ensembles. A focus on music reading in general music classes assists beginning instrumental programs and, along with plenty of singing, helps populate

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school choruses. However, stories of musicianist choral teachers who tell certain children to sing very softly or to mouth the words during concerts are repeated by adults who have never forgotten the implications.

Despite the many offerings of school music programs, lasting results that are the benefits for which the profession exists and that it promises—benefits that meet the action ontology criterion—are not greatly in evidence, a fact increasingly not lost on taxpayers and administrators. Once required general music classes are behind them, students typically avoid elective classes.[63] Similarly, most ensemble graduates show few if any lasting effects on their adult musical choices and lives. For most, ensembles were "activities" that met their adolescent social needs more than their adult musical needs. Once the school years are behind them they no longer seek opportunities to actively make music.

This tendency is so notable that many musicianist teachers feel the need to openly repudiate any expectation that school music should have clear and clearly beneficial long-term effects for typical graduates. The action ontology criterion is thus rejected on the rationalization that any musical experience is routinely beneficial because it is aesthetic and, hence, automatically educative and beneficial. However, since such supposed aesthetic benefits are by definition personal, subjective, and covert, these teachers can simply claim such benefits despite the absence of observable evidence.[64] Other claims—for example, that membership in ensembles promotes personal responsibility, teamwork, and the like—are equally vague as to their out-of-school applicability,[65] and are just as easily rationalized. Consequentially, such claims run afoul of the earlier mentioned functionalist rationale: music education in schools is predicated on the function of promoting the future *musical* wellbeing of students to a degree or in directions that would not otherwise be the case.

Whatever else can be said about the ethical aspects of failing to provide the clear and clearly beneficial service expected of a profession (that is, whether students and the public are getting their educational "money's worth," so-to-speak), it appears that many current practices of school music, too often influenced by musicianism, are producing a legitimation crisis and thus the need for ever-more advocacy. Because music is valuable, advocacy rhetoric goes, so formal music education must automatically be valuable. Such advocacy risks accusing the taxpayers of not supporting school music and can thus amount to blaming the victims! Paradoxically, it also tacitly admits to *not* having made the clear and clearly valued impact on society that the profession exists to promote!

Regelski, Thomas A. 2012. Musicianism and the ethics of school music. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 11(1): 7–42. http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski11_1.pdf

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APPLIED ETHICS AND SCHOOL MUSIC

As indicated earlier, applied ethics adapts principles suggested by duty, consequentialist, and virtue theories that are most relevant to the unique situations faced by different professions or fields. Applied ethics, thus, rests on *case-based analysis*, sometime called *casuistry*,[66] where ethical considerations suggested by normative ethics (and other criteria) are 'fine-tuned' to the typical practical variables at hand. Thus, applied ethics starts with actual or highly predictable cases and likely needs and identifies relevant ethical and pragmatic variables that should be considered. In the helping professions, applied ethics are regarded as a practitioner's *duty*, an obligation; and malpractice (i.e., mal*praxis*) is thus a matter of ethical "due care," not simply one of technical competence.

Applied ethics are sensitive, however, to the unique circumstances faced in a profession. Extensive tests that might be ethically required in a medical center are out of the question on a battlefield, for example. Applied ethics also vary between teaching specialties. For example, no other teachers are expected to be able to control, let alone teach, the large numbers of students ensemble teachers face. Moreover, the musical needs of students are typically more varied, and often less obvious, than are the needs students have for learning to read and write, for example. On the other hand, musical study can have a natural appeal for students that other studies might lack.

Relevant criteria also vary, often considerably, according to the resources and limitations of particular teaching situations. Such differences (especially between students and between teachers) are among the variables a teacher is ethically obliged to diagnose. What is musically and educationally feasible in one situation is not always practicable (or desirable) in another. And proceeding unmindful of such variables can be unethical to the degree that likely consequences will be negative: for example, where the literature motivates many drop-outs or disinclines students from joining ensembles. Thus, the literature appropriate in communities where parents take their children to art galleries and concerts and promote exposure to a wide range of musics in the home can result in resistance to joining an ensemble—or contribute to quitting it—in communities where socio-economic and socio-cultural demographics are different. (Where demographics are mixed, highly varied literature is most likely to satisfy the largest number of students.) Situations where only a small percentage of students elect to join (or remain in) ensembles may be the result of such factors and, whatever the value for those served, the ethical question of "the greatest good for the

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greatest number" (a premise of consequentialism) arises—as perhaps it does with administrators who thus feel justified in reducing resources. Not offering musics from outside the classical canon is an especially notable ethical failing, one that can be directly linked to musicianism: viz., the lack of such models in the formal musical training of music teachers in many countries.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In consideration of the foregoing survey of ethical theories and the potential dangers of musicianism, I offer the following principles for an applied ethics of school music teaching.

1. First, as professionals, an ethical duty or obligation exists for music educators to provide a *notable service* that has a *consequential* impact on students' lives. Other duty-based ethics flow from rights generally acknowledged by other helping professions: for example, the criterion of "do no harm," the right to fair and just treatment, freedom of expression, and the like.

2. Secondly, professional service should observe the *action ontology criterion*: it needs to provide clear (i.e., observable) consequences that give evidence of their actual pragmatic value and, hence, of their ethical virtue. Any failure in this accountability risks pragmatic irrelevance and, thus, ethical equivocation.

3. Thirdly, following Aristotle's virtue ethics, the benefits—the 'right results'—said to be at stake should be judged in terms of the constituency a music teacher's professional actions are supposed to serve: *individual students* and, by extension, *society*.[67] Such 'right results' involve an unavoidable tension between musical values and educational criteria and virtues. But teaching that serves music, the school music program, or the teacher to the exclusion or detriment of students' musical, educational, and other needs and rights, is not virtuous by any ethical account, no matter the musical quality attained—especially where musical quality is preserved by excluding large numbers of students, or by not including musics of interest to more students.

4. Fourthly, virtue ethics stresses an *ethic of care:* 'right' or 'virtuous [excellent] action' cares for students and their musical needs above musicianist values and is care-full in meeting those needs while doing no harm in the process. The criteria for 'right action,' for the 'right reasons', in the service of 'right results' are the basic elements in regarding teaching as professional praxis, rather than as simply a specialized occupation or technicist craft.

Regelski, Thomas A. 2012. Musicianism and the ethics of school music. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 11(1): 7–42. http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski11_1.pdf

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5. Finally, when the 'right action' criterion (#4) is combined with the action ontology criterion (#2) and the criterion of 'right results' (#3), the tangible consequences of teaching facilitates reflection on results that promotes teaching improvement. Such *reflective praxis* acknowledges teaching weaknesses and works to correct and overcome them. Teaching thus becomes an informal kind of ongoing action research where curriculum and methods are regarded as hypotheses, the effectiveness of which—judged according to relevant musical, pragmatic, and ethical criteria—is 'tested' in action and, when needed, modified or changed and alternate methods "practiced" with a view to needed improvement.

Two other factors are also relevant. First, following Aristotle's virtue ethics and the concept of teaching as praxis, *practical virtue is always subordinate to theoretical virtue*: praxis acts in behalf of 'goods' *first* decided on by 'right reason' (Aristotle 1998, 34–35 [1105$^a$17–1105$^b$28]; 38 [1106$^b$9–35]; 154–58 [1143$^b$18–1145$^a$11]). "Good teaching," then, is not a matter of using prescribed 'good means' but of starting from an informed and unambiguous vision of 'good ends'; those 'right reasons' that, following Aristotle, discernibly advance the good life through music. Curriculum, then, is significantly a philosophical matter.[68] With 'good' curricular ends ('right reasons') decided *first*, methods and materials are *then* chosen and employed with care (phronesis), and the criterion of 'right results' (i.e., tangible consequences) determines the adequacy of learning and teaching. Furthermore, agreeing with the adage that "nothing is as practical as a good theory," Aristotle allows that practical wisdom informs philosophical theorizing (Aristotle 1998, 158 [1144$^b$29–1145$^a$11])—thus again emphasizing the need for reflective praxis.

Secondly, the "applied" aspect of applied ethics always involves *pragmatic* criteria. For pragmatism, the worth or value of a 'thing' or action is seen in the practical difference it makes—in ethical language, the useful consequences it has promoted according to the action ontology criterion. Thus, the five ethical principles addressed above all depend on pragmatic consequences; on introducing into students' musical lives the choices, attitudes, dispositions, values, and musicianship skills that empower a life well-lived in part through music, and in ways and to a consequential degree that would not have been likely without school music.

If school music is predicated on benefits that are *neither clear* (in the sense of giving evidence of their pragmatism and virtue) *nor clearly beneficial* (in the sense that the musical wellbeing of typical students is not enhanced in consequential ways), then the 'anything goes' of ethical relativism becomes seriously problematic. Consequently, any musical experience

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promoted by teachers is automatically regarded as virtuous. Since results of such teaching simply fail to meet even the minimum criteria of consequentialism and avoid appropriate ethical or pragmatic accountability for 'right results', the duties associated with being a professional and the attendant ethical virtues are correspondingly lacking.

The need exists, then, for stressing music teaching as an essentially ethical endeavor. Applied ethics should be addressed in substantial ways in the professional education of all aspiring and in-service music teachers, starting at least with the principles above. Failure to address the ethical dimensions of music teaching risks the pragmatic irrelevance that threatens the existence of school music, and thus denies one of the fundamental requirements of a profession and, hence, the status of music teachers as professionals. Observing an applied ethics of school music is, therefore, an extremely functional and pragmatic means by which the profession can meet its obligations to schools, students, and society and by which it can progress, not just profess.

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**Notes**

[1] References herein will be to ethics, not morality. The Roman philosopher Cicero used the Latin *moralis* for the Greek *ēthikos* or *ēthos.* However, "morality" often gets associated with religious premises for distinguishing "moral" from "immoral" behavior. But, as Singer (1997) notes, ethics is "not something intelligible only in the context of religion." Borrowing an argument from Plato, he summarizes, "if the gods approve of some actions it must be because those actions are good, in which case it cannot be the gods' approval that makes them good. The alternative view makes divine approval entirely arbitrary" (Singer 1997, 3). NB: The extensive notes in this paper—such as this clarification—explain, define, refine, or exemplify (etc.) complexities, sources, and resources not provided in the text. Readers not interested in such details can ignore them.

[2] Some exceptions: Higgins (1991) argues against formalist aesthetic theories for divorcing music from its ethical dimensions; Bowman (2001) analyzes both music and music education from an Aristotelian ethical perspective; Bowman (2002) places the ethical dimensions of music teaching in the larger picture of general education; Abrahams and Head (2005) offer hypothetical case studies that illustrate typical ethical issues music teachers face. "Theorizing social justice in music education," a special issue of *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Dec. 2007; http://act.maydaygroup.org), focuses on ethical issues.

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An earlier issue of the same journal (Vol. 4, No. 3; Sept. 2005) explores race, music, and music education. NB: Herein, "school music" refers to music education as part of general education in comprehensive schools. However, some of the issues analyzed are also relevant to private studios and community music schools. Examples are drawn from the author's observations in several countries, but mainly from North American public schools.

[3] *Situation ethics* or *practical ethics* are other terms used to refer to ethics based on contexts of actual or likely cases rather than on norms. Singer (1986; 1997) is often credited with reviving the topic. However, he points out: "Ethics takes a universal point of view. This does not mean that a particular ethical judgment must be universally applicable. . . . What it does it does mean is that in making ethical judgments we go beyond our own likes and dislikes" (Singer 1997, 11–12).

[4] *Metaethics* (see http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/metaethics/) does not prescribe ethical criteria but, instead, analyzes the assumptions, language, and arguments involved in ethical debates. The present analysis is an attempt to identify and explore ethical issues that are typically overlooked, explained away, or taken for granted in music education.

[5] However, Aristotle dismisses Plato's ideal of 'good in-itself' that takes different (and, therefore, always impure) appearances in the perceptible world. He demonstrates (Aristotle 1998, 7–10 [$1095^b26$–$1097^a14$]), first, that "good" has no common 'essence' and is instead always relative to the particulars of context and situation; secondly, then, that there are different standards of "the good" according to (and sometimes within) different fields; thirdly, that the Platonic ideal is of no practical use and, thus, is of little value for guiding actions in daily life. Despite these arguments, when values are wed to particular situations, contexts, circumstances, times, places, and even persons, "relativism" is often decried. This requires distinguishing between "silly" or "radical relativism" where 'anything goes' (or of "emotivism" and "ethical subjectivism" where anything can be good if someone says so) from situations where the particular practical needs at stake properly serve as the *criteria* for judging the virtue and value of actions. Aristotle anticipated this distinction in arguing (1998, 11–15 [$1097^a15$–$1098^b5$]) that ethical judgments need to be suited to the practical needs at stake. Thus, we must "not look for precision in all things alike, but in each class of things such precision as accords with the subject-matter, and so much as is appropriate to the inquiry. For a carpenter and a geometer investigate the right angle in different ways . . . ." (14 [$1098^a15$–$^b5$). For an introduction to the problems of ethical relativism, and its difference from ethical subjectivism, see Singer 1997, 4–8. NB: References in brackets to Aristotle are to the original Oxford Edition of *The works of Aristotle translated into English*, Vol. X.

[6] In contrast, in medicine or law it is the judgment of one's peers that is central in any adjudication of ethical practice; i.e., of *mal*practice. The absence of malpractice in teaching—in fact, the widespread rejection of the idea among teachers, especially unions—points to a weak teaching ethos. Without a clear idea of 'right results' for students (and society), pragmatic competence and, thus, the ethics of teaching are excluded from professional accountability.

[7] E.g., http://aaeteachers.org/code-ethics.shtml; http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/codeofethics.htm; http://www.fldoe.org/dpe/publications/ethics.pdf. See also, http://www.ethicsweb.ca/resources/professional/codes-of-ethics.html. As example of their common sense nature: "The professional educator deals considerately and justly with each student, and seeks to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy" (from the *Association of American Educators* code, the first listed above).

[8] Not even helpful *and* harmful. There are countless instances where learning may be promoted but the 'patient' is worse off: everything from health related issues (e.g., repetitive stress injuries, hearing problems, etc.) to "no pain, no gain" pedagogy where students lose interest, practice too little, quit lessons (etc.).

[9] Functionalism theorizes that "all societies consist of systems which perform the basic functions necessary for the society to survive. . . . [S]ocieties continue to organize formal schooling because doing so helps societies to survive" (deMarrais and LeCompte 1998, 5). Professions continue to be viable as long as they provide their services well, or as long as those functions are valued by society. Lacking these conditions, a *legitimation crisis* arises that threatens the existence of the profession (see Kratus 2007 for evidence of this risk for school music). NB: Other sociological theories of schooling are critical of functionalism (see, e.g., deMarrais and LeCompte, 1998). However, politicians, taxpayers, education ministries, and school administrators all treat functionalist premises as 'common sense'.

[10] The virtues of generosity (i.e., charity) and of putting the needs of students before one's own personal or musical interests (i.e. selflessness) are among the ethical criteria of altruism; and in Kant's duty ethics, it is wrong to treat people as means to one's own ends or pleasures, or to ignore the interests of a minority (see Vardy and Grosch 1999, 53–61).

[11] The data cited by the authors for this conclusion are from the 1970s. However, the problem is actually getting worse, at least in the U.S. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future "has calculated that these days nearly a third of all new teachers leave the profession after just three years, and that after five years almost half are gone – a higher turnover rate than in the past" (Dillon 2007). For similar dynamics in Sweden, see Bladh 2004.

[12] Music teachers in most countries—even many with strong central ministries of education—typically have far greater freedom and control over their curricula, teaching, and evaluation practices or requirements than do teachers of most other subjects. Such freedom from top-down control can have its advantages but can also encourage a veritable state of anarchy in which music teachers—even in the same school—are largely free to act autonomously. This can amount to the worst kind of relativism, yet the ethical implications usually go unnoticed.

[13] Variables that can range from very altruistic to very self-serving, and the aspiring music educator is often not in a position to know which might be the case for a given model. In any case, how many enter music education to be better than the music teachers they had?

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[14] However, the discussion of consequentialism below mentions variants where the agent—e.g., the music teacher—can also benefit as long as 'right results' are reached for students; also see n. 28.

[15] This point-of-view, of course, can be self-serving to the degree that university music professors typically have little in their own training that prepares them to teach, save the limited models of their own teachers and a repertoire of taken-for-granted pedagogical traditions. These are not without their ethical implications; for example, research is discovering more and more health problems in connection with their indiscriminate use (see, e.g., *The Arts and Health Journal*: www.thesah.org). The problem arising when *music* is the 'calling', not *students*, is discussed below in connection with "musicianism."

[16] Especially because school-age students have different traits and needs than do university-age students; e.g., the latter are expected to adapt to the idiosyncrasies of professors or to be self-directed enough to regard their professors as resources. To quote one Harvard student, "No one comes here for the teaching."

[17] The autonomy of school music, however, also distances it from students' musical experiences outside of school and works against promoting lifelong learning and amateuring throughout life.

[18] A widespread (but often tacit) criterion of membership in select ensembles of some schools in the U.S. is the expectation of private study. In some countries, admission to municipal/community music schools is by audition (or 'talent' tests that, in effect, actually test achievement) while in others all interested students are accepted. Since not all families can provide private lessons for their children, acceptance by audition and achievement tests often discriminates against the poor.

[19] *Ethically dubious* because a teacher's musical values are imposed via the legal authority granted teachers over students, who are thereby systematically denied other learning—for example, of musics and instruments other than those of the canon; *philosophically suspect* because the traditional aesthetic criteria typically marshaled against 'pop' musics (i.e., distinguishing 'fine' art from 'lower' arts and 'mass' culture) are themselves critiqued by contemporary philosophers; see, e.g., Gracyk 2007; Carroll 1999; Strinati 1995; Dixon 1995 and many postmodern theorists, such as Lochhead and Auner 2002.

[20] Duty theories often fall prey to messy complications that characterize many actual situations. Faced with such complications, people typically resort to consequentialist principles (e.g., they may argue that the consequence of saving of a life justifies an occasion of lying that is otherwise wrong) or to principles of virtue theory (e.g., the benevolence and courage to make a decision that benefits another person, even though it may reflect badly on the agent). *Proportionalism* allows contexts to be considered when the particulars of a situation or case are of enough consequence to justify overturning or modifying norms: for example, arguments for "just war." Proportionalism, then, often resembles applied ethics. Another problem of deontological ethics is that two duties often conflict: e.g., the duty to

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address *musical* values and the duty to promote effective *learning* for all students, regardless of their abilities and accomplishments. Aristotle's virtue ethics, with its recognition of "precision" as conditioned by different needs (e.g., musical criteria appropriate for school-age students versus for university students or professional musicians) and its emphasis on moderation, provides some guidance in this respect. More on virtue ethics follows, but see n. 5 and n. 29.

[21] However, consequentialism (discussed below) can also be stated deontologically: that maximizing beneficial consequences is an ethical 'right' and, thus, that an ethical act involves the *duty* to try to maximize the good and that a failure to *attempt* doing so is ethically wrong. This species of consequentialism is sometimes called "rule-consequentialism" to distinguish it from "act-consequentialism" which judges the actual consequences of actions.

[22] *Legal* (statutory) rights are often contrasted with *natural* rights; the latter are argued as stemming from *natural law*—reasoning based on what is "natural" (especially theories about human nature)—and thus that are believed to apply universally regardless of statutory laws. However, philosophers, theologians, and religionists throughout history have disagreed about natural law, yet freely resort to their versions of it in criticizing state-enacted laws.

[23] This implies not only that music teachers should not intentionally use embarrassment (etc.) as a pedagogical strategy (particularly given the volatile emotional status of many pre-pubescent and adolescent students) but also that circumstances that might lead to negative emotional experiences should be mitigated. For example, recording rehearsals can help accustom soloists to the pressure of facing an audience.

[24] E.g., by explaining and *warranting* their musical ideas and choices (i.e., thus educating students' independent musicianship), not just imposing them without reason or qualification. The *authoritative* teacher is recognized by students as an authority (expert) who helps them reach their own goals. The *authoritarian* teacher dictates, demands and imposes means and ends on students, and students are left neither knowing the reasons why they must acquiesce nor of the possibility of other alternatives.

[25] As opposed to the needs of the teacher or the ensemble: for example, switching students to instruments needed for balanced instrumentation, despite students' preferences or their other musical needs to the contrary.

[26] Some philosophers continue to use "utilitarianism" (e.g., Vardy and Grosch 1999) rather than "consequentialism," the term first proposed by philosopher Elizabeth Anscombe in 1958.

[27] As used here, "wellbeing" is one translation of the Greek *eudaimonia*, a goal shared with Aristotle's virtue ethics, described below. Some translators render *eudaimonia* as "happiness," but others use it to refer to "life well-lived." In the edition of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* cited herein, the translators stipulate that it "is used to refer to whatever life is most desirable and satisfying" clarifying that "*eudaimonia* is not a state of feeling or

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enjoyment" (Aristotle 1998, xxvii) and thus is not associated simply with the emotion of happiness. In contrast, "pain"—often the translation for the Greek *lupē*—"covers all adverse emotional reactions, including dislike, boredom, grief, and distress" and "painful" (*lupēron*) "often means 'unpleasant' " (Aristotle 1998, xxvii). Thus, consequentialism is not engaged in some hedonistic calculus of pleasure versus pain but rather weighs wellbeing against negative alternatives.

[28] For example, one judges an action as to whether its *overall consequences* are better than other options. Another focuses on which *expectable (*or *predicted,* even *promised) consequences* seem best of all alternatives, while yet another requires reason and diagnostic judgment in foreseeing the *most likely* consequences that are best. Other distinctions involve whether consequences are more favorable only for the agent, for everyone affected, or for everyone except the agent. The difficulty of accurately making such predictions is a common criticism of consequentialism. However, if the promised service is provided, the professional can also be benefited (e.g., in terms of financial, psychological, and professional rewards, etc.) without any ethical failing. For readers inclined to sorting out these distinctions in relation to practical issues in music education, see: *The internet encyclopedia of philosophy*, "Consequentialism," http://www.iep.utm.edu/c/conseque.htm; and *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*, "Consequentialism," http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/.

[29] That can also be regarded as "duties," thus again reinforcing some overlap between duty and consequentialist theories; see n. 21. And, as explained in n. 27, a certain overlap exists between consequentialism and the *eudaimonia* or wellbeing (or "the good life") that is the focus of virtue ethics.

[30] One that, nonetheless, is regularly subject to frequent complaints from groups that seek to advance their own political, social, ethnic, racial, religious, and other ideological causes. This socio-political volatility is not typical of most other helping professions.

[31] Beyond its contributions to the general consequences for students of *all* teaching and schooling, music education is *legitimated* mainly by the *musical consequences* it promotes; the musical difference it makes on the life well-lived through music.

[32] This criterion is first given strong voice by Aristotle's emphasis on the suiting of the good to the particulars at stake in individual cases, fields, 'sciences', and 'arts' (Aristotle 1998, 7–10 [1096ª15–1097ª34]; and by his emphasis on ethics as a practical matter where the *facts* at stake are primary: "the fact is a primary thing and first principle," that "we must try to investigate the natural way, and we must take pains to determine them correctly, since they have a great influence" on judging or guiding ethical actions (Aristotle 1998, 14–15 [1098ᵇ5]). This emphasis on approaching the good in terms of empirical *consequences* sometimes leads to "classical" consequentialism being equated with act-consequentialism; i.e., focusing on *perceivable benefits* as the *evidence* of ethical action. See n. 21.

[33] Thus, for example, strings are often not taught when only one large instrumental ensemble can be offered, even though the musical interests of potential string players could be met by

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offering string chamber groups. The same applies to instruments from outside the Western classical canon. This can especially be problematic in countries where such music has all but replaced traditional musics in the school curriculum.

[34] In some countries, however, the focus on music reading and singing *does* result in widespread choral amateurism (e.g., Estonia) and can be cited as evidence of making a difference.

[35] For a more detailed exposition of Aristotle's concept of praxis for music education, see Regelski 1998; for details on Aristotle's virtue ethics as applied to music education, see Bowman 2001; for analyses a propos of teaching in general, see Saugstad 2005, Dunne 2005, and Noddings 2005. For a contemporary interpretation of Aristotle's virtue ethics, see MacIntyre 1984; and for a summary of virtue ethics see Vardy and Grosch 1999, 94–122.

[36] Twelve in all (depending on the translation): Courage, temperance, liberality (generosity), magnificence (majesty), magnanimity (high-mindedness), proper ambition, patience, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, modesty, and righteous indignation (exact terms differ according to the translation). These are postulated as the "mean" between two vices: e.g., wittiness is the mean between foolishness and boorishness and magnificence the mean between vulgarity and pettiness.

[37] This metaphysical and contemplative nature is shared with the traditional aesthetic theories that arose following the Enlightenment. For the tortuous path from Aristotle to aesthetics, see Summers 1987. For examples of non-speculative, non-metaphysical theories of art, see Berleant 2010, Shusterman 2008, Mandoki 2007.

[38] However, recognizing mistakes (e.g., cutting a board too short) benefits future actions (e.g., "measure twice, cut once") by contributing to praxial knowledge. When the possibility of acknowledging mistakes in teaching are eliminated by claiming benefits that are so intangible as to defy notice let alone accountability, then the action ontology criterion is ignored and any teaching is good enough. Such teachers do not learn from their mistakes because they acknowledge no 'technical' faults in their teaching.

[39] No less than pianist/conductor Daniel Barenboim recounts: "I studied with my father till I was about seventeen. . . . For me, learning to play the piano was as natural as learning to walk. My father had an obsession about wanting things to be natural. I was brought up on the fundamental principle that there is no division between musical and technical problems. This was an integral part of his philosophy. I was never made to practice scales or arpeggios . . . [only] the pieces themselves. A principle that was hammered into me early, and which I still adhere to, is never to play any note mechanically. My father's teaching was based on the belief that there are enough scales in Mozart's concertos" (quoted in Booth 1999, 88). Thus, the issue is not one of whether technique is needed: it is! It is a question of the efficacy of focusing 'mechanically' on technique as an end-in-itself in ways that can be counterproductive. See n. 40.

[40] Once attracted to and engaged meaningfully in a rewarding pursuit, students (of all ages) may choose to practice (or study) to improve skills they have *personally discovered* to be relevant to their success and pleasures (e.g., the way amateur golfers do who go to a driving range). Thus, such practice is always informed by personal reflection on present skills and pleasures and is thus guided by a clear *causal relationship* in mind between practicing and improved satisfactions. The motivations of such self-diagnosed needs are often absent when technique drills are imposed by music teachers under conditions where the supposed technical 'good-for-you' is not understood by the student or the claimed 'goods' are not deemed by students to be "worthwhile" (i.e., literally, "worth-the-time"). Subjected to a paradigm that is unresponsive to their needs and interests, many students quit their studies and pursue other more relevant interests and needs. Compare this all-too-common skill-drill paradigm to the Barenboim's recommendation, described in n. 39.

[41] Or the mere reproduction of putative 'things' such as musical 'works'.

[42] There is no "standard practice" in any helping profession; instead, professional "standards of *due care*"—ethical criteria—are applied to the always different particulars of individual cases. Similarly, because teaching involves people and their differing needs and traits (as further complicated by an unavoidable complex of particular contexts, conditions, and circumstances), there is no "standard" or "standardized" learning. Test scores show only statistical norms that, when called "standards," give a false impression: what is tested, how, how scored, and the setting of passing scores (etc.) are all arbitrary. Moreover, in an art such as music, the idea of "standard" or "standardized" technique and artistry is a contradiction in terms—regardless of the self-congratulatory rhetoric of many music educators at all levels about maintaining 'high standards'.

[43] Such action ideals are not "idealistic" or utopian but, rather, down-to-earth directions toward which to aspire and, thus, that guide daily choices and actions. Being a good friend and a good parent are action ideals that guide everyday conduct: they are incapable of any perfect fulfillment and, instead, are aspirations with everyday consequences (pragmatic and ethical) that always can be improved upon.

[44] Using playing the harp as a basis for comparison, Aristotle counsels that virtue is the result of practice (Aristotle 1998, 28–29 [1103[a]10–[b]25]). Similarly, virtue in teaching and the 'practicing' of one's teaching competence—as with practicing music—implies first acknowledging, then overcoming mistakes.

[45] This is one problem with student teaching internships (by whatever name). Whatever is learned cannot simply be carried directly into subsequent teaching situations, each having its unique needs and demands.

[46] In teaching, these should not be those advertised as "best practices" where "best" is pronounced in advance of praxis (and actual consequences) and is claimed regardless of differences between teachers and teaching situations. "Exemplary practices," however, can

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serve as models—though actualizing them typically requires considerable adaptation to situated variables.

[47] Aristotle held that ethical character traits are "irrational" (e.g., courage does not result from reason) and thus are cultivated only through habit—particularly habits acquired during the formative years. However, reason is central in regulating our emotions (e.g., rashness or cowardice) and thus virtuous conduct is guided by Aristotle's "Doctrine of the Mean" (Aristotle 1998, 36–47 [1105$^b$28–1109$^b$26]). Thus Aristotle's primary and secondary intellectual virtues are rational and cultivated by instruction and 'practice'.

[48] For an extended analysis of this condition, see Dunne 1993.

[49] Aristotle writes: "it makes, perhaps, no small difference whether we place the chief good in possession or in use, in state of mind or in activity. For the state of mind may exist without producing any good result . . . ." (1998, 16 [1098$^b$28–1099$^a$20]).

[50] For example, "good parents" take frequent note of the on-going future consequences of their parenting. Thus, they are not satisfied with one 'lesson' on table manners if it does not produce the desired long-term etiquette.

[51] For example, the band teacher who did not attend general faculty meetings because "I've got the best band in the state and I have better things to do."

[52] For example, the music professor who forbade his child from listening (at home) to popular music; or, following angry yelling from behind the studio door, the young piano student who burst out crying, exclaiming "Mr. Blackman's more interested in the notes than me!"

[53] In particular, directors whose rehearsals are filled with "I want, "I need" exhortations, and where—instead of having their musicianship informed by learning the musical criteria at stake—students are merely functionaries of the teacher's musicianship; as organ pipes are to an organist.

[54] In this regard, it can be compared to contemporary references to Islamism and Christianism as ideologies, especially since musicianism often has an almost religious zeal about it. On the recent coining of "Christianism" in relation to religious ideology in the U.S., see, e.g., Andrew Sullivan, "My Problem with Christianism," *TIME*, May 7, 2006 (http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1191826,00.html).

[55] In the broader context of 'high art', one philosopher writes that, early in the 20th century "a religion which had previously been confined to a tiny minority, and which even with them was no more than about seventy years old, suddenly swept over the Western world: the religion of art. Ever since then, this religion, or more accurately this cult, has gone from strength to strength. . . . What department of human life have the missionaries of this religion not claimed as their own? We have had education through art; health through art; the city revitalized through art; 'the family of man' united, at last, through art . . . ." (Stove 1991, 39).

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For a cultural history of "the apotheosis of art" (i.e., its transformation into a religion) see Shiner 2001, 187–224; for "the sacralization of [high] culture," see Levine 1988, 85–168.

[56] It is important to stress again that, as used here, musicianism is a *tendency*, a disposition, not an all-or-nothing condition. It is a usually strong *axis* around which other values—usually less powerful ones—revolve. In many teaching situations, a certain balance or dynamic tension between value components may exist, while in other situations the musical axis dominates, sometimes to the problematic exclusion of other values. It is these latter instances, particularly those excluding ethical values, that I consider here.

[57] Despite their similar musical training, musicianism is not typical of music therapists (one of the other helping professions) who accept as axiomatic that music is for the benefit of their clients, not a source of veneration 'in-itself' or for their own on-the-job musical pleasures.

[58] Assumptions increasingly challenged by postmodern influences on those disciplines, critical social theory, sociology of music, social psychology, reception theory, even cognitive theories and neurological research of music perception, just to name some leading sources that are progressively and loudly critical of the accepted 'culture' of traditional aesthetic theory and traditional music theory and history research; see, e.g., Levitin 2006; Martin 2006; DeNora 2003; Korsyn 2003; Carroll 1999; Hargreaves and North 1997; Strinati 1995; Dixon 1995).

[59] *Might*, because the traditional paradigms of higher education themselves can be improved (see, e.g., Odam and Bannan 2005). Musicianism in higher education—where it is often the norm—can also have a negative and unethical impact on students there; but that is a topic for another time. The present point is that many questionable teaching practices of higher education (e g., "it-goes-this-way" or "no pain, no gain" pedagogies; "common practice" theory classes that have no application for common contemporary practices; authoritarianism, despotism, and rote training from the podium, etc.) all influence otherwise unwitting, unquestioning musicianist teachers to adopt similar methods with their students, most of whom have no aspirations for professional careers. Incongruously, these teachers often imitate practices they once vigorously decried in their university studies.

[60] Not to mention the benefits of making a musical living that is predictable and secure compared to the rest of the music industry.

[61] *Primary* socialization transmits the basic culture and values of a society (ethic group, religion, etc.); it typically occurs during childhood and the school years. *Secondary* socialization involves induction into particular occupations and professions, particularly where a group—as a kind of sub-culture—distinguishes 'insiders' from 'outsiders' on the basis of shared values and practices. Sociological research demonstrates that higher education in music involves implanting values, paradigms, and practices associated with earning the title of "musician" (see, e.g., Roberts 1993).

[62] For example, math or history programs are not judged by the few students who win awards or go on to eventual careers.

[63] If electives are offered at all (which varies according to school and country). One U.S. school—Westfield Academy and Central School, Westfield NY—should serve as a model: with 900 students in the entire system, over 200 are in high school music electives, including many general music electives.

[64] For example, if school music experiences have been as profoundly beneficial as claimed, it is not unreasonable to assume that graduates would seek (or create) similar opportunities after graduation. However, such life-long amateuring is rare—although this differs according to country and other variables (e.g., see n. 34).

[65] And such character traits are not uniquely the responsibility of music education and, thus, cannot by themselves legitimate the value of school music.

[66] Casuistry is accused of relativism by those who argue that values are—or should be—universal, absolute, and timeless rather than governed by the particulars of individual cases (for more, see n. 5). However, because important differences exist between different professions and fields, such differences entail different ethical considerations and the situatedness of individual cases often should not be ignored. For all three normative theories, it is an ethical responsibility to take such variables into consideration.

[67] On these grounds, school music fails to be virtuous to the degree it becomes an end-in-itself rather than relevant to the actual richness of the many social contexts for out-of-school musicking that are otherwise rarely addressed.

[68]I.e., a matter of "value" and, thus, of axiology: What of all that could be taught is most worth teaching—given resources, likely consequences, etc.?

**About the Author**

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