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## Methods and Situational Ethics in Music Education

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# Methods and Situational Ethics in Music Education

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The field of research in education is in transformation, moving in recent years to stress learning outcomes, qualitative student experiences, learning environments, and youth culture (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2002; UNESCO—The Right to Education, n.d.; Treaty of Lisbon 2007). This post-positivist emphasis is a long overdue and necessary corrective to behavior-based practices that seek to inform and strengthen teacher authority. Despite or because of this, teaching expertise and teacher professionalism are currently under attack, both within the domain of academic scholarship and among policy makers and politicians at large (Kushner 2010, Apple 2003). In the United States, a trend to de-professionalize teaching is seen as a way to safeguard student outcomes and protect learners from the vagaries of individualized instruction (Apple 2000). In the field of music education, this focus on outputs finds form in the U.S. National Standards for Music Education, which include nothing about educational and aesthetic values, emphasizing behavior-based musical outcomes instead (Benedict 2003). In Finland, learner-centered music education has changed the look of schools, with music classrooms increasingly turning into rock band rehearsals (Väkevä and Westerlund 2007). Following the mandate to create student-centered classrooms (Finnish National Core Curricula for Basic Education 2004), and spending precious instructional time on youth music, Finnish music teachers are attacked by classical musicians in the national media and portrayed as unintelligent and uncaring toward their country's renowned heritage of classical music.

We are now encountering an unusual situation. Despite the attention surrounding learning environments and student outcomes, the teacher's place within this order has become increasingly unstable. She is too mechanical, too free, defined by others, untrusted with choice, or paralyzed with excessive choice. Further unusual, there is a kind of silence surrounding the teacher as an agent, as one who theorizes. In this paper we examine the history of a basic logic in educational thought, that of *teaching method*, with the hope of

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relocating the teacher as a vital and ethical agent in the educational process. A method is the educator's primary tool; a teaching method—preexisting or otherwise, Kodaly or newly improvised, Method or method—is the conceptual organization of knowledge and experience with the aim of enlarging further knowledge and experience. It has, in music education, taken the form of a specific process for teaching a particular skill, a published scope and sequence for a given classroom, or even a pre-existing series of tenets and practices for music education—as in the "methods" of Kodály or Orff. This article, however, revisits the concept in its broadest epistemological sense: a method [Latin *methodus* / Greek *méthodos*, = pursuit] is a way of applying intelligence to the contingencies of changing or uncertain situations by using certain means for achieving certain ends (Dewey 1915). Because educational methods characteristically attempt to manage uncertainty, and can at their widest sense be seen as answers or responses to context-specific cultural and institutional problems, our search for an ethics of music education will focus on the choices teachers make amid the contradictions, complications, and ambiguities of teaching music in an era of closely scrutinized outcomes.

In discussing the work that teachers do and the decisions they are required to make, we find appealing the writings of the American philosopher John Dewey, whose framework for understanding of ethics has to be examined in relation to values, morals, and art. In this article, we use as a starting point the Deweyan view that when predictability or certainty are pursued as ends-in-themselves or as *a priori* goods, the ethical action and moral imagination that is required in teaching—the options, deliberations, and decisions that are part of daily life in schools—are curtailed, and this serves to disempower teachers (Dewey 1930). In the present cultural conditions in which teachers operate, Dewey's naturalist meta-ethics of valuing and value judgments offer tools for practical reconstruction within changing environments (Anderson 2010). It rejects the dichotomy between facts and values while avoiding judging specific choices (per se) as better or worse, right or wrong. This theory is not subsumed under one single set of concepts, based on any single interest or aim, or reducible to any one rule or system of rules. Rather, Deweyan ethics is *a project of inquiry* concerned with the solution of practical problems based on a variety of "morally transformed" interests and aspirations (Putnam 2004). With this in mind, we view teacher professionalism and teacher agency as bound by the moral demands of education. Methods are a logical place to locate moral concerns because a teacher's method of choosing acts and

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activities, and the intelligence and care with which she acts, arises from how she sees herself, her students, and the social and musical problems they share.

This essay considers the ways in which *ethics* and *morality* are related to music teacher envisioning and action, in the imaginative capacity to interact purposefully within the unique social sphere called school. We will show that the recent turn in professional discourse, away from teacher-directed music education methods toward theories of learning based on the self-evolving socio-cultural musical practices that occur outside the school, has shifted our attention away from the vital and ethical features that are unique to schools and classrooms. We will further argue that in the current climate of teacher de-professionalization, there is a need for reflecting on the "whats," "hows," and "whys" of teaching and learning, not only from musical perspectives, but also from educational and ethical perspectives that emerge from within educational situations. Ethical or moral deliberation transcends the established hierarchies of values that govern, implicitly or explicitly, the manner in which music teachers reflect upon the work they do. By ethical deliberation we mean judgments that are not merely technical, professional, or musical in nature, but those that deal with the growth and cultivation of a changing self. As Dewey writes:

> Moral deliberation differs from other forms not as process of forming a judgment and arriving at knowledge but in the kind of value which is thought about. The value is technical, professional, economic, etc., as long as one thinks of it as something which one can aim at and attain by way of having, possessing . . . Precisely the same object will have a moral value when it is thought of as making a difference in the self, as determining what one will be, instead of merely what one will have. Deliberation involves doubt, hesitation, the need of making up one's mind, of arriving at a decisive choice (LW 7, 274).

Teacher agency—the moral consequence of situational deliberation—is the capacity to reconstruct the means and ends of teaching into a constant *re*-organization of values for the good or the growth of oneself and others.


**The need for methods**

The contemporary context of rapid change and contradictory values may be the partial cause of a demoralized teaching profession. From questions about cultural responsiveness and learners' rights emerge frustrations that have much to do with teacher preparation and ethics. A North American music teacher might ask, how am I to create an inclusive or

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democratic learning environment when my own education was highly selective? What good is my classical training when my students want to learn something else? In focusing on the music that students know and love, a Finnish public school teacher may worry about abandoning her nation's proud heritage of folk and classical music. With increasingly diminished instructional hours, this teacher may feel good about what is taught in class, but anguished about what is omitted. These are questions that seem to surprise and confuse our university graduates when they encounter lived uncertainties for which they were not prepared. Here we call attention to ethics' gradual emergence in our field, which in turn suggests systematic neglect, or worse a professional view that is used to seeing ethics and morality as irrelevant to today's mundane and musically justified music education.

While we will later argue that a method forms the core logic in all educational events and that for practicing ethics, we need methods. We must begin with the proviso that we do not view the concept "method" as coterminous with established practices like Orff or Kodaly, as it is typically understood among music educators today (American Orff-Schulwerk Association 2010, Organization of the American Kodaly Educators 2009). Examining methods generally as a means to achieve certain ends, we find they are necessary in securing and directing the course of experience, even (especially) in daily life. We apply a method to the uncertainties and contradictions of teaching the cello, for example, just as we apply a method to the uncertainties and contradictions of shopping for groceries or planting a flower garden. But what is the relationship between a chosen method, or means, and a specific musical situation or educational event? An ethical crisis is evident in music teacher preparation and music education methodologies when in the process of securing ends against the uncertainties of change, creative or imaginative options are foreclosed or limited. Genuine ethical deliberation takes place, we will see, when teachers refuse to transfer means or methods, once tried and established, across changing landscapes.

Our problems begin, Dewey famously said, in the human quest for certainty (Dewey 1930). We seek a revitalized notion of teacher as neither scapegoat nor savior, but as *agent*, a person who does not only adapt to change (Freire 1998), but who can flourish in the moving landscapes of learning. We imagine the classroom as an experimental site, housed within complex ecologies, in which methods are tested. By contrast, our profession's view of methods is normative and fixed: By strict control of outcomes, grand methods like Kodály, Orff, and Gordon, diminish instructional options in order to predict certain and only certain

ends and values. For Dewey, this quest for certainty presents educators with a *moral* problem. Facts, for example, are not moral or immoral as such, nor are perfect fifths and 4/4 time. But it is what we do with facts that matters (Hansen 1993, 1996). The moral dimension arises in the nexus of the use of intelligence and plans for action: "[I]ntelligence is critical method applied to goods of belief, appreciation and conduct… The issue is one of choice, and choice is always a question of alternatives. What the method of intelligent, thoughtful valuation will accomplish, if once it be tried, is for the result of trial to determine" (Dewey LW 1, 325, 326). A profession that doesn't explicitly reflect on the vitality of its methods of teaching is one that typifies a kind of teacher schizophrenia in which frozen habits, dogma, silence, guilt, the everyday common sense of perfect fifths, and 4/4 time replace the moral intelligence that is necessary to guide and direct educational action.

**The story of instruction**

Despite a lack of critical reflection on methods as means for solving problems, and the shift to anti-Methods teaching in countries such as Finland, the history of music education can still be read as the story of instruction, particularly the story of Methods. As evident in prominent curricular approaches like Suzuki, Dalcroze, and *Jump Right In*, as well as the one-size-fits-all practices that shape and define modern classrooms and ensembles, music education too often appears as, and is envisioned to be, a field that is characterized by predictability, uniformity, efficiency, and clarity (The International Suzuki Association 2005, Dalcroze Society of America 2009, The Gordon Institute for Musical Learning 2009). There is nothing inherently wrong with predictability, uniformity, efficiency, and clarity. It is when their use value is lost in the quest for certainty that methods, according to Benedict, "become more real than the music itself," suggesting that teachers too often teach Orff and not music through Orff (2009, 220). Benedict argues that a false security results when we adopt instructional recipes and quick fixes. This in turn alienates students as they move further away from the ethical process of inquiry, which ultimately deals with the self.

The relationship between means and ends becomes problematic when the means to a musical event or experience becomes taken for granted as an end in itself. While the teacher may have justified reasons for drills, fa/sol relationships, and tuning exercises, the process can become a meaning-free abstraction if students experience the means as the final ends—in other words, *if the methods become the only experienced reality.* In such a setting, technique,

which is essential for growth, becomes *sine qua non*, and the ends originally envisioned evaporate from the pedagogical situation at hand. A kind of idolatry of technique ensues—a "methodolatry," writes Regelski (2002): the blind faith that "technical skill alone produces taken-for-granted ends." (111) When this occurs, "good teaching is simply a matter of the standard use of a 'good method.' And since the method itself is deemed good before the fact of use, and the training in the delivery of the method is standardized, any failure of students to learn . . . is attributed by default to 'uncontrolled variables'"—to uncertainties like "no talent, no musical intelligence, parental laxity, too much television, lack of budget, scheduling problems, society, and so on" (111).

We agree with Regelski and Benedict that normative methods are too often deemed "good in advance" and that standardization is potentially alienating, leading to teacher-proof curricula. We advance their claim by noting that grand methods like Kodály and Gordon combine forms of teacher-proofing and developmental psychology to secure uniform growth through the training of an individual's musical cognition. Carefully isolating testable cognates such as the recognition of intervallic relationships, pitch discrimination, and sequenced skill training, teachers of these psychology-based methods produce cognitively developed musical minds, perhaps with the facility to transfer between unrelated musical domains. In accord with its own purposes, there is little doubt that such an approach has proven to work, often producing specific musical results that its adherents intend. The teacher in this view is like a ballet mistress who drills students in isolated and progressive skills like *pliés* and brushes for the development of maximum control and expressivity. This approach to channeling artistic development—in its limited context—holds no need for ethical deliberation in its application, unless one conceives that the working out of musical or muscular problems—the difficulties of fa/sol relationships, good intonation, or the perfect *plié*—are *ipso facto* moral issues.

Would the problem of endless preparation and musical abstraction be resolved if teachers start out with "real" music instead of tones or pieces of music? In David Elliott's (1995) praxial music education, the delay between means and eventual end is effectively resolved by immersion in an apprenticeship, in hands-on "musicing." In contrast, the grand methods instructor dissects basic musical principles for the development of musical cognition; her culture and musical tradition are considered generically, as is the method. The praxial classroom, as envisioned by Elliott, puts non-generic cultural practices first; it is one

in which students and their teacher dive right in to a specific tradition, say African drumming or Finnish folk singing. The teacher knows the whats and the hows—the ends and the means—she *is* a Finnish folk singer. Teacher knowledge pivots upon the depth of her "musicianship, a practical, situated form of knowing—knowing anchored in the contexts and purposes of musical practices" (Elliott 1995, 68). It is important to emphasize that such a method based on Elliott's praxial philosophy starts and ends with a music practice, one whose processes can be controlled with reasonable certainty and predictability. A teacher understands her subject matter and makes choices "in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making and music listening in specific cultural contexts" (14). "All music students (general students, or otherwise) ought to be viewed and taught in the same basic way: as reflective musical practitioners engaged in the kind of cognitive apprenticeship we call music education" (105).

With some praxial philosophers, teacher professionalism is tied to expertise and apprenticeship in a tradition governed by accepted norms and social goods that "promote predictable and pragmatic 'right results' that students, parents, and the public at large can easily recognize" (Regelski 2002, 103). Elliott closely ties professionalism to an "authenticity" of musical practice so that right results do not necessarily point to people (or the good in students' lives) but rather to principles and values embedded in the given musical praxis and *how well* they are followed and exemplified by the learners (Elliott 1995). In other words, the more African a Finnish or American teacher's drummers sound, the more professional he is as a teacher, and the more "real" his classroom's music is. As noted, Elliott's expert teacher deliberates between musical matters within the "accepted" boundaries of a given musical practice. The concept of boundaries may become problematic when a student moves out of them by, for example, introducing Finnish folk singing to an African drumming context. One might ask if the student is doing right by the tradition, and if his contributions are valuable. If an actor is in conflict with a community's values, could his innovations be considered moral, non-moral, or even immoral? As we understand it, the praxial teacher's deliberations and his use of imagination in music teaching may be restricted to musical matters and therefore may not encourage a critical perspective of societal—even moral—issues outside of the musical tradition in question, issues in the very educational situation and context to which they may be connected (Westerlund 1999, 2002). While

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ethical considerations are not ruled out *de jure*, they may occur, but only incidentally, and not at the expense of musical truths or musical "rights."

In recent years, a theoretical turn seems to be moving music education researchers in the direction of studying youths and youth cultures with the hope of creating instructional practices that might be more relevant and lasting (Allsup 2002, Söderman and Folkestad 2004, Westerlund 2006). Just as praxialists seek to adopt the real world practices of authentic musical traditions, research on how young people make and perform real music out of school has lead to an interest in informal learning (Green 2001, Folkestad 2006, Kratus 2007). In contrast to the classical traditions of grand methods and what may be considered the expertise-driven requirements of praxial theory, Lucy Green (2008) advocates a radical rethinking of teacher method by focusing her approach squarely on students and the learning environments they might choose for themselves. Informed by her earlier work observing the informal practices of popular musicians, she has replaced the notion of teacher as expert with a method that focuses on student inquiry. Referring to learning strategies rather than teaching strategies, students in her experimental classrooms adopt the informal practices of popular musicians. In Green's curriculum, students start with music "they already know and understand, like, enjoy, and identify with" (2008, 10). Then, she writes, "the main method of skill acquisition in the informal realm involves copying recordings by ear . . . informal learning takes place alone as well as alongside friends, through self-directed learning, peer-directed learning, and group learning" (10). Skills and knowledge "tend to be assimilated in haphazard, idiosyncratic, and holistic ways, starting with whole and real world pieces of music . . ." (10).

Like composers Carl Orff and Zoltan Kodály, Green developed an educational method in direct response to historical conditions she found problematic. Students today continue to experience "alienation" from institutionalized classroom music from practices that date back to "post-second world war" curricula, when "pupils were educated in Western classical music and folk music, mainly through singing and music appreciation classes . . . [and] were required to study music with whose delineations they largely had no point of identification" (2008, 89). With little affinity to the cultural meanings that this kind of museum music represented, students faced the compounded problem of instruction that paid too much attention to music's abstract properties. But the problem of alienation could not be solved for Green by simply adding popular music to the curriculum because the teachers she

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observed doing so applied "formalist" methodologies that neglected the cultural meanings attached to youth music. "[O]nce inside the classroom, popular music has tended to be *approached* largely as though its inter-sonic meanings [tonal patterns and relationships, rhythm, form, etc.] warranted the same kind of attention as those of [Western] classical music" (2008, 90, orig. italics). Students could achieve "celebratory" experiences as opposed to "alienating" or "ambiguous" experiences "by allowing them to approach the inter-sonic materials and meanings of whole pieces of music directly, in ways that were derived from the 'real-life' informal learning practices of popular musicians, as these occur in the world away from schools and classrooms . . . this approach seemed to enhance the listening skills and musical appreciation of many pupils, or to promise a form of 'critical musicality'" (90).

We believe that Green responds to classroom uncertainty by making student enjoyment or "celebration" the criterion of methodological success. "Critical musicality" is arrived at through students' autonomous engagement with the music they like as they get better at doing it. As Green writes, "[a]chieving such criticality is more likely to occur if pupils' ears have already been opened through positive experiences of a variety of musics, in relation to both inter-sonic and delineated meanings; that is, through what I have referred to as musical celebration" (2008, 80). Ethical deliberations, if they occur at all, are instigated by what the learner discovers on his own or with peers. We call attention to the fact that teacher professionalism and content specialization is radically reworked to disallow most adult intervention. If an informalist methodology is to be implemented strictly, as according to Green, the teacher has little ethical role to play beyond hope. Even Green admits that "musical criticality" takes the form of a "promise," an ideal that has the possibility of realization if the right kind of musical facilitation among peers takes place (90). In any case, the informalist approach in itself does not demand any ethical role from music teachers in its paving the way for greater student authority and ownership.

Yet focusing on outcomes like positive self-esteem, the pleasure of working together with peers, and the satisfaction of performing a variety of popular instruments in the order of one's choosing needn't exist in conflict with teacher expertise. Unlike Green's experiments in informal learning in the United Kingdom, popular music instruction in Finland, a practice that established itself in classrooms and teacher education programs in the 1980's, has not radically changed the music educator's role as teacher/facilitator. Finnish music teachers are prepared to be highly competent in popular music styles and instruments, and are expected to

guide the hands-on music making processes as in any other musical genre (Väkevä 2006, Westerlund 2006). As some North Americans may now look to Europe as a model for popular music education, the moral obligation of media critique should be part of any discussion of popular music or informal pedagogy. It is worth asking whether student enjoyment and celebration are sufficient for enlarging criticality, and if or how teachers use media critique in arts education.

In spite of ethical ambiguities within and among the various methods that make up this story of instruction, we can agree that as a profession we are moving in a direction that is more sensitive to student participation and musical variety. We seem to be affording learners richer opportunities to design their own courses of study, facilitating performance of multiple instruments and styles, as well as allowing more students greater influence in how they direct their learning. The outcome of this recent paradigm shift in professional discourse (and even practice) may be that students are feeling less alienated and that what is experienced in school has perhaps greater connection to their "real" musical lives outside of school. Ironically, while we are getting better at facilitating student agency, we fear that we are not getting better at facilitating *teacher* agency. We move now to the problem of teacher professionalism which introduced this paper, and the difficult choices teachers make when they negotiate between the "certainty" of their expertise and training and their responsibility to forecast ethically derived (and uncertain) classroom ends for their students.

**A vision of ethical music education**

In our vision of an ethical music education, we consider eight important starting points.

(i) *A major problem of our profession is the too common belief that the surer one is of means and ends, the less one needs to question, experiment, or inquire.* "Probably the chief cause of devotion to rigidity of method is . . . that it seems to promise speedy, accurately measurable, correct results. The zeal for 'answers' is the explanation of the zeal for rigid and mechanical methods," wrote Dewey almost a century ago (Dewey MW 9, 182–3). Even today, it is a common cultural trope that good teachers are unquestioning experts, unbothered by inner and outer conflict. Who would argue that early career teachers are led to believe that the less one exhibits inner conflict, the better one will be viewed and celebrated? Mistaking uncertainty for anxiety, teachers adopt a mannered approach in which they disguise public uncertainty, performing intelligence more than embodying it. This fosters the erroneous

notion that once a teacher graduates with certification or a doctorate, her life as a student and inquirer effectively ends.

(ii) *It is vitally important to recognize that "all the aims and values which are desirable in education are themselves moral"* (Dewey 1985, 369). This means that music education is not only about music, but deals with ideals of human character and society, ideals about life in school. Our profession's renewed interest in the social aspects of learning, and the move toward learner-centered instruction is a commendable and appropriate response to the complexities of pluralism and youth culture. Yet the degree to which this turn is ethical (rather than being merely musical or cultural, or relevant or "authentic") is found in a method's relationship to its ends or ideals. For example, one who advocates informalism like Green may have certain fixed ends in mind, but unlike formalist or grand methodologies, the important choices are given to students, not teachers. Motivation, having fun, student ownership, and "celebration" are deliberate but limited starting points. While we agree that these ends are deeply admirable, a teacher must be more than a witness to student freedom. Indeed, she may have good reasons to act in ways that contradict her students' musical goals. The study and performance of Death Metal, for example, may be an inappropriate way to "celebrate" certain preferences or values, given that schools are public institutions devoted to nonviolence. What happens when children choose as given ends, the practice and performance of religious music, or nationalistic music? It is quite easy to imagine students finding their way to music that promotes sexual promiscuity (to say nothing of homophobic or misogynist musics). Concerning the latter, the teacher at the very least should discuss and debate the consequences of promiscuity (even if this means addressing birth control or the use of condoms to prevent sexually transmitted diseases). Because social responsibility can be at odds with student rights, which are understood in the context of informalism as negative freedom, an ethically conceived informalist methodology must struggle openly with the possible contradictions of educational ends (the cultivation of citizenship, plurality, moral and disciplinary knowledge) and sociological ends (the cultivation of individuality, identity formation, social inclusion, and in-groups/out-groups).

(iii) *Values give general direction to the deliberation of means and ends; methods or means are chosen with a specific end-in-view, with an intelligent plan for action.* Good teachers will always mindfully cultivate certain values and related ideals within their students, such as a lifelong musical interest or critical attitude development. However, a

teacher interested purely in ideals, one who sees only what is distant, is more likely to fail than succeed. A too-lofty vision may prevent her from making the right kinds of adjustments "on the ground." When ideals stay abstract, or if the end is too far from reach, such a teacher is unable to imagine an intelligent proportion of means to ends. The educational reality of an idealist can be seen as empty of meanings. Contemporary music teachers can be heard saying, we need to give our students a general knowledge of all musics so that our children can manage a future that is complex and multicultural. But how? And in what ways? The overly practical teacher, on the other hand, has no horizon toward which she aims, but constructs her lessons as if the lessons themselves were the purpose of music education. Mistaking a curricular unit or musical skill for the larger aims of education, music teachers may limit classroom ends to mere academic achievements or musical outcomes like the recognition of time signatures, fingering B, A, and G on the recorder, or singing certain songs from certain songbooks. These outcomes confuse existential growth with musical achievement.

According to Dewey, the good teacher combines the distant with the proximal. She combines the learner's future with an intelligent plan of action, a contextually-derived method, so that current learning is an investment in a future ideal (Dewey 1938). The direction is checked constantly by the teacher with the attained ends (the close up ends) in turn suggesting *newer* ends. A process-series of ends-in-view—ends attained and modified and reattained—proceeds toward a teacher's more abstract aims (like a disposition for lifelong learning, or the kind of musical criticality that helps students decode media representations and stereotypes). This kind of action curriculum is never purely instrumental, but should have experienced value in itself. In other words, in this vision, the criterion of a good music education is never the constant preparation for a future life (or a future concert), or a scattered series of daily activities (like self-justifying étude books), but is when one's experience is just as meaningful presently as it is imagined to be in future life. When this occurs, there is an enlargement and enrichment of life as students and teachers move toward a chosen horizon—an *evolving* horizon that is likewise enlarged and enriched through the very means that are chosen to get there. The ethical teacher necessarily deliberates between multiple and contradictory ends and multiple and contradictory ideals, and the means and methods that are found to be effective—to be "good" or "right"—depend on the *multiple* and sometimes even contradictory situations she encounters.

(iv) *In multicultural societies and school communities, a music teacher's deliberation between means and ends has become ever more complex and should be a crucial part of professional education.* "At least there is a possibility, a chance that there are a lot of discrepant forces, not just one contradiction, a number of forces and contradictions that are pulling in different directions, and therefore we are obliged to consider a number of possibilities regarding the method in which these conflicts of forces and conditions will work out" (Dewey 2008b, 444). A Kodály instructor, for example, has only limited ends available for use. With fixed ideals, the method thinks for her, so to speak—*it defines without deliberation.* Metaphorically speaking, the Kodály method is like putting on formal evening clothes without knowing what kind of place you are leaving to visit. Or worse, it is like a teacher who has chosen a school uniform for you, and expects you to wear it for the rest of your life. A fixed methodological view secures that the teacher need not reflect between choices, or that the reflection takes place within a fixed range of decisions.

(v) *There is a connection between a life of inquiry and our call for situational ethics.* We fully agree with Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle who write "a legitimate and essential purpose of professional development is the development of an inquiry stance on teaching that is critical and transformative, a stance linked not only to high standards for the learning of all students but also to social change and social justice and to the individual and the collective professional growth of teachers" (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 2001, 46). We are committed to seeing the school as a public site—an educational laboratory—where music educators embrace the moral good through the use of social intelligence. As earlier noted, by moral, we do not mean *the* good as an *a priori* good, but *a* good—a situational good embedded in conduct. Since intelligent conduct "necessarily implies a continuous adjustment of developing capacity to new conditions" (Dewey 1975, 343), we locate teacher professionalism in the capacity to move responsibly among multiple, conditional, and overlapping scenarios. This means that a teacher's chosen methods of instruction are deliberated against a myriad of social and individual visions *and* social and individual consequences, not merely against musical consequences, musical "goods," or musical outcomes alone. At the risk of overstating our case, we do not believe that methods like Orff, Kodály, or Gordon are inherently bad or wrong, nor do we claim that praxialism or informalism is absent of ethical action. Methods, we emphasize, are ways of applying

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intelligent direction to the world. But a method is established and applied when its efficacy has been tested and found to be useful—*for certain ends only.*

(vi) *A teacher's ethical deliberations are tied to students' conduct and growth.* A typical methodolatrist musical director is likely to consider that wider ethical issues are inconsistent with the prevailing technical rationalities of a cognitive/motor approach to musical aptitude and achievement. Taking time out of a rehearsal to deal with the meaning of a set of lyrics or to investigate a work's historical contradictions in order to lift students' consciousness beyond the dominant or taken for granted levels of knowing might be considered by many as a waste of (musical) time. Even worse, a teacher may mistake musical achievement for moral good. Recalling our earlier definition of moral deliberation, music education in which facts and knowledge are taught as something to be "gotten" or "possessed" is not quite moral in nature. The same facts or activities gain moral significance only if they are chosen carefully to build the character of the student, to affect change in his dispositions, or to make a difference in his life. Without student ownership of shared aims and means, knowledge that is good-for-everyone—knowledge that is predetermined—is non-moral because it doesn't deal with the particularities of a time and place. This means that musical growth, perfect technique, or good intonation may be exhibitions of the student's technical growth without necessarily providing for the existential needs of his own life/view. Moreover, a critical attitude doesn't emerge from facts and skills alone, but may be embedded in larger contexts of societal conflicts and contradictions. The instrumentalities of knowledge or the quantifiable renderings of growth are not what are at stake in our vision, although these exhibitions may be more visible than moral growth. Yet, we do not view moral growth as inconsistent with musical growth. Students can achieve and sustain National or local standards, while at the same time their education shapes conduct and character. We recognize, furthermore, the very ease with which teachers can own the achievements of their students, seeing a choir as *my* choir or a doctoral student as *my* doctoral student. In other words, choices made for a teacher's achievements are not the same as choices made for a student's growth.

(vii) *Schools are legitimate communities: they are special places with unique purposes, with public aims that are or can be distinguishable from the existing cultural practices that occur outside the school.* The purpose of education, as we understand it, is not simply to train inductees into the social practices of a place or time, but to reach beyond the

existing order of things, so as to make *use* of the social practices of a place or time. The facts of uncertainty and change make education the practice of reconstructing and transforming the existing order of things. Education, therefore, is not the same as instruction, and it is altogether different from cultural induction or training. Concerning music education, we agree with Wayne Bowman that training in a musical practice is not necessarily the same as educating musically (Bowman 2002, 3). Similarly, the purpose of music education is not merely to instruct in the procedural know-how of various musical traditions. The purpose of music education should be to renew the musical culture from which it comes; to remake a new generation of music lovers and practitioners; to revitalize its historic practices; to reawaken interest in the familiar and forgotten; to reconstruct musical ways that range from the radical to the reliable. The "re" words we use to describe this vision of education are a rebuke to those methodological ends for which certainty is a quest, and for those traditions that trade in the authentic as authoritative.

As we look to an understanding of teacher professionalism and the moral obligation to educate musically, we conclude that if we as teachers restrict learning to musical ends and musical ends only, we necessarily restrict ourselves to those kinds of questions we are allowed to entertain, and those kinds of problems we are allowed to solve. As Elliott (1995) suggests, we have to be educators *and* musicians: not only content specialists, and not only outstanding musicians (262). Here we argue, however, that a music teacher's morally concerned educational deliberation may deal with issues that are not at all musical in nature. It means, for example, that musical concerns taken as their own ends like perfect intonation, playing in time, or playing somehow "authentically," may have to give way should a greater individual or social good present itself. Likewise, justification for social harm incurred through the pursuit of musical excellence or musical achievement is a morally repugnant act, though one that is so exceedingly common to anyone who has attended a typical conservatory or School of Music that no supporting illustration is even necessary. Still, our stance, presented in radical opposition to the prevailing ideology that favors musical ends over social or educational goods, is *not* the creation of another dualism or binary. The ideal we advance is *not* social versus musical, or teacher versus student, or ethical versus non-ethical. We argue that the best education is *ipso facto* a moral enterprise, one in which the conduct of its participants is made up by a plurality of unpredictable, overlapping, contradictory, and complementary social actions and values. Growth cannot be seen merely from the musical

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perspective because the school has educational aims and values that are wider than disciplinary knowledge alone. In this view, in this ideal, the school is not a binary construction of either/or dialectics, but a microcosm of society—past, present, and future—in all its conflict and beauty.

(viii) *The central aspect of music teacher professionalism is precisely in understanding that no end is such that there are no further ends that can be reflected upon; no musical end is an end-in-itself with no further moral evaluation.* The archenemy of music education professionalism is the familiar assumption that musical ends, whether understood through aesthetic objects or musical performances are *fixed* ends, ends-in-themselves and that these ends ought to have as little as possible to do with other ends, such as social or moral ends. Furthermore, this assumption is often accompanied by the notion that the "musical ends" can be arranged in a hierarchy from the lowest to the highest, and that these fixed ends as terminal experiential fulfillments ought to be set beyond any other humane end and value. This hierarchical notion of values and deliberation between means and ends, according to Dewey, follows with the problematic view "that moral 'judgment' consists simply in direct apprehension of an end-in-itself in its proper place in the scheme of fixed values. It is assumed that apart from this hierarchy of fixed ends, a moral agent has no alternative save to follow his desires as they come and go" (Dewey 2008a, 169). If taken as *fixed*—as a safety belt against too many options—musical praxis as "enjoyed activity" may form a hermetic field in which other values than musical and artistic values are disallowed. For example, if excellence in public performance is more valued than democratic participation or the virtues of inclusion and equal-opportunity, a music teacher may justifiably exclude potential participants through high-stakes testing or competitive audition. In other words, teachers should be aware that the musical practices and the methods they employ in their schools exemplify the wider values of those schools. Values, the lack of them, or the misplacement of them, are made manifest through the actions and choices of teachers.

This strict hierarchy of values is evident, for instance, in conservatory teaching in which fixed ends denote plans of action or purposes without any possible alternative since repertoire is the sole criterion for deliberating ends-in-view. There is hardly any other life of inquiry for professional conservatory teachers than to know the fixed ends, and the means to attain these fixed ends. Such a hierarchy of values may, for example, justify a method that includes yelling or humiliation to achieve an award-winning performance. If teachers reflect

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upon the multiplicity of ideals that schools ought to take into account, such as equity of access in music schooling, cooperation and working as a community, curiosity, self-esteem, and cultural critique, so too must the musical ends-in-view reflect the ideals that touch learners' lives and are vital for life in school and society. The values, or aims, are not context-free but are conditioned in many ways by rapidly changing contexts and cultures; the general educational values and ideals may change any musical ends-in-view even radically if taken into account. Only the professional competence of such constant reorganizing of value hierarchies based on ethical judgment makes the music teacher a moral agent and educator instead of simply a music instructor.

**Situational ethics and the imagination**

The imagination, this section will conclude, is used in the moral deliberation that takes place between means and ends—means and ends that are conditioned by a community's multiple aims and values and between its multiple histories and present and future directions. By imagination, we do not mean flights of fancy or plain fantasy, rather the free play of thought when entertaining choices. Imagination is the ability or capacity to see things as if they could be otherwise (Greene 1995) and the imagination, of course, is critical for making ethical decisions. With regard to moral judgments in education, the form that our deliberation takes (what is done with whom or what is intended to take place among others) requires the imaginative capacity to see a matter *as if* it were otherwise. Dewey writes, "our moral judgments take into account both what is done or intended, and how or why the act is done. These two aspects are sometimes called the 'matter' and the 'form', or the 'content' and the 'attitude'. We shall use the simpler terms, the What and the How" (Dewey and Tufts 1956, 5). The "*whats, hows,* and *whys"*—words that framed the beginning of this paper—are starting points that are familiar to any teacher who deliberates between uncertain options (Allsup 2009, Bowman 2002, Westerlund 2003).

Regarding imagination and our vision of an ethical music education as presented above, we expand upon an important theme: "a narrow and moralistic view of morals is responsible for the failure to recognize that all the aims and values which are desirable in education are themselves moral" (Dewey 1985, 369). We wish to emphasize that moral education in schools doesn't exist in or through a grim canon of moral principles or musical techniques learned and applied. Rather, a situational moral good is always involved when the

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quality of interaction and social life is examined and tested to be good. Most music teachers have an idealized vision of what music education should be. But pointing to musical knowledge alone, to so-called "best practices," or established skills and established methods, is not necessarily an act of imagination. Of course, the musical imagination is important in entertaining musical options, given the ambiguity inherent in perceiving or rendering musical pieces, or through finding solutions to pedagogical problems. But the musical imagination is not moral until it involves the uncertainty of social and situational settings; it is not moral until it deliberates among the various consequences of social action as these actions apply to everyone in a school community. School engagements "need to have ethical as well as musical dimensions since music is interrelated with other aspects of lived life, and our values affect, as they are influenced by, musical thought and practice" (Jorgensen 2008, 241).

So, how does a teacher make ethical decisions about what is taught and learned in schools? For the authors of this paper, it is hard to see how deliberations emerging from the "*whats, hows,* and *whys*" of music education do not involve some form of dialogue between a teacher and her students. Jorgensen starts with such a dialogical argument, a practice that borrows from the ancient Greek understanding of dialectic as a reciprocal conversation across differences.

> In cases where one or another alternative must be selected, however, it is important to recognize that this dialectical approach constitutes a process whereby teachers and their students explore their alternatives and the possibility of the ground between them before prematurely foreclosing either option. It provides a systematic way of analyzing alternatives and focuses as much on the process of philosophical reflection as on its practical outcomes. Given the freedom to act in this manner, teachers and their students likely will arrive at differing solutions that *fit their particular perceptions* of their times and places. (Jorgensen 2004, 17–18, emphasis added)

As a significant departure from most discourses in music education, Jorgensen's dialectical philosophy opens the field for reflection on the plurality of means and ends (the "*whats, hows,* and *whys*") of music teaching. For Jorgensen, teacher professionalism that is ethical is likewise dialogical, and thus focuses on collective community action with democracy as a guiding ideal. But what does a teacher do with the results of dialogue? If dialogue is taken to mean compromise across the particularities of difference and perception, this stance may inadvertently inhibit growth. If dialogue affirms or *intends to affirm* the preexisting values that a community holds dear, dialectics as a teaching stance hold no guarantee for ethical reconstruction on the one hand, or re-imaginative practice on the other.

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Jorgensen's dialectical model reminds us of the value of diversity and the importance of difference in the cultivation of community. Her stance speaks to the postmodern condition of our students' de-essentialized selves, and the hybrid nature of the musical and artistic artifacts that circulate in the liminal spaces of youth culture, and the converging, evolving, fragile, and all but uncertain points of contact that emerge in purposefully constructed learning environments that encompass a teacher and her students. Yet, there is still a problem that needs to be untangled. What does a teacher do with the results of dialogue? Is dialogue so self-evident that its results speak for itself? Do the outcomes of classroom dialogue give clear indications of purposeful, ethical ends-in-view? Dialogue, after all, is not inevitably moral in and of itself, and the differing solutions that arise from a given classroom discussion can result in a laissez-faire practice of music teaching and learning where [say] representation of difference is proxy for multicultural virtue; or where "voice" is just that—the hearing of another's voice, rather than the receiving of something otherwise unknown and unconsidered. Before dialogue can become a method whose means and ends are ethically organized, and before dialogue can figure in a vision of teacher professionalism, diversity needs to be understood as a moral good whose ideals guide the practice of teaching. David Hansen, in paraphrasing Dewey and echoing the existential claims of those for whom philosophy is synonymous with education, writes "to live fully, we are sentenced to a particular mode of education. Our education resides 'in' learning from all contacts of life . . . If we succeed in that, or at least attempt to do so, then we can be said to be leading not just a life but a moral life. We can be said to become moral selves" (166).

This vision of dialogue as an educative moral encounter, in which contact from all ways and walks of life is valued as means to a richer and fuller life, requires the capacity to receive and the curiosity to examine. A classroom dialogue that functions toward the moral growth of all involved is not a chat among friends or a competition among adversaries. Participation is ethically bound: teachers facilitate and guide without succumbing to domination, and students bear responsibility to attend to issues that are larger than themselves. What emerges is a 'laboratory space' where the *results* of dialogue, or the *results* of purposeful and diverse interaction, become *new* starting points, which in turn fund testable means to further ends. These points of interest, for Hansen, are moral because they involve more than just the singular self, e.g., the teacher and her tradition and the students and his desires: "If persons are mutually engaged in one another's ideas, actions, and hopes, their

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selves widen and deepen in insight, knowledge, sensitivity and capacity to grow in communicative and expressive ways. In doing so, persons constantly position themselves to expand their learning through each successive interaction, in a dynamic spiral of give-and-take" (178).

**Ethics and teacher professionalism**

Teacher professionalism means, in part, communicating with the public about how ethical and educational negotiations are framed, and how educational and musical practices are reconstructed and reimagined (Hatch 2005, Woodford 2005). Although the authors of this article stand strongly by a vision of teacher power and professionalism, we stand strongly against teacher timidity and ignorance with respect to ethical responsibility. There is little we can say about music teachers who feel that music making is a neutral (or merely neural) activity, except that such a vision impoverishes all concerned. Imagination is critical, writes Maxine Greene, "because teachers incapable of thinking imaginatively or of releasing students to encounter works of literature or other forms of art are probably also unable to communicate to the young what the use of imagination signifies. If it is the case that imagination feeds one's capacity to feel one's way into another's vantage point, these teachers may also be lacking in empathy" (Greene 1995, 36–37). Teachers—those who help students understand that there are as many ways to interpret a song as there are members of a classroom community—are teachers for whom inquiry and empathy are stances of professionalism and power.

Concerning ethics and the imagination, how do we make sense of American choir directors who program South African freedom songs, yet neglect to investigate the racial injustices (and the artistic expressions that are related to said injustices) that surround their own hallways and neighborhoods? Stories are common of choirs who perform John Lennon's *Imagine* without ever integrating the song's social message into their rehearsal plans, to say nothing of instigating a wider school effort around an anti-war movement, social justice, or hunger. The imagination deals with cultural practices, too, not simply the social problems that cut through to the public, or the controversies that frame the words we sing. We do not teach jazz for the sake of history or preservation or cultural heritage or other worthy abstractions, as such. We teach jazz so that students can do something with jazz, and more broadly, do something with life, or live life more fully, even if it means changing jazz. But

this is a point of view that is rarely presented in teacher preparation programs where most courses teach students to adapt to what is and has been, not to adapt what is to what might be (Freire 1974, Greene 1995). For teachers to feel less timid, they need exercise in imaginative practice. They need exercise in ethical encounters. They need exercise in empathy. And yes, they also need exercise in expert disciplinary practices. Just as we envision the classroom as a laboratory setting where imaginative encounters between what is and what might be are sure to take place, so too do we envision music teacher education programs as housed within laboratories: experimental, situational, uncertain, empathetic, ethical, and imaginative settings that are funded by the traditions, cultural practices, and histories that inform them (Hansen 1993). The music educator in this context is "trained" not only as a musical performer and musical expert, but is guided to exercise the wider educational and ethical considerations of his craft as well as given tools for experimenting, all in the service of his future students' musical and personal growth. In such a professional educational environment, carefully chosen musical, or other, means become methods for achieving musical, and other, ends-in-view that in themselves function as means for further ends, all being tested and retested in new educational situations against various, even mutually competing, ideals by the use of imagination. In such use of methods, music education can exist as an ethical inquiry and the teacher as moral agent.

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