Ethical Dimensions of School-based Music Education

Thomas A. Regelski, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor, School of Music, SUNY Fredonia NY (Emeritus)
Docent, Helsinki University (Finland)

Introduction

Music education is not just a specialized occupation. Rather, it is one of the *helping professions*: professions such as medicine, therapy, law, the ministry, (etc.) that exist to serve the needs and wellbeing of people. With this professional status, however, comes the ethical responsibility to properly serve and protect the people served; its patients, clients, parishioners and, in teaching, students. Music teachers are reminded of this by the aphorism, "we teach students, not music."

According to functionalist sociology,[1] professions come into being in order to serve certain needed personal and social 'functions'. The ethical function of a profession is to promote the wellbeing for which it exists and, in the process, to "do no harm." As social institutions, professions continue to exist to the degree that they continue to provide 'functions' that represent valued needs of individuals and society.

Schools also came into being and continue to make their important contribution on the same functionalist grounds. And, as professionals, music teachers assume a corresponding range of ethical responsibilities that are tied, first, to the overall functions of schools (e.g., to promote the social, political, and economic good of society); and, secondly, to the specific promised function of music education as part of the general

[1] Functionalism uses an analogy to the human body where the various organs all have 'functions' that serve the whole body. Its position is that "all societies consist of systems which perform the basic functions necessary for the society to survive. . . . [T]hose elements in society that persist are those that have contributed to its continued viability. Schools are one of those elements; hence societies continue to organize formal schooling because doing so helps societies to survive" (deMarrais & LeCompte 1998, 5)

education of all students – namely, to contribute in discernable ways to graduates' musical abilities and choices.

However, the ethical dimensions of music education in schools (i.e., so-called "school music") are too often overlooked or downplayed. On the assumption (often extolled by "advocacy" statements in support of school music[2]) that music is good, too often the corresponding assumption is that teaching music – simply providing formal musical experiences in schools – is automatically good, routinely effective, and always valuable or 'functional' (needed and useful). In turn, this leads to the kind of "radical relativism" where "anything goes,"[3] as far as the ethical criteria guiding a teacher's decisions about curriculum, pedagogy, didactics, and accountability; and where, therefore, just about any teaching is judged by the teacher as good or good enough.[4]

This chapter will highlight key ethical aspects that merit being stressed and attended to if teaching music in schools is to be most fully professionalized and, thus,

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[2] The increasing need for political and social "advocacy" in defense of school music – in defending its continued presence in schools – is itself evidence of not having provided functional results in the past. In other words, increasing challenges to school music are evidence that actual musical benefits for most graduates fall far short of the promised results and values of the profession. Instead of taking this as evidence of the need for change, too often the knee-jerk reaction has been to engage in "advocacy" of the status quo (see Kratus 2007 on the threat that music education has reached a "tipping point" where the tide seems to be turning against it). This amounts to a combination of "preaching to the choir" and "blaming the victims": noble words may help music educators feel more righteous about continuing in their well-set ruts, but make little impact on those most affected – graduates whose lives outside of school and as adults remain largely untouched by school music. This represents not only a legitimation crisis for music education but, as shall be illustrated in what follows, an ethical dilemma.

[3] Sometimes also known as "emotivism" or "ethical subjectivism" where an action is "good" simply because the person says or believes so (see Singer 1997, 6-8). Differences between music teachers, even within the same schools (where circumstances are typically similar), are often so great as to represent an "anything goes" kind of anarchy that itself raises a host of ethical questions.

[4] Thus, unlike most of the other helping professions, teachers are not concerned with – do not even acknowledge the concept of – *professional malpractice*. Malpractice – for example, in medicine – is mainly judged on ethical grounds: the failure to use appropriate *standards of care* (not "standard care" since each person's needs and circumstances are different) and thus causing harm that was avoidable. The lack of criteria for judging such 'mistakes' in teaching is a serious problem; such failure of accountability discredits the professional status of teachers in the minds of many graduates. "Care," as an ethical criterion is discussed below in connection with virtue ethics.

most fully ethical. The main issues can only be sketched, since ethics[5] is a frightfully complex and contested philosophical discipline. The plan is to present and analyze key ethical theories and to explore common grounds between them that can contribute to an applied ethics for teachers of school music. Along the way 'cases' or 'examples' of ethical situations will be sampled and then criteria suggested of ethical principles for consideration in regard to classroom music and ensembles.

Ethics

The philosophical study of ethics falls into two categories. *Formal ethical systems*, using reason alone, promote either a single and invariable criterion or a set of interrelated principles or norms, for guiding and judging human actions. As a group, these are called *normative* theories, and they are characterized by highly abstract, often theoretical premises that are often sorely challenged (sometimes fatally) by actual cases.[6]

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[5] The term "ethics" will be preferred to "morals" in this chapter, even though the two terms are typically synonyms: ethics, from the Greek "ethos," was translated by later Latin scholars as "moralis" or morals. However, in common use, "morals" are often discussed terms of "immoral" behavior judged in religious terms. It is a premise of philosophical ethics, however, that ethical principles can be realized through reason and need not depend on religion. For example, in Plato's *Euthyphro*, the argument is presented that if what the gods command is good, then it is not their decree that makes it so and we can independently reach or confirm the goodness in question through reason. If, on the other hand, what the gods command becomes good only on their authority, then it is arbitrary and it need not command our attention or respect – unless, of course, we fear retribution. In subsequent ethical philosophy, then, a standard of goodness independent of God has been sought through reason. That standard often does, it turns out, reinforce many religious grounds for ethical actions, but on certain key issues it often differs. For example, "thou shall not lie" is challenged by situations where lying would save someone's life; or, "thou shall not kill" is challenged by arguments for "just" and "holy war" (e.g., the Crusades) and to defend one's own life.

[6] Ethicists are very fond of, and good at, conceiving of circumstances that present exceptions to, or that challenge the theoretical terms and conclusions of normative theories. Situations that people face on a regular basis also give evidence of the difficulties in consistently following such stipulated norms. *Proportionalism*, however, allows 'bending' a normative ethical principle "based on the context or situation but this situation must be sufficiently unusual and of sufficient magnitude to provide a reason which would overturn what would otherwise be a firm rule (Vardy & Grosch 1999,48)." This principal is argued, for example, in cases where lying to save a life is justified (righteous) or when the police lie to deceive a criminal into a confesson..

Theories that begin with typical cases and reason from them to relevant ethical criteria for use in such cases are called *applied* (or *practical*, or *situation*) ethics. Examples of applied ethics include legal ethics, medical and other heath care ethics (i.e., bioethics), military ethics, business ethics, environmental ethics, and animal rights. Thus, professional ethics fall within the scope of applied ethics. However, principles suggested by normative theories are typically central to the applied ethics of a profession (or field, such as animal rights).

Different professions and fields regularly tend to face cases that are dissimilar and unique in their particulars.[7] Thus the ethical issues facing doctors, lawyers, and therapists typically differ, as do those facing teachers. Furthermore, and importantly, differences within a profession or field are equally great. Thus, each patient who seeks medical attention has unique needs and circumstances, and the same is – or should be – the case for each student in music classes and ensembles. In teaching, moreover, differences between subjects taught, schools, demographics of the student body, resources, state educational policy, and the like are all relevant to ethical decision making.

Educational ethics have not figured prominently in the preparation of teachers.[8] Most of the ethical criteria for teachers are either covered by statutory laws governing schooling (e.g., against corporal punishment), amount to fine-sounding platitudes,[9] or are common sense (e.g., not dating students). Typically missing is the central ethical criterion for which the teaching profession exists: to serve each student's right to learn.

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[7] For example, civil rights and animal rights, as ethical fields, focus on different cases, different particulars. Thus killing animals (intentionally or by accident) or using them for scientific experiments presents an entirely different range of particulars and considerations than does killing people (intentionally or by accident) or using human subjects for scientific experiments.

[8] The first volume of the scholarly journal *Ethics and Education* (Routledge) appeared only in 2006.

[9] E.g., "Educators create, support, and maintain challenging learning environments for all students": http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/codeofethics.htm#statement. Principle #2.

Thus, the ethical virtue of school music is not a matter of claiming to have implemented a "good music program" (e.g., highly practiced select ensembles, a generous offering of scheduled music classes, abundant resources, etc.) but in what that (supposedly) good program is "good for" in terms of the enhanced musical functioning of students and graduates.[10]

Each of the three main normative theories will be discussed with a view to arriving at a range of principles of applied ethics relevant to guiding the choices, actions, and practices of school music teachers. Typical cases of ethical situations will be used to exemplify each theory in terms of school music issues, and the chapter concludes with some ethical questions and criteria for ensemble and classroom music programs.

Duty Theories

Duty theories[11] propose obligations (i.e., duties) that follow from certain postulated norms of ethical conduct. Perhaps the most familiar are the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, and Kant's "categorical imperative."[12] Duty theories arise from the concept of "rights" (e.g., civil rights, animal rights) and the obligations that flow from such rights – in the case of professions, the *rights of those the profession exists to serve* (e.g., patients' rights, but also students' rights). One difficulty of duty theories is that duty is

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[10] A "good legal practice" is not a matter or size, earnings, public attention and the like, but a matter of regularly serving the legal needs of clients. An important difference, one with ethical implications, is that the "clients" of school music programs, the students in ensembles and classes, are not free to choose the providers of their professional services on the basis of the reputation of the practitioner in the way the patients and clients of doctors and attorneys are. If anything, this increases the ethical responsibility of music teachers since their "clients" are entirely dependent on them. Some parents provide private music lessons for their children but students of less well-off parents (or those less committed to school or cultural values) are denied such opportunities. This violates the basic duty ethic of fairness. More on duty ethics follows.

[11] Often called "deontological" theories by ethicists, after the Greek *deon* for duty.

[12] "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become universal law." For a discussion of Kant's duty ethics and about the nature of "categorical imperatives" (i.e., those followed for the sake of duty only), see Vardy & Grosch, 1999, 56-61. There, in addition to a slightly different translation, are two other categorical imperatives from various writings of Kant. Also see point 7 on page X below.

"categorical" – only a question of duty – and thus a duty is followed *regardless of consequences.*[13] Thus an action followed as a duty is ethical even if it produces negative consequences; on this account, followed strictly, telling the truth is ethical even if it might directly lead to the death of an innocent person and a teacher's duty is fulfilled simply by offering instruction, even if no, negligible, or negative learning results.

Duty Theories and School Music

The first and most important consideration of duty ethics in relation to school music is that music educators have a duty to provide the service for which the profession exists: discernibly advancing the musical wellbeing of students.

1. To begin with, as with the other helping professions, the service should benefit the *individuals* served, not the teacher; not 'music programs' as autonomous ends-in-themselves. For example, an attorney's duty is to represent a client's legal needs, not to build the biggest law firm in the region; that might be a by-product of successfully representing clients, but it is the 'right results' for individual clients that is the measure of how well the lawyer (or the firm) fulfills the duties the profession exists to serve.[14]

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[13] In this, duty theories differ from those of consequentialism and virtue ethics described below. However, the proportionalism discussed in n. 6 above often is applied to particular cases, and duty, consequentialist, and virtue theories thus often arrive at similar ethical conclusions, though by usually different routes. Furthermore, as will be made clear below, consequentialism can be stated in deontological terms: for example, that it is a teacher's duty to promote consequential learning and to minimize or ameliorate failure.

[14] More on 'right results' (beneficial consequences) follows later in connection with both virtue ethics and consequentialism – again illustrating that a certain overlap between otherwise contrasted ethical theories is quite typical: reason often follows different courses to the same conclusions. Readers who are tempted to think that examples given from law (or medicine) law are naïve – that, in fact, many lawyers (and doctors) are more interested in making large sums of money than serving their patients and clients – only reinforce the ethical principle at stake here: unfortunately, some professionals lose sight of their duty to those they serve and instead put their own selfish needs ahead of other considerations. This, then, is clearly unethical and that it is just as clearly not uncommon leads to skepticism about this or that doctor or lawyer. The same skepticism can be directed at (and often is – by students, parents, administrators) those music teachers who give every appearance that 'their' music program (as they usually call it) exists to serve their musical needs

In music teaching, then, the teacher's ethical duty is to serve the musical needs of individual students in ways and to a degree that would not otherwise be the case without formal study.[15] The 'music program' is, then, a byproduct of effective practice: it is not a pre-existing format into which students are to be force-fit, or that limit students musical options for learning by addressing only a narrow range of possibilities.[16] Too often, however, the 'program' takes on an autonomous status in the minds of music teachers, and *students are seen as serving the program rather than the program being the pragmatic result of serving their musical needs*. Thus, in effect, the program is the collective byproduct of successfully meeting students' needs, in the same way a doctor's 'medical practice' is constituted by patients who return for their medical needs based on the success of prior treatment.

2. A second general duty, shared with the other helping professions, is to "do no harm." [17]To be ethical, an attempt at helping someone, no matter how well intended,

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or professional reputations, not those of the students or community. In such programs, students become functionaries of the teacher's musical or professional needs and goals: for example, in ensembles where the students are to the teacher as organ pipes are to an organist.

[15] Doctors and lawyers would not be needed if there were not important health and legal needs that average people could not meet on their own or that time alone would resolve. So, school music cannot take credit for certain musical growth and expansion of musical interests that might likely have taken place without formal study. Instead, it should directly focus on "making a difference" as a result of its offerings. School music can certainly be held ethically accountable, then, when it cannot provide evidence of "making a difference" – one that is clear, clearly beneficial in its contribution to the musical lives of students and graduates (see Regelski 20XX)

[16] For example, many schools do not offer 'string programs' because there are not enough students or resources to offer a full string orchestra – as though the only reason for offering instrumental instruction is to populate an ensemble that the music teacher can direct. Students who are not receptive, for whatever reasons, to wind and percussion instruments (or, for that matter, to the standard instruments of the orchestra, such as instruments found in various folk, ethnic, vernacular musics, including rock and pop forms), still have the *right* to have their musical needs and interests addressed by school music. If that means a 'string program' based on various chamber groupings, according to whatever instruments are available, then – following duty ethics, and the dual principles of altruism and fairness – it is the obligation of school music to provide for the musical needs of all students, even the few who are interested in studying strings. The same principle pertains to students whose interests gravitate to non-orchestral instruments that are widely encountered in society.

[17] A parallel principle of consequentialism is to avoid negative, unpleasant consequences. More on that follows.

should not worsen that person's condition. In some cases this can also be understood to mean that, in not properly meeting a clear need, the continuation of the problematic condition can be seen as harmful; this is the case when a physician's treatment not only fails to remedy the illness (and suffering continues) but extends the problem at the personal and financial expense of the patient. In school music, then, not improving skills that are central to a student's musical wellbeing can rise to the level of doing lasting harm by, in effect, leaving students musically 'handicapped'.[18]

In school music, "do no harm" is also directly violated when, for example, physical or psychological harm results for students. Overuse injuries, for example, are only now being researched and the evidence is compelling that many traditional teaching methods violate biomechanical and other physical variables and produce painful *medical* conditions much more than had ever before been assumed or noticed. Furthermore, only recently has the negative impact of school music on students' hearing loss been realized. This includes the dangers presented by large ensembles rehearsing at full volume in rehearsal spaces that are acoustically inadequate and includes even hearing loss induced by solo practice under inadequate acoustical conditions.[19]

3. To these quite obvious harmful results of music teaching can be added all manner of negative psychological conditions. These are related to the *right of students to be safe* – in this case, from psychological harm, manipulation, or attacks. Violators are those teachers who resort to embarrassment, bullying, belittling, and threatening tactics

[18] For example, students who do not learn to sing "on pitch" ("or "in tune") can be musically 'handicapped' when singing carols, church hymns, etc. The handicap may be unknown to them (as when other singers around them take negative notice) or they can be acutely aware (e.g., those who migrate to another room when the majority are gathered around the piano singing carols). In general, students whose musicianship is insufficient to learning new music on their own are 'handicapped' in this regard.

[19] For more about such health endangering practices in music education see: http://www.maydaygroup.org/php/ecolumns/musicandhealth-bibliography.php

that, given the volatile emotional life and self-concepts of pre- and early-adolescents, can be devastating and have serious, long-term negative consequences.

Teachers who strategically employ ruthless challenge or audition systems rely, first of all, on a dubious educational principle since, in such competitive situations only one student reaches his or her educational goal at the expense of all others. Furthermore, not meeting the educational and musical rights of 'losers'[20] is itself an ethical issue. And, what of the loss of face, of self-esteem, of self-value induced for more than a few students by such strategies? In order to feel "safe," some students may intentionally adopt a subservient, non-competitive strategy; but those who leave a program because of such experiences have been 'harmed'. Music teachers who are unconcerned with students who drop out – indeed, who use competition and auditions as a means of working only with the elite, select, or self-selected few – are failing both in their duty to "do no harm" and in meeting the duty for which the profession exists, which is to make a lasting contribution to the music education of each student served.

4. This leads to a consideration of the traditional *duty to be fair and just* in treatment of other people, an ethical principle that gains considerable weight in the

[20] Or in rationalizing that 'losing' is a part of life and needs to be taught, or that 'losing' motivates more or better practicing efforts – both rationalizations that have no merit. The former advocates that negative results – losing, failing, falling short – is somehow (and automatically) positive and that schools should formally promote such experiences so that students learn how to handle failure. Clearly, such experiences are already (and unfortunately) numerous enough that they do not need to be formally 'taught'. Furthermore, as a (supposed) source of motivation 'losing' has two problems. First, it can motivate practicing (and 'winning') as an end-in-itself (e.g., as an *extrinsic* motivation where practicing ceases when the competitive goal is removed – such as after graduation) rather than practicing for *intrinsic* musical reasons and benefits (thus continuing to perform and practice in the years to come because of the pleasures provided). Secondly, only an already 'strong' personality type, with a strong self-concept is motivated (extrinsically) by such failure; other personality types are, in contrast, easily defeated, overwhelmed, even crushed. These latter might continue in an ensemble or musical play (etc), but often avoid such competitive situations in the future and thus do not benefit from the supposed motivation of 'losing'. Once again, the consequentialist ethics to be discussed below can be stated deontologically: that is the duty of a music teacher to maximize success and wellbeing and to minimize failure or unpleasant results. Again, this points to an overlap between otherwise different ethical premises.

helping professions. Thus, when school music serves the needs only of a elite few, students who are excluded (by competition and audition, or because the program does not offer anything of musical relevance to them) or whose departure from the 'program' is welcomed (rather than seen as reason for redoubling of effort by the teacher to recoup a student's interest or motivation), fair and just treatment are denied the largest number – this in the face of professional claims that school music is supposed to make important contributions to the general education of *all* students.

Furthermore, when the music of school music is limited and creates an autonomous world of literature that has little connection to music in the world outside of school, then most of the musics that are relevant and meaningful to students are effectively excluded. In focusing, usually, on a restricted diet of "good music" (namely, the musical traditions in which the teacher was trained, or that the teacher prefers) a host of musics are ignored. This kind of exclusion is seen by educational sociologists as creating a "hidden curriculum"[21] (deMarrias & LeCompte 1998, 242-247): what is learned (though not overtly taught) is that the music excluded – e.g., the music of this or that ethnic group and other vernacular music of the community – is not part of acceptable culture, is not meaningful, is not suitable. Unfortunately, the hidden curriculum – and its negative learning – includes far more musics than school music typically acknowledges

[21] "This term [first used in the 1960s] called attention to the fact that students learn more in school than is included in their formal instruction. . . . The hidden curriculum consists of the implicit messages given to students about socially legitimated or 'proper' behavior, differential power, social evaluation, what kinds of knowledge exist, which kinds are valued by whom, and how students are valued in their own right. These messages are learned informally . . . . [T]he hidden curriculum conveys messages both through the 'form and content of school knowledge' and through the 'silences,' or what is left out" (deMarrais & LeCompte, 242). "According to functionalists [see n. 1], education systems perpetuate the 'accepted' culture" (deMarrais & LeCompte, 7). Thus, the implication is that musics that are not included are not accepted, not acceptable, and from this students easily conclude that their musical lives outside of school – and the uses to which they put music (e.g., religion, dancing, ambience, etc.) – are also not worth addressing. Of course, this strategy backfires when students distinguish themselves from adults through the "forbidden fruit" tactic of engaging exactly in what adults, or authorities, disapprove of.

as "good" and, as a result, students who do not 'identify' with the music of school music are not served by it, thus creating an ethically unjust and unfair result for them.

5. Another traditional duty is *beneficence towards the needy*. This altruism – supposedly the 'calling' that attracts practitioners to a particular profession in the first place – depends on the already mentioned premise that the profession exists to meet certain important needs: in the case of school music, the musical needs of individual students. Thus, students' "needs" must be determined (i.e., diagnosed, not unlike a doctor diagnoses a patient's medical needs) and then met, not dictated – as is the case when all students are treated alike, as though on a factory assembly-line, by one-size-fits-all curricula and teaching methods and materials. Once again, the needs are those of individual students, not of the 'music program'.

Furthermore, "beneficence" implies results that are *beneficial*. These benefits must be clear, particularly to students: an action (in the present instance, any teaching action) that produces no discernible difference falls short of being ethical because its virtue cannot be determined. Various intangible 'benefits' claims by music educators – aesthetic responsiveness,[22] team-work, perseverance, cooperation[23] – fall short of the

[22] Claims for this benefit too easily amount to an ethical cop-out since, by definition, aesthetic responses are highly subjective and covert, and thus not observable. Thus whether students have such experiences (as an automatic by-product of any and every musical experience in school) – let alone whether or to what degree school music has enhanced their ability to have them, or has enhanced the quality or profundity of such experiences – simply cannot be determined; the teacher is free to simply claim a benefit in the absence of any evidence. This lack of accountability often rises to the level of the *radical relativism* mentioned earlier where teaching is good (or good enough) simply because the teacher claims it is good. A comparison might be the claim that by attending church services everyone is automatically made more spiritual and moral; but given the out-of-church behavior of many people, that is clearly not the case.

[23] In any event, such personal virtues and dispositions are among those that all teachers share a duty to promote. The benefits provided by school music – those that are particular to its existence in schools – thus need to go beyond such shared duties, and should involve lasting results that benefit students' and graduates' *musical* lives in important and lasting ways. Failure to do so is a failure to promote the good for which the profession exists in the first place: students' *musical* educations.

requirement of this duty simply because they are easily claimed but cannot be evaluated or directly attributed to school music.

6. The *duty to allow and promote free expression* flows from a basic conception of human rights. Music teachers run afoul of this need when, instead, they dictate all musical and other ideas and choice. That is not to say that they are obliged to let students "do their own thing" musically. However, students are not truly *free* to express their musical (and related ideas) unless they have a *choice* from among reasonble options. People who hold strictly to a particular idea (whether by close-mindedness or ignorance) are not free; they are owned and limited by that idea, by that bias. Freedom is promoted, then, when students are offered *options* from which to choose and have reasons (criteria) for their choices. Students, then, need to learn the reasons for a teacher's musical choices: from these the musicianship of students is informed and, with it, their choice-making options increased. They also need certain opportunities to express their own ideas and choices (for example, by being allowed to choose from among options suggested by the teacher).

The duty to provide for free expression is, however, difficult to meet when the only or main vehicle of instruction is a large ensemble. This suggests that, at the very least, school music can meet this duty more readily by a well planned infusion of solos, duets, trios (etc.), involving a range of musics from which students can choose. Such opportunities put a greater premium on a student's individual musicianship and musical choice-making.

7. Finally (in this all too short summary), is the duty that flows from one of Kant's lesser known categorical imperatives: "Act in such a way that you always treat

humanity in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end" (cited in Vardy & Grosch, 58). This duty to students is not met when music teachers *use* students as means to the ends of their 'programs',[24] or to the teacher's own musical ends and pleasures. Instead, students are the ends for which school music exists and, thus, the duty follows that it is their musical benefits and satisfactions that need to be served.[25]

Consequentialist Theories

Duty ethics arise from the ethical obligation to promote or provide the functional benefits for which a profession exists. However, in school music too often the "benefits" claimed are very vague: they are claimed in the face of little or no evidence, or ignore evidence to the contrary; are held to be the automatic result of providing any formal musical experiences; are not clearly "beneficial"; or are not primarily musical. In comparison, *consequentialism* focuses on actual – notable and noteworthy – results of teaching and,

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[24] For example, where a student is obliged to switch instruments when doing so is not in the best educational and musical interest of the student and serves only to improve the orchestration of the ensemble; or where, to begin with, students are recruited on instruments strictly with a view to the needs of the ensemble, not with a view to their own interests: e.g., the student who came home with a note from the band teacher, "your child has been selected, on the basis of musical achievement tests, to study the euphonium" [a true story]. The duty also comes into play when, as mentioned earlier, students who play (or want to play) certain instruments are denied school-based performing opportunities due to a lack of ensembles provided for those instruments, or must learn an 'accepted' instrument to be in an ensemble. Such 'programs' clearly put the needs of the ensemble before those of the students. Similarly, pianists who end up as a choir's accompanist are not having their needs as singers met, although some opportunity to accompany does impart musicianship skills that are likely to serve them outside of school and as graduates. It is also fair to wonder whether the instruments and musics favored by school music are so favored because other musics and instruments (e.g., the kinds involved in 'garage bands' of all kinds) do not depend on (or bring repute) to the teacher/director because such groups do not have conductors, or because music teachers are simply incompetent in 'coaching' students interested in such musics (or in teaching them to play such instruments), or because the music teacher just does not favor or approve of such musics.

[25] However, as will be seen in the consideration below of consequentialism, an agent such as a teacher may also benefit and still be ethical as long as those for whom teaching is undertaken also clearly benefit as much or more than the teacher. In other words, the teacher's benefit should be secondary, just as financial gain, reputation, and the like, should be secondary for practitioners in any of the helping professions. An ethic for such *altruism* towards those served, then, is a clear and over-riding duty; for example, many lawyers undertake so-called *pro bono publico* services (i.e., for people in need who cannot otherwise afford to pay).

thus, these theories can help in promoting an applied ethics for school music that is based on more clearly observable criteria.

To begin with, for consequentialist theories the consequences of an action – in the case of school music, the actual consequences of teaching – determine the ethical propriety of the action. A teacher's actions are ethically proper when the consequences for students are clear and clearly good. Furthermore, "good" is qualified as consequences that make a *useful* difference for students.

Consequentialism is the contemporary version of the *utilitarianism* of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill.[26] It introduced the concept of "utility" to ethical theory: for an action to be ethical, consequences should be useful for those affected. This criterion stipulates, then, that the "good" supposedly served by a teacher's action must clearly be good in the sense of its usefulness for the students, not just supposedly "good for" them on some vague or noble sounding aesthetic grounds or on the teacher's say-so.[27] In other words, for consequentialism, results need to be *consequential*; they should make a *substantial* contribution to meeting a *significant* need and to a *functional degree* of usefulness.

Furthermore, for consequentialism an ethical action is one that (1) produces "the greatest good for the greatest number," as the axiom goes; and (2) an action is "good" that is more productive of happiness or pleasure or more preventive of unhappiness or pain than its alternatives. In its contemporary form, however, "pleasure" is understood

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[26] Some ethicists follow traditions in British philosophy and continue to refer to utilitarianism (e.g., Vardy & Grosch 1999)

[27] When students complain, "Why do we have to study this stuff?" and the teacher's only answer is, "because it is good for you" or "because it is in the curriculum," the usefulness criterion of consequentialism – the actual relevance of the learning at hand for students' present and future lives – is already in jeopardy.

more in terms of wellbeing than in hedonistic terms; and "pain" is understood more in terms of disagreeable or adverse consequences, such as boredom or dislike.

Consequentialism and School Music

In music teaching, the first principle indicates that consequences that are good for the largest number of students should be sought – at least in addition to consequences that benefit a minority or elite few. On this account, school music is most ethical when it clearly serves the greatest number of students in ways that are clearly "good for" – useful for – their present and future musical wellbeing. The second principle indicates that negative or adverse consequences of any kind are specifically to be avoided.

1. Consequentialism thus is two-pronged: first it analyzes or diagnoses the potential or most likely positive *and* negative consequences; then it judges whether the positives outweigh the negatives and if the musical wellbeing of the greatest number of students will be served. Being aware of the potential for negative consequences, and thus being careful to avoid them, is central to this ethic: students who fall behind, fail, quit, or in any way lose interest or enthusiasm cannot be ignored. Ethical (i.e., professional) responsibility requires special efforts on their behalf.

2. Consequentialism affects all decisions governing curriculum, methods, materials, and assessment: the ethical virtue of such decisions is seen only *after the fact*, in terms of *pragmatic 'utility'* for students. Thus, "good" teaching, methods, materials, and assessment strategies cannot be pronounced in advance, as is done by those who favor one-size-fits-all recipes and so-called "best practice" prescriptions (see Regelski "methodolatry"). Instead, in effect such teaching decisions are treated as hypotheses[28] that

[28] Concerning curriculum: What of all that could be taught is most worth teaching, has the most 'utility' for students' musical wellbeing, is most teachable given the circumstances, benefits the largest number of students (etc)? Concerning methods and materials: Which are most likely to facilitate the knowledge and

need to be 'tested' in action for their 'utility' and effectiveness and when they do not lead to positive consequences for the greatest number of students, alternative or remedial actions need to be taken.

3. Important to consequentialism, then, is the realization of the potential that some actions – even well-intended ones (for example, those flowing from a music teacher's sense of duty) – can result in negative consequences.[29] Avoiding and overcoming such adverse consequences thus becomes central to the ethics of teaching. This certainly rules out using embarrassment or the "no pain, no gain" pedagogies of some teachers, the use of competitive strategies that produce only one 'winner' and many 'losers', doing nothing about students who drop-out or about high drop-out rates, and other practices in school music that predictably result in undesirable consequences for most or even some students.

4. By focusing on the actual pragmatic consequences for a student's musical wellbeing, consequentialism focuses attention on the needs of *individual students*: not the needs of the 'program' or teacher, or across-the-board claims that all students have the same needs – such as a required diet of skill-drills, the 'utility' of which is lost on students, or where students mindlessly practice with little idea of the 'utility' of such drills, or that lead to students who lose interest to no longer practice as they should, or quit study. The same principle also applies to ensembles and to the practices of

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skills at hand, which are hypothesized to be most efficient and effective, which seem best suited to reaching most students (etc.)? Concerning assessment: How will teaching and learning be evaluated, what will be taken as evidence of success, how will the 'utility' of what is taught/learned be judged, and how will the criteria of effective and efficient teaching be judged in comparison to other methods and materials (etc.)?

[29] A teacher may feel a duty to teach students something that, given the circumstances (e.g., the diversity of student ability, the resources, time, schedule, etc.), is simply not practicable to teach and, thus, where – despite the teacher's best efforts – consequences are negative: only a few, if any, students benefit to any functional (useful) level. After taking into consideration the particulars and limitations of any teaching situation, consequentialism leads to curricular choices that have the greatest likelihood of success for the greatest number of students. See n. 28.

classroom instruction – except that students in classes 'drop out' mentally and often misbehave once they have lost interest.

5. Consequentialism also focuses attention on the observable differences between the supposed benefits *promised* by the teacher or school music program and the *actual consequences* produced for the musical wellbeing of students and graduates. Given that the profession exists to provide a clear and clearly valued service, results that are neither clear nor clearly beneficial in the changes made in the *musical* lives (choices, actions, capabilities, etc.) of students and society are evidence of the failure to fulfill the functional contribution promised by the teacher or program and thus of a failure to live up to the ethical responsibility of the profession. It seems fair to suggest that the increasingly threatened existence of school music – the diversion of resources away from it to more valued, more 'functional' subjects and uses in schools – is prima facie evidence of just such a professional failing on a large scale.

Virtue Theories

Duty theories focus on the obligations of the music education profession to promote the benefits for which the profession exists and to address certain other human rights that are observed in all helping professions, such as fairness and equality. C*onsequentialist theories* stress that such benefits need to be clear, consequential (substantial), useful, and affect the largest number of students, not only an elite or fortunate few. Furthermore, the general duty of teaching as a helping profession to "do no harm" is clearly tied by consequentialism to observable negative consequences for students. *Virtue theories* focus on the personal character of the teacher, with "virtue" specifically qualified in terms of 'right results' for students' wellbeing. Thus virtue theories can help unify some

principles from both duty and consequentialist ethics, while making its own contribution to an applied ethics of school music.

Virtue ethics arise first in the writings of Aristotle and have had a strong influence on subsequent virtue theories [30] Aristotle distinguished two kinds of personal virtue: *ethical* and *intellectual*. The former involves personal qualities, such as generosity and patience.[31] Intellectual virtues involve *epistēmē* (knowledge and skill), which is divided into three distinct kinds of knowledge according to the different uses to which the knowledge is put: *theoria*, *techne*, and *praxis.*

Theoria includes abstract, scientific knowledge, speculative reason, and metaphysical inquiry. Its active form is *contemplation* of truth and beauty and is, for Aristotle, the source of happiness. However, Aristotle saw ethics as involving *practical reason*, not theoretical speculation. Practical reason decides on virtuous action when faced with the unavoidable and ever-changing problems of what to do (or not do) in particular situations. Thus, "goodness" is judged when a 'thing'[32] or action serves the immediate purposes or needs at stake. In other words, the purposes or needs at stake provide the criteria by which the virtue of the action (or the goodness of a 'thing') is judged, thus avoiding "anything goes" relativism or subjectivism.

Techne is the 'making' of practical things. Thus it relies on cognitive and manual skills (*ars* or 'arts'). Its active form is *poēisis*, or "excellent making." Because 'things'

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[30] Most notably, Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* (see, e.g., Aristotle 1998). For a quick survey of other virtue ethics, see Vardy & Prosch 1999, 94-122; MacIntyre 1981. As regards schools, see Noddings 1984 and 2005.

[31] Twelve in all: Courage, restraint, generosity, dignity, high-mindedness (honorable behavior), proper ambition, patience, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, modesty, righteous indignation (exact terms differ according to the translation). All exist as the "mean" between two vices: e.g., courage is the mean between rashness and cowardice, modesty the mean between shyness and shamelessness.

[32] 'Things' need not be objects but can involve a range of usually results or products that are intangible, such a speech.

not people are at stake, mistakes carry no ethical responsibility – as long as the final results serve the human requirements at stake.[33] However, when teaching is approached as techne – as a kind of craft-like collection of routine skills and 'tools' – it deteriorates into a kind of factory process[34] that treats students as though they are interchangeable 'products' on an assembly line. Various fixed methods of a highly prescriptive nature[35] – whether those devised by someone else and passed on by followers, or those of a teacher's own invention – are thus claimed to be good *in advance of their use* (thus ignoring the tenets of consequentialism), are said to be good for all students (regardless of differences between teachers and teaching situations, and between students in terms of needs, abilities, etc.), and the 'skilled' use of such putatively "good methods" is assumed to produce good results automatically. This kind of teaching is largely concerned with 'delivery' of instruction; however, it fails even as techne since the final result does not serve the particular needs at stake – namely the unique musical needs of students.

Praxis is the realm of human action[36] that serves the needs of people in their infinite variety. Thus, praxis is centrally concerned with the ethical criterion of producing (as Aristotle describes) 'right results' for those served. Importantly, such 'right results' are judged in terms of the needs of those served – the particular benefits to the wellbeing (*eudemonia*) of those for whom the action is undertaken; in teaching, the wellbeing of students. Praxis, understood as 'right' or 'virtuous action' – *eupraxia* – thus

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[33] If the 'thing' or service in question is being paid for by a customer, an ethical responsibility is due that the "excellent making" should be done in a reasonable time, and with reasonable care to produce results that satisfy the customer's needs. Given this proviso, even a musician has the ethical responsibility to give the audience it's "money's worth."

[34] That is, the 'music program'.

[35] And so-called "best practices," "research-based methods," etc.

[36] One typical translation of praxis is "action." Praxis, however, is not just any "practice" (or set of practices or actions) but 'doing' that is undertaken for the purpose of promoting 'right results' for those to be served by the action. In later, Marxian use, it came to refer to action that changes people and the world.

depends on the ethical virtue of *phronesis*: the need to be prudent, caring, wise and far-sighted in bringing about 'right results' – and cautious in doing no harm. *Dyspraxia* is the failure to achieve 'right results' and failure to avoid harm. In many of the helping professions – though not teaching – this amounts to the ethical failing called professional *malpractice*.[37]

The practical wisdom on which praxis depends requires, first of all, *caring* for those served and, secondly, being prudent or *care-full* [*sic*] in decisions and actions that affect their wellbeing. The "ethic of care" advanced by contemporary philosopher Nell Noddings[38] has been nicely summed up in relation to teaching in this way:

> The caring teacher first attends to and sees students in a positive light and then compassionately, actively, and fairly responds to their needs. . . . Nodding's ethic of care orients the teacher to the growth and well-being of others and is expressed in actions towards individual students. (Chubbuck, Burant & Whipp 2007, 117)

Phronesis and its ethic of care rely heavily on Aristotle's *secondary* intellectual virtues: the ability to acquire knowledge needed in order to make proper decisions; the ability to judge or diagnose what is 'right' and just for all who will be affected; the understanding needed to analyze all the relevant variables at stake; and the ingenuity or versatility to competently handle the always different situations presented by the unique differences between the individuals served. Such *praxial knowledge*, then, has many sources[39] but is ultimately an accumulated practical wisdom that is built from a history of

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[37] Technically speaking, mal*praxis*: this is not simply a failure to achieve 'right results' but a failure of the professional responsibility to observe ethical "standards of care" and thus of causing harm by being careless.

[38] See Noddings 1984 and 2005

[39] Including, sometimes, theoria; not theory contemplated for its own sake, but the kind that can be applied to practical needs, such as the doctor's understanding of biology and chemistry. Certain kinds of techne also qualify; certain skills that can directly promote teaching success, such as a music teacher's piano or conducting skills. When put in the service of successful praxis, however, theoria and techne become praxial knowledge; they have been adapted to the situated differences of particular cases and have lost their previous 'fixed' or 'abstract' forms.

eupraxia – of 'right results'. Considered from the perspective of virtue ethics, then, teaching is properly regarded as praxis: it is not just as a techne that employs standardized, routinized, craft-like teaching 'practices', but a professional and, thus, ethical 'doing' that exists and is 'practiced' to serve the needs of students.

Virtue ethics and school music as praxis

While duty ethics focused on more or less vague professional responsibilities teachers have to meet the *rights* students have to a beneficial education, and consequentialism proceeds according to an ethic based on promoting *consequential results* and avoiding negative ones, virtue ethics focus on the ethical disposition of the teacher to *care* for individual students enough to be *care-full* to bring about 'right results' in their behalf. Virtue ethics thus can help draw together important themes and principles from both duty and consequentialist ethics.

1. The focus of virtue ethics on 'right results' is again on individual students and, thus, the 'rightness' or 'goodness' of results is properly judged in terms of their needs, not those of the school, the 'program', or the teacher. In ensembles, then, this means that students must be individually benefited in some consequential and lasting way: the ensemble exists to serve the musical growth needs of the students in it. As with any cooperative undertaking (for example society), individuals participate and cooperate in the expectation of some greater good provided to them by the group. In school music, for example, ensembles make available a literature that students would otherwise miss. However, when students' individual musical and educational needs get subverted to the greater good (or glory) of the ensemble (or director), the ensemble may appear to 'thrive' but not significantly benefit its individual members. That is the case for students who

spend years in an ensemble performing parts that are not musically interesting or educationally significant and that therefore do no promote the kinds of lasting skills, attitudes, and dispositions that solo and chamber musics do. Where students have the chance to perform both kinds of literature, and reap the different musical and educational benefits of each, the ethic of 'right results' is best served.

2. The virtue of care and care-fullness entails the need to diagnose students' needs and to provide for them accordingly, not to force-fit all students into lock-step teaching methods and materials that ignore differences between students and that, in turn, treat all students alike. This same ethic was prominent in consequentialist theories, but Aristotle's virtue ethic stress the ethical responsibility for music teachers to remain up-to-date in their diagnostic capacities and understanding[40] and to exhibit the versatility needed to meeting students' differing needs. School music 'programs' that offer only a narrow range of 'standard' ensembles, and that use one-size-fits-all methods and materials for classroom music, fail to promote 'right results' as qualified by virtue ethics.

3. Virtue ethics go beyond the "good intentions" of duty ethics. Thus, 'right results' are the criteria for judging whether the teacher has shown ethical "due care." For example, a teacher-director who has a successful select ensemble may feel the "duty" to create a non-select ensemble for other interested students. But if this is just a token gesture, and those non-select students do not receive the same commitment from the teacher-director as the select group, then "due care" has not been observed in significantly advancing the musical 'right results' for the 'non-elite' majority of students.

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[40] For example, and as mentioned earlier, the new research concerning health problems created by school music (see n.) but also being aware of new literature (not just for existing ensembles, but that can open doors to expanded opportunities for performing), new teaching and scheduling practices, of new technology, particular computer hardware and software, even the potential of popular computer games like GuitarHero.

Similarly, if a classroom teacher dutifully undertakes to teach children to match pitch, but the vast majority still cannot after six or seven years of such classes, then "due care" has not been observed. In sum, virtue ethics insist that the teacher's duty is to promote 'right results', not just "go through the motions" of offering activities that – no matter how much fun children have – lead to no discernible progress or growth.

4. Furthermore, 'right results' need to be consequential (in the sense understood by consequentialism); that is, they should make a significant and lasting difference in the lives of students. Failure in this regard means that the supposed benefits to the students of professional practice have not been realized in ways or to a degree that ethically justify the time, effort, and expense – to all involved, students, taxpayers, etc. – of offering instruction. Functionalist accounts of school stress the 'functional' role of education for individuals and society, and the 'right results' of school music should be similarly 'functional' – directly influence the musical functioning (abilities, choices, and dispositions) of typical students. In this, virtue ethics echoes the 'utility' criterion of consequentialism.

5. Aristotle understood that virtue was qualified by the "precision" that is proper to a particular endeavor. Thus, he wrote, "a carpenter and a geometer investigate the right angle in different ways; the former does so in so far as the right angle is useful for his work, while the latter inquires what it is or what sort of thing it is; . . . We must act in the same way, then, in all other matters as well" and accept that different aims and needs have different ethical requirements and criteria (Aristotle 1998, 14). Thus, because the aims of school music (i.e., the musical needs of the students it serves) are significantly different than those of professional programs in universities and conservatories, the

musical and educational criteria of school music should also differ in appropriate ways. The "precision" – artistry, musicianship, technical criteria, devotion, etc. – of professional musicians, then, is simply not properly expected of school music ensembles and performers. While these models remain important,[41] the different aims and needs of music in the general education of students involves a different kind of "precision" – a different set of ethical and musical criteria – namely those focused on serving the students' musical needs as, for the most part, musical amateurs.[42] When school music is taught in a way that, in effect, *protects music from students* by sacrificing their needs at its altar, this aspect of virtue ethics has gone awry.

6. Finally, virtue exists only in contrast with its absence. Thus, where teachers do not recognize or admit to mistakes, failings, and weaknesses – where their teaching is always good (or virtuous) enough[43] – there can be no real virtue. Worse, there can be no praxial knowledge developed: such professional growth depends on the virtuous character traits of acknowledging mistakes and on the ethical responsibility of improving upon them – both remediation of present failings, and learning over time to avoid future ones. Such teachers remain more or less frozen in time, employing the same collection of

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[41] In the same way that professional athletes are important models for amateurs; for example, to golf enthusiasts who watch and study the professionals.

[42] The purpose of school music is its contribution to the general education of all students. For some, this is likely to be largely a matter of the lasting 'right results' it promotes for lifelong listening choices, habits, and the like. For those who have been in ensembles or who gain certain performing skills in classroom music (e.g., singing), the lasting 'right results' should also influence listening, but likewise facilitate lifelong amateur music-making, as well. The number of students that school music is responsible for sending into professional musical careers is not a criterion of a good 'program' and is no more a justification for the existence of music education in schools than is, for example, producing professional mathematicians justification for why mathematics is taught in schools.

[43] Because, they typically argue, they used "good methods" (best practices, etc.) and used them competently. In other words, such teachers accept that "teaching" responsibilities are fulfilled by 'delivering' a lesson, not by determining whether that supposedly good lesson promoted 'right results' for students. The underlying assumption is – and one sometimes actually hears words to this effect – "I taught it to them; if they didn't learn it is their fault," or the fault of parents, too much TV or computer games, negative effects of the media on their musical choices and habits, etc.

"good lessons" or endless variations on them (usually to reduce the teacher's own boredom). Other helping professionals grow in their expertise because they learn from their acknowledged mistakes; but where any teaching is good enough, neither praxial knowledge nor ethical "due care" are in evidence.

Towards an applied ethics of school music as and for praxis

Normative ethics reason from a formal theory to conclusions about how its principles *should* apply in all instances. However, life is notably untidy and even the most principled of people make exceptions or excuse inconsistencies by recourse to different norms for different situations.[44] In comparison, applied ethics analyzes actual or highly exemplary cases to identify relevant ethical variables that need to be considered in deciding how to act. Among these considerations, applied ethics draws upon principles of normative theories that are most applicable.

Despite the differing criteria of the three main types of normative ethics, considerable overlap has been noted in the implications and conclusions each suggests for an applied ethics of cases that are typical in music education. Nonetheless, individual cases – no matter how representative of a type of case faced by music teachers – still require case-based analyses of their unique particulars. However, the overall stance of virtue theory, with its concept of teaching as praxis, is perhaps most comprehensive in insuring such case-based analyses. Given its emphasis on the ethical virtues of care and prudence and the intellectual virtues needed to bring about 'right results', important aspects of duty and consequentialist theories are brought into sharper focus.

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[44] For example, as against "thou shall not kill" supporters of capital punishment seek recourse in "an eye for an eye," or resort to proportionalism (see n. 6) to claim that state-sponsored killing of murderers saves lives by acting as a deterrent.

Considered as a professional praxis, then, every aspect of teaching music in schools is imbued with ethical dimensions for promoting 'right results'. In particular, 'right results' are understood in terms of lasting consequences for students and graduates. These consequences are guided by a "value added" criterion (Regelski 200?) – namely, what typical students are enabled *to do musically* at all, better, or more often.

The "at all" criterion comes into play when school music advances knowledge and skills that enable students to be musically functional in ways they would not have been without formal instruction. The "better" criterion recognizes that students come to school with musical knowledge and skills and that it is the ethical responsibility of music educators to build upon and improve the functionality of each student's capabilities. Finally, the "more often" criterion recognizes that school music has a bearing on students' attitudes and dispositions and that a particularly desirable 'right result' is the kind of school music education where students are enabled, motivated or inspired to be more musically active outside of school and throughout life than would have otherwise been the case.

In sum, this means that the school music 'program' is itself focused on facilitating in any way possible the real-life musical functioning of students and graduates. "Music," then, is not just some 'thing' students are just 'exposed to' or gotten to 'experience' in ensembles and classes; it is not just an 'activity' confined to schools; and it is far more than a source of contemplation at special times, in special places. It is a central form of *personal agency* [45]

[45] "Agency" in the sense of the kind of "action" or "praxis" ('doing') by which some important end is accomplished. Personal agency, then, is a the process of self-actualization; a matter of bringing one's Self into Being or the actions by which it is constantly in the process of Becoming. Social agency, then, involves the actions through which sociation – social relations – are actualized and, hence, through which society is constituted.

> Music may influence how people compose their bodies, how they conduct themselves, how they experience the passage of time, how they feel – in terms of energy and emotion – about themselves, about others, and about situations. In this respect, music may imply and, in some cases, elicit associated modes of conduct. (De Nora 2000, 17)

Thus conceived, music is also a prime source of *social agency*: an important building block of society:

> [M]usic is in dynamic relation with social life, helping to invoke, stabilize and change the parameters of agency, collective and individual. By the term 'agency' here, I mean feeling, perception cognition and consciousness, identity, energy, perceived situation and scene, embodied conduct and comportment.
>
> If music can affect the shape of social agency, then control over music in social settings is a source of social power; it is an opportunity to structure the parameters of action. (DeNora 2000, 20)

Thus, music is "a resource for producing the scenes, routines, assumptions and occasions that constitute 'social life' " (DeNora 2000, xi), and is an important personal and social praxis in the everyday lives of everyone. Such personal and social agency via music is the benefit at the heart of the professional duty of school music; it is the consequence of most significance that school music can promote; and it is the 'right result' that takes as infinite a variety of manifestations as there are people and musics.

Some typical examples or general 'cases' of ethical facets of school music ethics can be best presented in the form of questions since, in an applied ethics of school music teaching, the answers should depend on the particulars of individual cases.

Ensemble teaching

School music 'programs' are widely associated with the number and 'quality' of ensembles offered. However, these are typically large groups, directed by teachers who make most or all of the musical decisions. They are particularly susceptible, as has been

noted throughout, to ethical conundrums. Some central questions for case-based analyses are the following:

- Are individual students benefiting in lasting ways from their experiences in the ensemble, or do their individual musical needs and educational rights get lost or submerged in the collective enterprise? In other words, are students being enabled and even more inclined by their ensemble experiences to perform outside of school and throughout life? This emphasis on personal musical agency might be called the 'right result' of *independent musicianship* as a primary benefit of school music.
- Are performing opportunities made available that extend beyond traditional band and orchestral instruments and the supposedly more 'learned' musics of school music and the university? What reasonable steps, then, are taken to serve the musical needs of any interested students – for example, by expanding ensembles beyond those traditionally associated with school music? In other words, following the Swedish educational principle of "from life into school," do ensembles exist that build bridges between musical "life" in the community and school music, or does it steadfastly ignore and exclude the rich possibilities of musics that students encounter outside of school in their daily lives? This criterion stresses social agency as a 'right result' of school music.
- Are students' musical capabilities and choices expanded by the literature and musics selected, or narrowed? In this regard, are "multicultural" and "world musics" included in a valid way and to a functional degree, or only as a symbolic gesture?

- Are only a small percentage of the students 'touched' or accommodated by ensembles and other performing opportunities, and the vast majority either excluded by auditions and competitions, or self-excluded because the program has little to offer that is of interest to them? In other words, are students recruited to support the ensemble program, or is the program the successful result of serving students' musical needs? What provisions are made for benefiting the "losers" of auditions and seating competitions?
- Are opportunities regularly provided for small ensembles – duets, trios, etc. – where students benefit from a different range of literature, from having fully interesting and challenging parts to play, where there is no opportunity to 'hide' or 'get lost' in a large section, and where students rehearse more often on their own, with only periodic 'coaching' by the teacher?[46]
- Given the likelihood that not every graduate will, as an adult, be able to find or make time to continue performing, is regular provision made for promoting audience listening by ensemble members[47] or is the questionable assumption made that members are automatically made better (and more motivated listeners) just by performing a limited selection of literature? If listening is the most likely lasting benefit promoted by ensemble participation, have provisions been made by

[46] Small ensembles are especially important for either players seated down the hierarchy of sections whose parts are often not very musically interesting or challenging and for chorus members who often follow the few stronger members of their sections. A parallel diet of small ensemble literature thus keeps them musically interested while at the same time advancing their musicianship and technical skills. Small ensembles also have the greatest potential for carry-over to life outside of school and after graudation. Compared to the logistics of being in a large out-of-school ensemble (e.g., finding a rehearsal time when so many people can attend), it is relatively easy to find one or two other players and find time to get together. Moreover, just getting together to play can be its own reward, without the need for public performance.

[47] E.g., where some scheduled rehearsal times are used instead for listening lessons, or as recitals – for example, of performances by the small ensembles mentioned in the previous point.

which students' listening skills are expanded to include other literature, other musics other than the narrow selection they have performed in school?

Classroom music

In some countries and schools have specialists who teach music to entire classes of elementary and middle school students – sometime called "general music" classes, based on the idea that such instruction contributes the musical part of a student's "general" or comprehensive education.[48] In other locations, the classroom teachers themselves provide this instruction. In either case, however, the professional duty involved is to advance the *functional role* of music in the lives of all students in the same way that, say, language arts classes advance the functional role of language in the lives of graduates. Thus, these questions can be asked in highlighting this important duty to students.

- In what ways, and to what degree, do students actually benefit from the musical 'activities' and 'experiences' formally provided in such classes? Following the common 'functionalist' premises of schools, and thus of classroom music for all students, are the benefits claimed of the kind that actually enables students to 'function' musically at levels or in directions[49] that would not otherwise have been the case?[50] Or are claims made that, in fact, are so ephemeral – taking an

[48] Unfortunately, the term "general music" is often misunderstood as teaching "music in general" – a potpourri of information "about" music that is believed necessary to "appreciate" music, or an array of musical "experiences" that (somehow) advances understanding and thus appreciation.

[49] For example, at levels that allow beginners to continue on their own and that provide enough musical rewards that students are motivated to continue. Important to such instruction is a functional understanding of how to find new literature, use fingering or similar charts, and how to practice.

[50] The professional duty to provide such benefits is given even stronger emphasis in non-functionalist theories of schools. For example, critical theories see schools as places that should not just "transmit" the knowledge and skill needed to "reproduce" the status quo (with its various conflicts, inequalities, etc.) for succeeding generations, but knowledge and skill that "empowers" students to make their own choices – to create their own histories – and, thus, that ultimately "transforms" society beyond the status quo. Thus, for critical theories of schooling, learning that is empowering must have a tangible and vital impact on learners.

imperceptible form that cannot be evaluated – that neither teachers nor students can be held accountable?

- Are students evaluated to gauge their individual musical progress and in order to evaluate teaching effectiveness? Or is most instruction focused on the class as a group, thus failing to meet individual needs? Similarly, are one-size-fits-all methods and material routinely used class after class, year after year, or is teaching alert to individual differences – between classes and students.
- In this regard, if students are graded for music class, is this grading adequately based on musical progress, or mainly on cooperation and behavior? In class, are some students rewarded for good behavior by, for example, getting to play favored instruments while other students rarely if ever are extended such choices? Can the sources of misbehavior be traced to the methods and materials in use and thus minimized by improved approaches?
- Given the typical focus on singing, playing instruments, and moving and listening to music, do students actually learn to match pitch, read music, and listen with greater perceptual richness? Or do classes mainly serve as a kind of musical recreation – an enjoyable break from other studies – that makes no lasting contribution beyond the momentary pleasures of an individual class?
- Is the curriculum – the literature, the instruments used, and other 'content' of such teaching – related to musical choices and opportunities outside of school? For example, are the instruments involved common outside of school – thus leading to transfer of learning to lifelong enjoyment – or are they "classroom instruments"

that are used only in such classes and that, therefore, have no potential for transfer of learning to out-of-school musicking?[51]

- Similarly, is the literature totally rooted in childhood songs and interests, or does it relate or lead to musics that are of potential interest to adults? Does the music listened and moved to represent a wide sampling of musics readily available outside of school (including "world" and "multicultural" musics), or only a narrow selection of classics from the Eurocentric canon?
- Are students enabled to compose or otherwise create their own music, to learn how music is put together, and thus to listen to it with enhanced capacities? Resources allowing, are they familiarized with some of the readily available computer software for composing that they could be using at home and throughout life.

In general, are the benefits provided, beyond those served by all teachers and subjects, *musical* benefits that ethically warrant the continued existence of music in the general education of all students? Since music programs are increasingly eliminated or marginalized in favor of other subjects, what musical benefits can be pointed to that are contributed by school music to the well-rounded general education of all students?

As should be evident by now, virtually every decision facing a teacher is not just made according to practical criteria but with ethical criteria foremost in mind. Approached as a

[51] Whatever the instruction virtue at a certain point of, say, Orff instruments and tone bell sets where all the "wrong" notes can be removed in advance to enhance the musical result, "real" instruments – those used in "real life" outside of school – come with all their notes. In any case, while such instruments can have some important instructional value, what is learned is most beneficial when it is progressively transferred to "real" instruments; for example, where tone bells or hand chimes prepare students to join a school or church hand bell choir or where rhythmic reading skills learned on classroom percussion instruments can be transferred to other instruments and singing.

professional praxis, teaching music in schools is at every step an ethical matter – or should be – of "caring" for the musical wellbeing of students, and of being "care-full" to bring about 'right results' and to "do no harm." Decisions concerning what to teach and why, how to teach it, and whether (or the degree to which) teaching/learning have been successful all turn on the kinds of ethical questions and principles surveyed in this chapter.

In effect, each decision is its own "case," and requires case-based analysis that considers situated particulars in terms of relevant ethical criteria. Such an applied ethics of school music means that a teacher's ethical responsibility is not fulfilled simply by going through the motions of offering instruction. Rather, it is fully a matter of bringing about 'right results' for those served that is the very *raison d'être* for the existence of the profession. Failure to observe that ethical responsibility threatens the status of school music – its 'functional' contribution to general education – and, thus, the continued existence of the profession. The mounting challenges facing school music today will not be overcome by more or better advocacy of the status quo; rather, the profession will benefit from realizing just how practical ethical theory can be in helping school music make a more consequential and lasting contribution to the lives of all the students it serves. That is the kind of 'right result' that can reinvigorate and restore school music to its promised function in general education.

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