

Implications of Aesthetic versus Praxial Philosophies of Music for Curriculum Theory in Music Education

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Introduction

At heart, curriculum is a matter of values. The most basic curricular thinking involves answering the question, What of all that can be taught is most worth teaching? In other words, there is always more to teach than time and resources permit and not all of what can be taught or learned is equally valuable to all students or to society. The study and clarification of value has always been a major enterprise of philosophy. To the degree curricular thinking is a matter of the criteria involved in making value judgments concerning what is most worth teaching and learning, then, to that degree, curriculum planning and choices concerning day-to-day instruction are philosophical.

Most teachers are rarely aware of the philosophical nature of their curricular decisions. In fact, that is the problem: they are unmindful of the practical implications of the philosophically uninformed curricular choices they do make. It is therefore entirely unappreciated by most teachers (including many in higher education) that the very question of “What is music?” (e.g., Alperson 1994; Erskine 1944)) is inescapably philosophical to begin with! Consequently, the teacher who presumes to teach “music” but who is philosophically uninformed about what it is, is open to creating and thus suffering all sorts of difficulties.

One of the most consequential of these problems involves the question of whether music’s meaning is aesthetic, autonomous, immanent and, thus, intrinsic to the sounds (or scores) of musical ‘works’; or whether musical meaning is not ‘in’ the sounds of the moment (or ‘in’ a score) but rather arises in connection with the

situated personal and social uses and status-functions at stake. The former philosophy of music sees musical meaning and value as aesthetic while the latter philosophy roots music in and as praxis. The practical consequences for curriculum of these differences are, I submit, decisive.

Traditional Curriculum Theory and Music As Aesthetic Education

Traditional philosophies fall into three broad schools: idealism, realism and neo-scholasticism. For idealists, reality and truth take the form of a priori and therefore disembodied, abstract ideas that have rational and immanent meaning. Knowledge, then, is not gained through experience and, therefore, values involve ideas of goodness and beauty that are absolute and eternal. Art and music, then, ‘objectify’ or ‘realize’ such ideal, universal and timeless truth and beauty for ‘pure’ contemplation.

In the idealist’s view of schooling, intellectual learning is most important since knowledge is governed by the rational mind. By virtue of training, teachers’ minds are more highly informed and rational and, therefore, they can pass on knowledge of reality, truth and beauty to students. The curriculum, as a result, is predicated largely on abstract ideas-mainly verbal concepts and information and symbolic thinking. Instruction, in turn, involves techniques for transferring this ‘content’ from the teacher (or text) to students. For idealists, it is not necessary that understanding be useful in any pragmatic sense. In fact, in comparison to the timelessness and stability of ideas, idealists see the world of concrete things as problematically characterized by change and contingency. Thus, instruction typically is, as students often complain, “merely academic.” Such ideas, theories and understanding-as defined by experts, authorities and revelations from the past-are therefore valued as ends in themselves. Schools exist, then, to protect and transmit such knowledge to new generations rather than to effect change.

Idealism has been the predominant aesthetic philosophy of music (Bowman 1998). It has resulted in a conflicting variety of aesthetic theories that stress the intellectual, cerebral, cognitive and symbolic values of music-values that, despite certain key distinctions, tend to overlap realist and neo-scholastic aesthetic theories (discussed later). An aesthetic ideology or orthodoxy dominated by idealist philosophy has thereby arisen. According to this orthodoxy, ‘good music’ is the

‘art music’ of ‘high culture’; aesthetic meaning is said to be contained within music’s sounds as governed by the score for particular ‘works’ and exists to be contemplated for its own sake. An aesthetic distance must therefore be maintained that separates the ‘pure’ aesthetic experience of musical contemplation from any other so-called ‘extrinsic’ functions (such as worship) or personal uses (such as amateur recreation). Instead, the ‘disinterestedness’ (i.e., Kant’s well-known “purposiveness without purpose”) of aesthetic meaning is supposed to transcend any particular time, place or person in favor of universal meanings of a metaphysical or symbolic kind.

In the idealist view, the idea of “music” has a single essence or nature and the very thought of a plurality of “musics” violates the idealist aesthetic assumption of rational universality. Thus, while popular, folk, improvisatory and similar kinds of lay, indigenous and functional musics are popularly called “music,” idealist aesthetic philosophy maintains a strict hierarchy with the Eurocentric ‘art music’ canon at the very top and other music variously arrayed on a descending continuum beneath. Aesthetic experience is held to be cerebral and intellectual and takes the form of disembodied (abstract, purely ‘mental’) ideas of various kinds. Powerful bodily-based feelings, somatic residuals and other embodied, affective experiences are treated by idealist (and other aesthetic traditions in analytic philosophy) with deep suspicion or disapproval-as merely satisfying bodily appetites, or as superficial entertainment (i.e., as “ear candy”), or as emotional catharsis-and are ultimately seen as distractions from the ‘essential’ meaning of music, which is instead said to be some kind of rational ideation. Any ‘expression’, in certain idealist views, is ‘known’ or ‘symbolized’ cognitively, not embodied or directly ‘felt’ emotionally or experienced viscerally. As critics too numerous to mention have pointed out, then, idealist aesthetic philosophies of music since Plato have separated the mind (ideas) from the body (sentience) and have given precedence to the former while denying or depreciating the value or role of the latter.

The body is also denied or discredited in important ways by downplaying the bodily aspects of performance. These are regarded largely as physical techniques and therefore as not properly rational knowledge-an attitude that often associates performance skills more with athletic training than with education and thus helps make all the performing arts ‘odd bedfellows’ in academe. Certainly an important function is accorded performers, for without them esthetes could hear no music. But listening and composing are given the highest priority-the latter because the composer’s creativity is believed to encode purely aesthetic ideas into notes on the

page that the performer only renders into sound, and the former because contemplation of music for its own sake is the ultimate value. Thus, performance is accorded a certain secondary status as mainly (or merely) executory. For idealists, the physical (and visual aspects) of performance should have little if anything to do with “the music” and recorded performances can therefore be the aesthetic equivalent of live performances. A corollary of this view for music education implies that, by definition, performances by youth (and amateurs generally) fall short of the artistry needed to properly instantiate the full aesthetic merits of ‘good music’. Listening to recordings is therefore seen not only as an adequate substitute for, but as superior to performance for teaching ‘music appreciation’ since, the argument goes, youthful amateurs cannot achieve the artistry of professional performances.

“Music education as aesthetic education” (MEAE) finds its main support in idealism and has historically been the prevailing philosophy used as either the rationale for or premise of music education. This has been the case despite the fact that orthodox aesthetic theory—including the realist and neo-scholastic variants discussed below—typically does not explain or correspond to how most people experience music—whether in concert halls or in everyday life (Martin 1995; DeNora 2000). Traditionally, then, performance oriented music teachers have focused instead on technique and repertory to the almost effective exclusion of contemplation. It is also clear, on one hand, that the small percentage of students who choose to take part in large ensembles find the social activity of making music to be the main attraction while, on the other hand, their musical lives outside of and after graduation from school typically remain musically unchanged. Unfortunately, then, too few continue to perform after graduation from school despite their attraction to performance ensembles as a social activity. School music of this kind—whether in comprehensive or private music schools—is, therefore, restricted to the school years and has little demonstrable impact on their musical lives in ensuing years (Ståhlhammar 2000).

General music teachers, in contrast, do tend to labor to teach concepts as the cognitive and ideational bases for exactly the kind of musical contemplation described by idealist supporters of MEAE (e.g., Schwadron 1967; Reimer 1989; for a realist aesthetic making similar claims, see Broudy 1991)—despite the fact that social psychologists find that it is precisely the use-value of music that most attracts young people (Zillmann and Su-lin Gan 1997), and keeping in mind that such ‘extrinsic’ functions are viewed by idealist and other aesthetic traditions as detrimental or contradictory to the ‘intrinsic’ values of aesthetic contemplation.

Social research also confirms what common sense observes, namely the existence of important “taste publics” and “taste cultures” (Russell 1997) that form around exactly the kinds of social practices belittled by aesthetic theories and respected by praxial views of music. In other words, ordinary people of varying educational backgrounds find a host of values in and from musics that are denied or downplayed by the idealist dominated aesthetic orthodoxy and by MEAE with its agenda for teaching the ‘appreciation’ of supposedly abstract, metaphysical and thus transcendental musical meanings. It might be assumed that philosophical realism would be more down to earth but this is not the case.

Realism does diverge from some of the abstractness and abstruseness of idealism by instead emphasizing reality as revealed by our senses. Thus, for the realist, matter is independent of mind; the physical world and its natural laws are the source of truth and knowledge, instead of mind. Realism, in consequence, serves as the basis for modern empirical science. Because science deals with what ‘is’ not with what ‘ought’ to be the case, values cannot be ‘discovered’ by science; however, for realists, values are based on so-called ‘natural law’ and, as is also the case with idealism, are regarded as absolute and eternal. Good art, then, is expected to, reflect or represent (i.e., ‘re present’) the orderliness and rationality of the natural world. Realist aesthetics are therefore sometimes called “naturalistic aesthetics.”

Schooling is concerned to convey an understanding of the logic and order of the universe. As a result, mathematics and the sciences are stressed. Primary importance is given to transmitting ‘objective’ facts and information. Knowledge and truth, not unlike idealism, then, are said to arise outside the learner’s experience; they are merely passed on and passively received, despite teaching methods that favor the senses—such as demonstrations, laboratory experiments, and the like. Knowledge, then, is considered a matter of a priori or given truth and ‘facts’ rather than of personally constructed meanings, action patterns or dispositions, functional competencies, or the like.

Realist aesthetics of music present several problems. First, while musical sounds have physical properties, “music” per se is not simply acoustics. Thus, hearing sound as music is not a matter of the auditory mechanisms of the brain; it is not the ear that converts sound into “music,” but the socially situated and embodied mind—as already existing in a rich socio-cultural context of musical praxes and as “triggered” by uniquely situated circumstances and intentions, both personal and social (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, 135). Secondly, with the arguable exception

of clichéd imitation, music does not refer directly to the things of the world. Even compositions inspired by stories and visual images depend, then, on titles and other verbal hints to the listener.

Although realism is credited with a move from the purities of aesthetic formalism (i.e., music as pure form, balance, proportion, and symmetry, or as an architecture of sound) to expressionist aesthetic theories, the feelings, ideas, and emotions supposedly contained ‘in’ and ‘expressed’ by music are not, for realist esthetes, ‘real’ emotions. Such ‘expression’ is neither the composer’s nor the listener’s but is “aestheticized” (Osborne 2000, 80-85)-aesthetically universalized and therefore intellectually ‘purified’ of individual feeling-and abstractly encoded by the score. As Harry Broudy, a leading educational proponent of aesthetic realism, writes: “That is why, emotion felt in listening to music has been called aesthetic emotion, intellectual emotion, . . . It is not the real thing somehow” (Broudy 1991, 81). So, while music is experienced ‘in’ the brain, in the realist’s view musical experience as such does not call attention to or take the sentient form of bodily experience. Thus, the aesthetics of realism result in disembodied experiences that are appreciated based upon some claimed intellectual (e.g., symbolic, cognitive) correspondence with lived experience.

As a philosophy guiding music curriculum, and along with idealism, realism strongly emphasizes connoisseurship. Music deemed to be good by what Broudy describes as the “experts of successive ages” is therefore imposed on students in the belief that it will “enhance the pupil’s enjoyment of music and life” (Broudy 1991, 91,92). According to Broudy’s realist aesthetic, music other than the Eurocentric canon, whatever useful contributions it might make to practical needs-be they religious, personal, social, ceremonial, etc.-is not to be confused with the aesthetic value of music as a ‘fine art’ that should be the sole focus of formal music education (Broudy 1991, 77). The emphasis, again like idealism, is largely on contemplative listening. Performance is once again relegated to a secondary realm in this disembodied account of musical meaning (Broudy 1991; this author barely mentions performance). Instead, meaning resides objectively ‘in’ the score, the ‘work’, and is only apprehended in a ‘disinterested’ and therefore basically cerebral form.

This brings about a final problem especially associated with realism as a basis for curriculum: If aesthetic value arises, as Broudy claims, from the “higher” and “richer” forms of human experience a composer somehow encodes musically in a score, it is difficult to account for how school age students are supposed to

recognize, associate, understand or identify with such profound and exalted kinds of life experiences (and, thereby, to value them) since they have not yet lived such supposedly rich and mature moments. And ‘having’ such experiences in intellectually symbolized or generalized form would not provide the tangible benefits of the ‘real’ life experiences said to be the source of such valuing.

Music young people can relate to is, by the same aesthetic account, juvenile and inferior. Nonetheless, the comprehension and discrimination needed to develop good taste and appreciation are (supposedly) developed best through listening because young performers lack the technical skills to properly realize the aesthetic value of ‘good music’ through their own performances. For similar reasons, then, all manner of amateur recreational, lay, naïve and everyday kinds of music and music making are disregarded or denigrated. Instead, according to Broudy, “musical training affords the learner a basis for objective and informed judgments about certain aspects of musical quality” (Broudy 1991, 86). This idea of music education as “training” for ‘disciplined’ judgments of connoisseurship overlaps certain idealist themes, but bears even more similarity to neo-scholastic philosophy-not surprisingly, since both realism and neo-scholasticism are rooted in certain traditions associated with Aristotle.

Scholasticism is a theory that developed at the same time as and in interaction with the beginnings of ‘schools’ in the middle ages. It is thus inextricably wed to some of the most basic paradigms and historical traditions of schooling at all levels. Neo-scholasticism is a contemporary philosophy rooted in renewing the old-time emphasis on rational knowledge and disciplined approaches to learning, and has so much in common with realism that it is sometimes called “scholastic” or “classical realism.” The Aristotelian conception of mankind as a rational animal underlies scholasticism. In this view, the ability to think rationally is the most noble and valued capacity that humans possess. Thus, the mind can seize upon truth logically in the form of self-evident (or “analytic”) truths, or via certain kinds of scientific or empirical (or “synthetic”) facts that depend on experience for confirmation. This tension between rationalism and empiricism, usually antithetical beliefs, results in considerable overlap of neo-scholasticism with idealist and realist theories (and thus with MEAE in general). However, of the two, rational knowledge is seen by neo-scholastics as being of a higher order than empirical knowledge. Values, then, ultimately depend on rationality and the “good life” is lived in agreement with reason. Therefore, base desires and bodily pleasures and emotions are to be controlled by the rational intellect-although, concerning art, intellect is sometimes seen as leaping beyond reason to reach certain kinds of intuitions and spiritual

states that are subsequently contemplated and enjoyed rationally.

Schooling, for scholasticism, should develop the disciplined habits of thinking that can most properly inform and guide the good life through studying the leading disciplines of knowledge and their internal structure. Systematic subjects such as mathematics and foreign languages and, especially, the “great ideas” and “great works” of the past are particularly favored in the belief that they promote rational thinking and an intellectual understanding of the world. The watchword for neo-scholasticism is the mental and personal discipline that results from enforced training and, therefore, students are regularly expected to study and master subject matter-viz., the academic disciplines taught as disciplines-in which they often have no personal interest because no important practical or personal use is demonstrated. Curriculum focuses, accordingly, on teaching the “structure-of-the-discipline” for its own sake.

Given its heritage in the Middle Ages when art and music were entirely praxial, neo-scholasticism has no clear aesthetic philosophy. It therefore tends to share an often-contradictory mix of idealism and realism, focusing sometimes on rational ideas and sometimes on intuitions of cognitively experienced (abstracted) feeling-states. Neo-scholasticism, however, does make its distinct mark on music curriculum in two ways.

First, the small movement known as Discipline-Based Music Education (predicated on an earlier development in art education called Discipline-Based Art Education) presents and teaches music as a formal discipline of study; it stresses its theory of the ‘structure of music as a discipline’ by focusing on music theory and history, and particularly on aesthetics. In such programs, ‘hands-on’ production or performance are downplayed in deference to a theoretical and thus strictly cognitive approach to musical perception that focuses on musical connoisseurship largely as a form of aesthetic criticism.

Secondly, neo-scholasticism is a strongly conservative movement that finds expression in the educational theory of perennialism. Perennialism arose early in the twentieth century as a reaction against the child-centered theory of progressivism that portrayed each learner as an individual with certain unique needs and traits. In progressive schools children are active constructors of their own learning and meaning, not just passive repositories of received knowledge. The progressive teacher is authoritative and facilitates and guides learning rather

than being authoritarian in force-feeding it. Progressivism also stresses the practical value of learning for life-use and thus problem-solving and experiential learning are stressed over rote memorization of isolated facts and inert information. School is seen as modeling life and as a vehicle for personal and social transformation.

Against such values and practices perennialists argue that since human nature (i.e., rationality) is uniform, schooling should be, as well. Therefore, rather than catering in any way to students' individual needs or interests, perennialists feel that prescribed (and thus force-fed) subject matter should be the focus of the curriculum. Perennialist instruction, then, is not just teacher-directed, as is also the case with progressivism; it is teacher-dominated. Hence, the teacher is decidedly more active than students; and what is studied (and why and how), is because the teacher and the school dictate it! And, most importantly, in line with perennialist commitment to the "great ideas" of history, the "great works" of the past in music and the other arts are seen as containing values and truths, absolute and unchanging, which have therefore survived the test of time (see, e.g., Adler 1994). Accordingly, solely a diet of the "classics" is featured as eternally relevant and valuable, despite the passage of time and changes in cultural understanding. School, in the perennialist view, should not preview or model life; rather, 'academics' are best because they discipline the mind and develop the disposition to deal with life rationally.

In general, all three of the traditional philosophies share this abstract, largely 'academic' and impersonal approach to schooling, as well as other traits. For all three, truth and beauty are eternal and unchanging 'facts' that exist independently of and thus prior to the experience of particular individuals. Knowledge, then, can only abstractly received from outside the personal subjectivities, life-worlds and needs of individual students. The abstractness of knowledge for students is in part a direct result of the metaphysical claims of all three traditional philosophies; and in part a consequence of the inability of teachers to model or otherwise demonstrate the actual or even potential relevance of such studies for life outside of school beyond contemplation-the very idea of which (aside from its philosophical problems) is decidedly unappealing to school-age students. The direct instruction required to teach such abstractions (viz., lecture, memorization, paper and pencil homework, and tests) is likewise a liability: "Discipline problems" arise in various forms and degrees when many students resist developing personal discipline because they see the knowledge at stake, taught as a discipline for its own sake, as lacking any foreseeable consequence of actual use in

life.

An often arbitrary and inconsistent synthesis of idealism, realism and neo-scholasticism is typical for all of schooling; and music curriculum is not an exception-particularly as concerns general music and other classroom instruction, such as “music theory.” For performance instruction, “the curriculum” amounts at best to “the repertory” studied for concerts, the theory being that performance automatically educates students to perceive and appreciate “aesthetic qualities” they will someday ‘appreciate’ as listeners-a “someday” that, for most, never comes. Otherwise, as we have seen, performance-based instruction is largely ignored or downplayed by aesthetics-based philosophies and rationales-especially the performance of popular, folk and other indigenous musics-and little or no concern is devoted to promoting life-long amateurism because amateurs cannot operate at appropriate aesthetic heights of mastery. Furthermore, whether in classes or ensembles, the metaphysical claims of the three traditional versions of MEAE concerning what music is and is ‘good for’ convey a picture of musical meaning that is timeless, placeless and faceless. This accounts for the abstractness and inertness of such learning, and may be a factor disinclining graduates from continuing to perform or listen to the “classics” featured by schooling once they are released from the teacher’s control.

If such problems were not enough to call the agenda of MEAE into question, there is also a realization in philosophical circles that aesthetic theory is, to begin with, “doomed either to pretentious vagueness or to an extreme poverty which makes it a poor step-sister to other main fields of philosophical enquiry” (Urmson & Rée 1989, 3). As philosopher Michael Proudfoot put it in an introductory overview of the problems of aesthetic theory:

It would be hard to think of a subject more neurotically self-doubting than aesthetics. Claims that the subject is dreary, irrelevant, muddled and misunderstood have been a persistent theme, not only of recent, that is to say, post-war writers, but from the very start of the subject. Alas, these claims have all too frequently been justified. (Proudfoot 1988, 831)

Such a befuddled and befuddling aesthetic theory hardly can serve, then, as an effective basis for the practical choices and actions called for by the needs of curriculum by music educators.

Proudfoot (1988) goes on to point out that “aesthetics has so often lagged behind other areas in philosophy” (852), in part because it has ignored the influence of Wittgenstein whose Lectures on Aesthetics begins, “The subject (Aesthetics) is very big and entirely misunderstood as far as I can see” (Wittgenstein 1966, 1). In his Philosophical Investigations Wittgenstein had taught that words have no single, essential meaning; instead, meaning is constituted in “language games” that involve how words are actually used in practice, which is always shifting and evolving, and typically circular. Thus, as he points out in his Lectures on Aesthetics, “it is not only difficult to describe what appreciation consists in, but impossible. To describe what it consists in we would have to describe the whole environment” (1966, 7). The environments of use in which music and the arts are appreciated are, Wittgenstein points out, so “enormously complicated” and varied that words referring to aesthetic ideas and criteria have negligible importance in typical circumstances (2; see also 11). “We don’t start from certain words” describing aesthetic qualities or criteria, he cautions, “but from certain occasions or activities” (3)-in other words, from music as praxis.

This need to get back to the unique requirements of active music making as they exist in particular conditions of situatedness is, in fact, a defining trait of a praxial philosophy of music and therefore of a praxial orientation to curriculum for music education. Again, as Proudfoot puts it: Recent contributions to aesthetics, then, have done little to dispel the charge of dreariness and irrelevance that has hung over the subject throughout its brief history. The familiar and the obvious are the first casualties in philosophical discussion: thus aesthetic theory often seems false to our experience of art (and sometimes the uneasy suspicion can arise that the philosopher has not forgotten [sic] the familiar, for he doesn’t know what responding first-hand to art is like). Recently, such inadequacy to our experience of art has been evident; a result, I believe, partly of aestheticians’ preoccupation with what it is to treat something ‘aesthetically’, and partly from a *concentration on works of art in isolation from the circumstances in which they are actually created or appreciated*. (Proudfoot 1988, 850; italics added)

This falseness or inadequacy to most people’s experience of music was mentioned earlier. We can now turn, then, to praxial theory, which instead stresses just such “circumstances in which [music is] actually created or appreciated” as primary to what music is and why it is valued and, accordingly, which rejects the misrepresentation and falsification of musical experience by various aesthetic theories as being autonomous and isolated from the important contexts of its use. Music as Praxis.

The account of music as praxis I develop here draws from the contemporary philosophies of existentialism, phenomenology and pragmatism. From the former two it gains an emphasis on the primacy of the individual and the important role provided by each person's consciousness of inner life and experience. In practice, then, existentialism and phenomenology are more concerned with the subjectivity of lived experience than with the rational intellect or detached, speculative metaphysics. Knowledge and meaning are not received readymade; rather, they are constructed by each individual. Contrary to traditional aesthetic doctrine, the body is fully implicated because 'mind' and the 'lived body' are not separated and jointly serve as the locus of all experience (see, e.g., Dillon 1988; Blondel 1991). Self-actualization, too, is a matter of self-creative agency that both reveals one's values and proposes them as models for others to consider. Learning, valuing and meaning, then, are all highly unique products of personal agency.

Schools that force-feed values to students and repress their individuality (despite typical lip service to individualism) are seen by these theories as outright negative in their effects. On one hand, such force-feeding prevents students from self-actualizing and thereby realizing self-created meaning in action. On the other hand, students are quickly taught that learning is something schools and teachers do to you, not something in which you participate for your own sake. Once schools and teachers (or music lessons and school ensembles) are behind students they are neither inclined nor able to learn on their own or for their own needs. In music education, they rarely have developed the musical independence to function without benefit of a teacher or conductor and thus most are unable to seek such musical fulfillment in later life (Regelski 1973, 1969).

Though progressivism is a direct reflection of pragmatic theories of education, many aspects of teaching influenced by existentialism-particularly the influences from humanistic psychology, which is a correlate of existential psychotherapy and philosophy-are similar to or overlap the descriptions given earlier of progressivism. Teachers therefore facilitate rather than dominate, and they help students explore problems rather than simply memorize and recall learning that must be force-fed because of its inertness-its inability to 'move' students' interests. And a philosophy that focuses on the central importance of self-creation and re creation fits well with the agency and self-actualization involved in making and listening to music (Regelski 1973).

Pragmatism shares or overlaps many but not all existential traits, giving each point of similarity, however, its own character and adding some qualities of its own.

Both, for example, share an emphasis on action, experience and Self, but existentialism understands these in terms of the free (even isolated) individual while pragmatism sees them in a socially conditioned frame of reference. Pragmatism also shares with realism a respect for tangible experience, but otherwise has little in common with classical realism. Pragmatists argue that there is simply no way of confirming the various metaphysical claims of realism (or the metaphysics of idealism and neo-scholasticism) concerning ‘ultimate’ reality, truth and beauty. All we can and do know and value, according to pragmatism, is our own experience. Thus, pragmatism involves a type of “experiential realism” (Lakoff and Johnson 1999) where knowledge is embodied; it arises from the full interaction of mind-body with the multiplicity of situations in life that we learn to deal with-formally or informally, explicitly or tacitly-and from which we evolve the flexible praxial knowledge serving our lives. Being thus actively constituted through ‘minding the body’, such knowledge is also personalized (Polanyi 1962) rather than passively received as inert, generic ‘fact’ at one time or place in life, such as in school.

Values, including those in music, are therefore relative to and personalized by individuals-that is, in terms of the range and specific conditions of the particular situations they experience-situations that are unavoidably imbued with socio-cultural ‘common sense’. Because the experience of life is not everywhere uniform, values are pluralistic (e.g., see Bowman 1991). They are, first of all, culturally relative in important ways, while nonetheless involving uniqueness contributed by individuals-their situatedness, needs, intentions, etc. (e.g., see Bauman 2000). Such values are not, on the other hand, wildly subjective or personal. Rather, they are confirmed, demonstrated, or warranted by the empirical consequences of experience. The success of such results, in turn, is governed by the ‘objective’, practical and social conditions and criteria occasioning experience in the first place (Bourdieu 1980). The pragmatic criterion holds that the worth of any ‘thing’-a method, event, action, object, praxis, etc.-is seen in the tangible and practical consequences that result from its use. Thus, ‘good results’ are a matter of how well the ‘thing’ satisfies the criteria determined by the concrete needs or other use-functions in question-including the “instrumental function exercised by a work of art” as well as its “enjoyed receptive perception” (Dewey 1980, 139, 48).

Criteria of value in art and music are also subject to the pragmatic criterion rather than taking the form of metaphysical pronouncements by aestheticians or revelations by teachers and other supposed experts. Questions concerning goodness, worth or value take two (usually interacting) dimensions. First, as

Robert Dixon, a critic of aesthetic theory, puts it, “art is good which is good of its kind” (Dixon 1995, 53). Therefore, music is good relative to the type of musical praxis at stake, for example, jazz, rap, rock, reggae, ‘concert’, or religious music, and so on. Questions of quality, therefore, are not judged along a single hierarchy of musical quality according to the standards of the ‘art music’ “classics” at the top. Rather, as Dixon also points out, the so-called ‘fine art’ of the classical Eurocentric canon “is not a quality of, but a kind of art” (Dixon 1995, 6; see also 44) and thus represents only one “highly peculiar ‘taste’ ” (57)-and certainly, at least in comparison to all musics in the world, a relatively esoteric ‘taste’-among an infinite diversity of musics and musical qualities.

Secondly, as I have argued elsewhere, music is good in relation to what it is ‘good for’ (Regelski 1998c, 1998a, 1996a). Thus, the goodness or value (i.e., ‘appreciation’) of any music is in part-but importantly-determined by the particular use at stake; which is to say, in relation to the social praxis that occasions its use in the first place! To understand this second condition more fully it is instructive to turn briefly to the root meaning of the term pragmatism in the Greek idea of praxis (for full details, see Regelski 1998c).

In his writings on ethics and politics, Aristotle distinguished between three types of knowledge: *theoria*, *techne* and *praxis*. *Theoria* involved knowledge that was developed and rationally contemplated for its own sake as the “good life.” Today, this is the kind of knowledge involved in so-called ‘pure’ or ‘fundamental research’ in the various sciences and humanistic disciplines. In general, then, *theoria* describes perfectly well much of the rationalist and discipline-based agenda for schooling advanced by idealists, realists and neo-scholastics that, as we have seen, students experience as “merely academic.” More to point of music, it also describes the kinds of meanings and values advanced by the aesthetic theories of those three schools of philosophy that support the aesthetic orthodoxy of MEAE. For all three, music is rationally contemplated in metaphysical terms for its own sake and a sharp distinction is made between a ‘disinterested’ aesthetic attitude and the sociality or usefulness of music as *praxis*. *Techne*, for Aristotle, referred to the kind of skill used to produce taken-for-granted results in predictable ways; it was concerned with what the Greeks called *poiesis*, the ‘making’ of products or ‘things’. As such, even today, it involves technical competence learned mainly through apprenticeship and ‘hands-on’ doing. Pragmatists sometimes refer to knowledge used to bring about certain results as instrumental knowledge. But *techne* has two further qualifications that distinguish it from *praxis*, which has its own ‘instrumental’ usefulness.

First, for *techne*, the nature of the technique and craft in question is largely impersonal; there is little contribution to the existential Self of the craftsman whose results, then, are not unlike those of another equally competent individual—for example, the work of two competent carpenters or plumbers. Secondly, any mistakes, poor work, or negative results are simply discarded; one simply begins again with no harm done besides the time wasted. Thus, the carpenter, for example, discards a mistake and simply starts over without acquiring any new knowledge.

Praxis, however, is a much more complex and consequential act of ‘doing’ rather than of ‘making’. To begin with, it is importantly governed by *phronesis*, an ethical dimension that focuses on the prudence—the care-fullness [sic] of action—needed to bring about ‘right’ or ‘good’ results for particular human needs. The ethical dimension of praxis, then, is a commitment to serving the always different and therefore unique needs of people, not simply to produce ‘things’ or invariant or taken-for-granted results. ‘Things’ may well be involved, for example the house designed by an architect; but praxis requires that such results—including non-‘things’ such as musical results or elimination of pain—clearly serve the needs of the personal or social situations involved.

Secondly, both the ‘doing’ of praxis and the knowledge that results for the practitioner are extremely personal and amount to a personal style—or “feel” for the praxis (Bourdieu 1990, 66-67)—that is defining of Self in important ways. In music this personal meaning goes beyond the mere expertise of technique (*techne*) to the heights of artistry and is also the basis of the “love” that is at the root of amateurism (i.e., the Latin root *amat*). Furthermore, the satisfactions involved in such ‘doings’, such as making music, are not just personal; in praxis they are self-actualizing in the sense associated with existentialism as well as with Csikszentmihalyi’s idea of “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi 1990; see, too, Elliott’s 1994 musical application of this concept). Thus, the Self is rewarded and defined in key and unique ways by the nature and fullness of the engagement with or in praxis.

The ‘doings’ of poor praxis cannot simply be thrown away, ignored or un-done the way the failed ‘makings’ of *techne* can. Because mistakes of praxis involve people, any failures become part of the new situation, the new problem faced by the practitioner. A doctor’s misdiagnosis or the teacher’s failed lesson therefore become factors that have certain inescapable human consequences that must be contended with if the corrected ‘doing’ is to reach the intended ‘right results’. As a result of the inevitable differences between always heterogeneous past experiences, such adaptively corrective actions result over time in ever-new praxial knowledge

for the practitioners' future use in contending with the equally heterogeneous needs of individuals and particular situations in the present and future. In this, such knowledge can be compared to the 'feel' for a game that is developed on the basis of, and applied to ever-changing conditions (Bourdieu 1990, 66-68; 80-82; 104-05).

Praxis usually depends on technical kinds of instrumental knowledge (from commonplace to 'trained') and also typically engages 'applied' forms of theoretical knowledge where knowledge is no longer contemplated for its own sake but guides practical purposes—such as the biosciences serving medical professionals. Praxis, then, typically involves a functional synthesis of all three types of knowledge, though the emphasis is always on the unique demands of the human needs at stake that provide the criteria of 'rightness'. Theoria and techne are thus not undertaken for their own sake but according to the situated needs for 'right results' that occasion praxis in the first place. As regards music, then, praxial thinking, in line with pragmatism generally, rejects metaphysical accounts of aesthetic 'essences' (whether of the idealist, realist or neo-scholastic kind) and similar metaphysical claims treating questions of beauty, meaning and value in music in absolute terms as eternal and universal. In particular, the idea that musical 'works' are autonomous is vigorously denied. The distinction aesthetic philosophers make between autonomous and stable 'intrinsic' qualities, meanings and values as opposed to 'extrinsic' qualities, meanings, values, uses and conditions is simply not made and is actively disputed. In the praxial view (and the view, generally, of ethnomusicology and sociological theories of music—see, e.g., Martin 1995, Shepherd and Wicke 1997; DeNora 2000;), musical meaning does not inhere 'in' the sounds, nor can it be analyzed 'in' or from a score. What music is and means always entails significant interaction with the socio-cultural conditions governing the sounds and the situated social praxes in which it is embedded and which, in part, it helps shape (e.g., see Small 1998).

Human sociality is a matter of relatedness and sharing through institutions, paradigms and social 'constructions' and practices of various kinds. Music, too, is inherently social because it invokes, evokes and totally engages such human relationships (Shepherd 1991, and Shepherd and Wicke 1997). Culture, however, is not simply a monolithic blob 'out there' that influences music in a single direction; culture itself is a process or type of praxis (Bauman 1999). Therefore, music engenders and conditions sociality at the same time that it is a product of sociality. Thus viewed, music is a consequence of the interaction between people and sounds socially recognized (i.e., labeled or signified as) "music." Musical

meaning, then, is not ‘in’ the sounds or their relationships but is realized through the interaction of such sounds with the socio cultural contexts, uses and other governing particulars of situatedness (DiNora 2000). The social dimension of music-its various use- and status-functions-is importantly determining of music’s meaning and music is importantly determining of sociality. In this reciprocal relationship, music’s semiotic function is somewhat parallel to spoken language.

First of all, in neither music nor language do sounds inherently signify immanent or fixed meanings. There is nothing about the sound of the word “pain” that is homologous with the experience of pain. Similarly, the psychological language of emotion, feelings, affects and moods is not homologous with the music in connection with which it is often used (Hanfling 1991). Meanings associated with the sounds of music, like the sounds of words, depend on a variety of social and cultural ‘structures’; they are ultimately governed by the way and the situations in which they are used and therefore evolve over time. Following Wittgenstein’s analysis of language, then, musical meaning also arises from situated conditions of use-where “situated” involves not just the physical context but the intentions (needs or goals) occasioning the praxis. For instance, a Bach chorale as worship affords significantly different meaning and value than that same score performed on the secular concert stage. In fact, in the same manner, a secular love song used in a wedding ceremony offers a religious and ceremonial meaning, and ‘gospel song’ easily became ‘soul music’ when the words were secularized. So, too, in 1999 the Vatican sanctioned the use of hula music and dance for the Catholic liturgy in Hawaii.

Just as the meanings of words and expressions evolve and change according to usage chronicled in good etymological dictionaries, so too do the meanings ‘afforded’ (DeNora 2000, 38-41) by music respond to ever-new ‘sensibilities’ and interpretations, new and highly personal life situations and experiences, even new technology. And this is even (or especially) true in conjunction with the standard repertory; for example; performing Bach on the modern grand piano or marimba, or in choral jazz arrangements. And, of course, the existence of recordings has totally changed how and why people listen. As musicologists know, in the early 19th century, audiences wanted to hear new music. The “form” of a piece thus played an important role in simply organizing aural perception of listeners hearing the music for the first time. Now that listeners are intimately familiar with the ‘notes’ (and “form” is totally predictable), they go to concerts (or collect recordings) to savor the differences between performances-an intention that did not occur to audiences hearing such works in their own age.

Musical sociality in general and the situatedness of present praxis in particular jointly condition a range of possible meanings without providing the kind of uniform or 'built in' meaning implied by the aesthetic orthodoxy. However, not just any meaning can be invested in musical sounds. Sounds and their embodiment in perception have certain material conditions; and the range of meanings that arise from the sociality of music mitigates any silly relativism where anything or everything is possible (Bowman 1996). The range of possible states of human awareness and thus of meanings afforded by music is flexible, then, but not infinite (Shepherd 2002). "Raw" sound intended, evoked or invoked as a particular or general kind of social praxis becomes "musical" sound (i.e., "music") in terms of the governing conditions and criteria of the praxis and its social conditions-its habitus (Bourdieu 1990), its Background (Searle 1998,1995)). The difference between sound and "music" is thus ontologically subjective; it is an observer relative function or status added to sounds (i.e., it is an "observer dependent" or social reality, not an "observer independent" or physical reality; Searle 1998, 116-117). Sound becomes "music," then, in terms of certain observer relative features or qualities afforded by or accorded to it in terms of the personal or social practices that such sound serves, that it is 'good for'.

In sum, sound understood to be "music" is a socially constructed reality that presumes observer relative and culturally situated values and practices. In this respect, musical value and meaning do not reside 'in' the physical features of constellations of sound but are a status function accorded to such configurations according to certain potentials such sounds are understood to be 'good for' (on "status functions," see Searle 1998, 152). The sounds themselves, to use an expression coined by ethologist Ellen Dissanayake, "make special" (Dissanayake 1992, 1990) and therefore contribute special meaning to praxis at the same time that they, in turn, are made special (i.e., into the status-function of "music") by the praxis. The relationship is thereby totally reciprocal and holistic; no distinction between internal-external, intrinsic-extrinsic, inherent-delineated meanings and values can ever be warranted. Aesthetic accounts-even quasi-aesthetic accounts of the "classics" of genres such as jazz or rock-rely solely on the first term of such dichotomies to the exclusion or denigration of the second quality. Thus, they fail to account fully for and falsify the down-to-earth authenticity and value of all kinds of musical experience.

Praxial theories instead stress all manner of musical 'doings' that bring about 'right results' in connection with situated use-functions. Unlike aesthetic philosophies, praxial theory avoids the "antifunctionalist prejudice" of the kind of analysis that

“refuses to take account of the practical function that symbolic systems perform (Bourdieu 1990, 295), and thus accounts pragmatically for all music, however rare or ubiquitous. First of all, in accordance with the two-fold account of pragmatic value explained earlier, the very existence of an unlimited variety of kinds, types, styles and genres of music is in itself compelling evidence that music is unavoidably as varied as humans and human sociality (Martin 1955, 25-74). It is useful to recall in this connection that the so-called ‘art music’ of the “classical” Eurocentric canon is but one in this vast array of types that arise in such multiplicity precisely because of the different conditions that bring forth different musics. Eurocentric ‘art music’ is not the paragon of quality to which all music should be compared; it exhibits, rather, only its own kind of qualia. Furthermore, I have argued elsewhere that traditional aesthetic theory is historically situated in such a way as to be largely irrelevant to modern musical life; and that aesthetic theory was, even in its own day, a flawed philosophy that largely served (and still serves) the ideological interests of the upper-middle class and its attempts to be ‘classy’ in its conspicuous demonstration of ‘good’ or ‘refined’ taste (e.g., Regelski 1996b; Martin 1995; Bourdieu 1984). One direct and unfortunate consequence of the influence of the aesthetic orthodoxy has been the ‘professionalizing’ of performance and, hence, the dramatic decline in amateur and recreational music making of all kinds that it occasioned (Regelski 1998a). Secondly, a praxial account of music points to the fact all the various kinds, types and genres of music, are ‘good for’ an unimaginable diversity of ‘good results’. All kinds of practical (praxial) uses of music, then, fall under the umbrella of praxial theory. What singer Ani DiFranco describes as “the indigenous, unhomogenized, uncalculated sound of a culture becoming itself in the streets, bars, gyms, churches and back porches of the real world” (DiFranco, quoted in Farley 1999)-in other words, the overwhelming preponderance of music in the world-is music clearly made for a bewildering variety of life uses (DeNora 2000). But, in this connection, the autonomy claimed by aesthetic theory and the psychological ‘distance’ required of aesthetic experience denies or deprecates the value of such music; or it attempts to tear such music from its natural and necessary context in order to exhibit it for contemplation alone-as though it was or could become, by such evisceration, purely or essentially aesthetic despite its origins in situated sociality. Such attempts by aesthetic theorists to apply aesthetic criteria to, for example, indigenous and ethnic musics of various kinds result, then, in a colonialism and exploitation by Eurocentric aesthetic theory (and its ethnocentric ‘high culture’) that misappropriates and misrepresents the music in question and devalues the kinds of authentic musical meanings engaged in situ by its creators.

In sum, praxial theory accounts for literally all kinds and uses of music; it finds musical value not in disembodied, metaphysical hypotheses concerning aesthetic meaning but in the constitutive sociality of music and the functional importance of music for the social ‘structures’ (or processes) that govern social and thus individual consciousness. It addresses ‘concert music’ (of all kinds) that is presented for ‘just listening’ as equally imbued with sociality (e.g., see Small 1998) and as a discrete praxis of its own that is no more or less important than other kinds of musical ‘doing’. But praxial theory redresses the imbalance the aesthetic orthodoxy has promulgated on behalf of listening, and reasserts the importance of musical agency through various kinds of performance.

Furthermore, in regard to ‘just listening’ in concert situations or at home, praxial theory accounts for and points to the value of listening to all kinds of music in terms of the “good time” thus created. In general, whether via listening or performing, music “makes special” time in a way that creates “good time”-time that is experienced as “worthwhile” in relation to both its sociality and its individuating benefits and other meanings, benefits and uses (Regelski 1996a). Therefore, as opposed to time we ‘kill’, simply ‘pass’, ‘waste’, or ‘spend’ at other pursuits (such as work), the “good time” resulting from musical praxis engages a variety of socially constituted meanings in which the individual participates in a way that is nonetheless self-actualizing and self-enhancing and that goes well beyond clichés of “good time” as merely “fun” or “amusing” (concerning metaphors of time as a ‘resource’, see Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 161-66).

In particular, then, such a praxial account of music and musical value provides support for all kinds of amateur and recreational uses of music (Regelski 1998a)-uses that in no stretch of the imagination are accounted for as aesthetically valid or valuable by the aesthetic orthodoxy at the root of MEAE. Whether such amateurism uses entail playing jazz at competent (but non-professional) levels of expertise, the skill of country fiddlers and banjo pickers, garage bands of aspiring rock musicians, or folk guitarists and lay or naïve music making of all kinds, such as community ensembles, church choirs, Christmas caroling and the like, each praxis has a place and personal, social and thus musical value in the praxial account. Furthermore, listening embraces not only ‘concert music’; it expands to include the kind of listening where music is fully integrated in such social practices as religion, weddings, parties, ceremonies, and the like. In these cases, music does not just ‘accompany’ the occasion; it is intrinsic to and defining of the very nature and value-structure of the praxis for those taking part (DeNora 2000; Dissanayake 1992, 1990).

In the praxial view, then, music is of and for the down-to-earth conditions and values of everyday life; a life well lived in terms of the “good time” thus created. It is not above life in some intellectually or cerebrally abstract, disembodied, otherworldly aesthetic realm of metaphysical ideals, profound expressions or high-minded understandings that exist for their own sake and are available only to ‘cultivated’ connoisseurs. Nor is it a matter of the ‘high culture’ by which the elite few define themselves as ‘cultivated’ in comparison to the ‘uncultivated’ masses. Rather, in the praxial account, music’s meaning and value—the meaning of any and all music—is for and as personal agency and sociality. Consequently, music is altogether more engaged with everyday people and everyday personal and social life (DeNora 2000) than is approved or sanctified by the ‘music appreciation’ assumptions of aesthetic orthodoxy and, thus, by music education pursued as aesthetic education. As such, praxial theory is also more down-to-earth as a foundation for the pragmatic decisions guiding curriculum for music education.

Curriculum for and as praxis

Aside from the philosophical problems already pointed out, MEAE has distinct practical liabilities in connection with schooling. To begin with, aesthetic meanings and values are so intangibly metaphysical as to present considerable practical problems for the planning and delivery of instruction. Since the controlling variables are various kinds of abstractions, instruction tends to be of and about abstractions. Thus, for example, concepts tend to be taught as cognitive abstractions (as terms, labels, definitions, etc.) rather as cognitive skills and action habits for praxis.

Secondly, by definition aesthetic experience is not directly observable. Accordingly, whether students are ‘having’ such experiences—or whether such experiences are ‘appreciated’, improved or heightened—as a result of instruction cannot be observed directly and thus cannot be evaluated. The assumption is made that simply performing or hearing ‘good music’ automatically results in aesthetic experience and that this experience is self-sufficiently an aesthetic education! Among other problems, the ineffability of aesthetic experience and, thus, the intangibility of the results of aesthetic education puts music teachers constantly in the position of having to defend or ‘advocate’ the value of music education for life and society.

Finally, it is abundantly clear to most teachers that it is the ‘doing’ of music that is

the prime attraction of musical study for most learners involved in performing. And for adolescents in general music classrooms, music listening serves a range of important use-functions in personal and social life that at least parallels and often goes well beyond typical adult uses of music. For example, DeNora (2000, 47) cites and comments on recent psychological research concerning everyday uses of music listening by 500 subjects in Britain:

In a preliminary analysis of the replies (Sloboda forthcoming), respondents reported using music in relation to six thematic categories: memory, spiritual matters, sensorial matters (for pleasure, for example), mood change, mood enhancement and activities (including things such as exercise, bathing, working, eating, socializing, engaging in intimate activity, reading, sleeping).

This research points clearly to the ways in which music is appropriated by individuals as a resource for the ongoing constitution of themselves and their social psychological, physiological and emotional states. As such it points the way to a more overtly sociological focus on individuals' self-regulatory strategies and socio-cultural practices for the construction and maintenance of mood, memory and identity.

Music is thus not just an 'accompaniment' to personal and social practices understood as autonomous; rather, self-consciousness and sociality are determined in key ways by the role and use of music. Attempts by well-meaning teachers to 'convert' students to the criteria and conditions of aesthetic experience thus typically fall on 'deaf ears', whether in classes or ensembles. In the former, the closer students are to adolescence and thus to using music as an ingredient in everyday personal life and self-identity, the more they resist such imposed values. In ensembles, attempts at such aesthetic 'conversion' are all but totally lost in the sociality of music making -a sociality that seldom extends beyond the school years because the ability or desire to be musically active on their own has not been nurtured in school. Rather, the praxis of "school music" is limited to the school years.

Praxial theories of music education are rooted in the 'doing' of music-including composition and listening as actions that constitute "the music." Hence, planning, instructing and evaluating are all benefited by abundantly observable results. A curriculum rooted in and for praxis (for details, see Regelski 1998b) most profitably begins with a written curriculum guide-a formal document that serves

music teachers as a blueprint serves carpenters. In the case of teaching, however, the teacher (or cooperating group of teachers) is both architect and builder. The curriculum guide originates in the goal of describing the general kind(s) of 'real life' musical praxis that instruction intends to initiate or improve.

These 'real-life' kinds and uses of music are approached as praxial ideals-not in the "idealistic" sense of being fanciful, impractical, illusory, or Utopian, but ideal in the sense that there no single instance nor any ultimate state of perfection that could ever be reached. In this regard, a "good marriage" is a praxial ideal. Praxial ideals for teaching are also directly comparable to the regulative ideals of professions: they guide the praxis in question toward certain desirable but un-detailed praxial ends that, given the diversity of persons served, can take no single or ultimate form and can always take improved or other form-e.g., the ideal of "good health" serving medical professions.

Each ideal is accompanied by a description of the basic musicianship knowledge and skills necessary for students to be able to take part in the praxis in question independently of the teacher. Such descriptions are conceived and expressed in holistic terms and rely on the teacher's own praxially developed musicianship. Hence, they are not so detailed as to become atomistic or detached, thereby losing sight of the final functionality and holism of the envisaged praxis. They are, however, stipulated in action terms as 'doings', not as abstract 'knowings' or 'understandings'. Finally, a praxis-based curriculum recognizes the potential for harm of teaching useful knowledge and skill by means that 'turn-off' students, and the importance, instead, of inspiring students with the benefits and joys of the 'play' of music. Thus, each praxial ideal is qualified in terms of the affective and "good time" conditions and values instruction needs to model and nurture if students are to want to and eventually choose to continue to be involved in the musical praxis in question outside of and after graduation from school.

In essence, a praxis-based curriculum organizes and delivers instruction according to an apprenticeship model; that is, the praxial ideals in question are approached in the manner of a practicum (for more on this, see Elliott 1994)-the holistic immersion of students in the types of 'doing' central to the musical praxes in question. Instead of a "spiral curriculum" that revisits autonomous concepts at ever-higher levels of abstraction, the spiral of a praxis-based curriculum constantly presents ever-more realistic examples and practical challenges of the ultimate praxial functions intended. In other words, skills develop according to the progression of technical and musical demands as instruction gradually becomes

ever more ‘real life’ in the kinds and conditions of musical praxis addressed. In this manner, it is insured that the knowledge and skills addressed by instruction are actually useful—a factor contributing not only to the efficiency of instruction but to evaluating the effectiveness of learning, as well. And, a considerable consequence of this praxial approach is the fact that, at each level, the joys, interests and benefits of the praxis in question are experienced holistically—regardless of present skills—and thus modeled for the future. At the same time, different kinds or ever-new levels or alternatives for praxis typically become evident and often tempt students in new directions or to new types or degrees of skill.

Furthermore, even though failing to reach “professional” expertise, the praxially gained insights of dedicated and competent amateurs lead to greater interest and critical intelligence as listeners. Amateurs favor listening to the music in which they are engaged (or at least to music for that instrument), and thus listen with critical insight informed by their own praxis. This kind of connoisseurship arises from praxial knowledge that results only from being an aficionado who is critically informed by praxis; it does not, as is the case with MEAE or DBME, develop dilettantism in lieu of such engagement.

On the other hand, what I call ‘just listening’—i.e., ‘concert listening’, or listening with full attention to recordings, as opposed to the everyday listening categories described earlier—is its own praxis! It has its own cognitive, perceptual conditions, criteria and ‘goods’—though not the ‘contemplation’ or ‘appreciation’ of ‘aesthetic meanings’—and therefore profits from its own apprenticeship, one that stresses, in particular, “music’s interpretive flexibility” (DeNora 2000, 43) and its sociality. This means, on one hand, that that ‘just listening’ ought to be one of the key praxial ideals in curriculums for performance instruction and therefore deserves a dedicated and direct apprenticeship of its own—i.e., ‘practice’ in the praxis of ‘just listening’ on the part of students studying performance.

Classroom music instruction likewise profits from its own practicum in ‘just listening’. But this practicum needs to include performing and compositional praxes of various kinds and levels that actively inform listening in the same way that performance experience influences the critical listening of amateurs. And instead of having ‘just listening’ as the sole intended consequence of the general music curriculum (as is typically the case with the focus of MEAE on learning to ‘appreciate’ aesthetic meanings), a praxial approach to general music class also focuses on developing an interest in and on nurturing beginning-level skills of performing and creating music as potential recreational practices for later life.

The sine qua non in general music class as elsewhere in this praxial approach to curriculum is a pragmatic concern with the kinds of holistic, 'real-life' musical praxis students can do at all or better as a result of instruction. Music education, then, becomes a value added to a value. The original value in question is the socially created reality called "music" and the forms and nature of musical praxis already extant in society when a student enters school; the "value added" is the new or improved musical agency instruction builds on this base for the individual and, hence, that it contributes to the enhanced musical vitality of the society.

Conclusion

Given the importance in every society of the "social 'powers' of music and its role "as a resource in daily life" (DeNora 2000, 151), a praxial account of music most fully reflects the central and pervasive role of music in human life. Similarly, then, a praxially-based curriculum provides the pragmatic benefits of music for everyday life pointed to by praxial philosophy. All kinds and degrees of musical praxis are thus validated and music teaching itself approaches a professional praxis (Regelski 2002) that is properly and fully committed to inclusiveness of musical meanings and values, not to the kinds of exclusivity promoted by aesthetic orthodoxy. Music education predicated on the value and importance of music as praxis, then, has the effect of including rather than excluding students, so that music studied in school is understood as music for us, for our lives, for the "good time" of a life well lived. Approached in this way music and music education have much more to contribute than has been realized by the traditional 'music appreciation', structure-of-the-discipline curriculum and hence holds forth the promise of being recognized as far more central to life and schooling than has heretofore been the case.

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