EDITED BY
WAYNE D. BOWMAN
ANA LUCÍA FREGA

The Oxford Handbook *of* PHILOSOPHY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

WAYNE BOWMAN AND
ANA LUCÍA FREGA

Aims and Assumptions

The recurrent, systematic, and critical examination of beliefs and assumptions—of the grounds for our musical and instructional actions—is fundamental to professional practice in music education. Without it we have no secure basis for claims that our instructional efforts are congruent with the ends for which our profession exists. More strongly yet, without philosophical inquiry our claims to professional status are rather dubious. The kind of inquiry we have in mind, however, is not the exclusive work of academic specialists: it is, rather, a process in which all music education professionals must participate—a fundamental undertaking to which all music educators must contribute.

It is natural that such inquiry disposes us to assume firm positions from time to time—to embrace "this" philosophical stance rather than "that"; but these positions are best regarded as temporary, as working hypotheses, as stances that are subject to revision and refinement in light of changing circumstances and as needs arise. It is the process of philosophical inquiry that is essential to music education, not the products it generates from time to time or place to place. In principle, nothing in music education should be exempt from philosophical scrutiny: no musical practice, no instructional aim, no assumption or belief. These are central among the convictions we bring to this project.

But what is the best way to advance and refine these philosophical processes? How can we use words and ideas to enrich musical learning and experience when the experience of music invariably exceeds—and often, quite dramatically—what we can say about it? Is talking about music, as some have claimed, like dancing

about architecture: an undertaking that is ultimately rather absurd? Do the radical differences between talk and music (to say nothing of the profound complexity of education) render philosophical inquiry pointless? If our questions have no definitive or final answers (if they are best regarded as hypotheses) is it futile to pursue them? We hope the essays of which this handbook is comprised will help demonstrate that philosophical inquiry is both unavoidable and fundamentally important to the responsible practice of music education.

This volume does not attempt an exhaustive overview of the field of music education philosophy. In the first place, philosophical inquiry is by its nature highly dynamic; it is not, we submit, the kind of discipline for which an exhaustive overview is a realistic goal. Second, music education philosophy is still very much in its nascent stages.[1] Although the number of scholars whose work is primarily devoted to it is increasing, it is still rather small. Instead of presuming to offer a comprehensive overview that delivers readers to the "cutting edge" of the discipline, then, we hope to advance awareness of philosophical inquiry's nature and potential importance to the field—the powerful ways it informs and orients practice at all levels and in all settings. We hope this handbook will introduce readers to the numerous and diverse ways philosophical inquiry serves the music education profession. We hope too that it may challenge conventional assumptions about philosophy's nature, its sphere of relevance, and its usefulness.[2]

We do not necessarily agree with or endorse all the views advanced here, but that has not been our concern as editors. Our objective has been to create a volume that illustrates the kind of differences philosophy can make for music educators' professional actions. While we might take issue with certain of the arguments advanced here, we heartily endorse the spirit with which they are advanced and the aims to which they are devoted: the *philosophical habitus*[3] they collectively represent. We understand philosophical practice not as an area of inquiry reserved for a handful of specialists whose job it is to craft doctrine for use by consumer-practitioners but rather as a constitutive dimension of professional practice in music education. The most important outcomes of philosophical inquiry, then, are not unequivocal or ultimate answers but the ability to ask better, more useful questions.

1 This is not to suggest that it is immature or naïve. To the contrary, many contributions to music education philosophy show remarkable sophistication and maturity. Music education philosophy is, however, in many ways distinct from music philosophy, from educational philosophy, and from "academic" philosophy in general. The confluence of music, education, and philosophy results in a distinctive practice with distinctive values, responsibilities, and concerns. The nature of this practice is very much a work in progress.

2 While we believe that philosophy done poorly is trivial, irrelevant, unimportant—and even, in a practical field like music education, potentially dangerous—philosophical inquiry done well is not only highly useful but essential. At issue, of course, is what it means to do philosophy poorly or to do it well. This is, we believe, a crucially important question.

3 The term *habitus* designates a set of dispositions that generate practices and perceptions. Itself an important philosophical/sociological concept, it has been extensively explored and developed in the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

One of the primary values of philosophical inquiry lies in the ways it helps refine and clarify our understanding of the questions we should be asking ourselves. Music education philosophy consists in an open-ended process that seeks to identify important practical problems and to frame them in ways that contribute incrementally to their resolution. Problems and issues are not annoyances to be done away with, then, but valuable resources. Moreover, what constitutes an important philosophical question or a valid philosophical answer is situated: it is relative to, among other concerns, time and place, ends-in-view, and one's understanding of the nature and aims of philosophical practice. For all these reasons and for others that will become more fully apparent in due course, we submit that philosophical inquiry should be among music education's most fundamental concerns, an area whose neglect—and it is widely neglected—has dire professional consequences.

What constitutes philosophy is a big question with far-reaching implications: implications at least as big and as far-reaching as one's understandings of music and of education. It would be foolish, then, to expect the intersection of music, education, and philosophy in *music education philosophy* to yield to simple analysis. However, we can point to what might be called the nerve of philosophical practice, the internal goods it is understood to serve by those who engage in it. Philosophy seeks to identify confused thinking and action, making action more intelligent, more informed, more congruent with responsibly held, defensible beliefs. The last thing we would want philosophy to do, then, is to compound confusion. Unfortunately, instances abound where this continues to happen. Too often music education philosophy involves opaque discourse that is irrelevant to the difficult problems facing music educators. Too often it pursues distinctions that make no discernible difference for practice. The fact it has so often fallen short of its potential is not an indication of inherent uselessness, however; rather it underscores the dangers of undisciplined philosophical practice. It shows the need to think more carefully and more rigorously about what philosophy involves and what we should expect of it. We hope this volume will contribute at least modestly to these urgent ends.

Readers should not approach this volume expecting to find *the* philosophy of music education or even *a* philosophy of music education. We are interested less in philosophy *of* music education than philosophy *in* music education: processes of sustained inquiry brought to bear on any—and potentially, every—aspect of music educational practice. The notion that music education philosophy consists of ironclad arguments about music's and music education's inherent natures—advocacy arguments designed to secure music education's rightful place within public school curricula—is one we do not espouse. Philosophy's "prevailing *habitus*," as Shusterman (2007) has observed, "is critical analysis" (94). Philosophy, he continues, citing the well-chosen words of Fred Maus, "savors precise conceptual distinctions and explicit argumentation" and involves "commitment to clarity and fairness." These, Shusterman suggests, are "cardinal virtues in the ethics of reading and writing" (95)—and, we would add, of philosophical inquiry done well.

This kind of philosophical practice is not easy, nor is it always comfortable or comforting; critical analysis often challenges and subverts habitual thought

processes, processes that are familiar, reassuring, and consoling. Philosophical inquiry works, when and if it does, by generating conceptual tensions that may initially involve confusion and discomfort. The trick, one might say, is to distinguish confusion and discomfort that are only that (and no more) from confusion and discomfort that promise fruitful conceptual and practical realignments—the kinds of adjustments or recalibrations that lead to more enlightened, responsive, and responsible action.

Acknowledging the central importance of questions and problems to music education presents a rather significant challenge to those who prefer just-the-facts-please approaches to instruction, curriculum, evaluation, and research. Indeed, even practitioners of philosophy have at times approached their field more as a body of doctrine than a mode of inquiry. However, while facts and truths may be laudable goals, they are seldom timeless, universal, or unqualified. There is no substitute for the critical habits and dispositions that are music education philosophy's stock in trade. The neglect of philosophical inquiry leaves a gaping hole at the center of the discipline.

Philosophy explores questions about what ought to be, musically and educationally—issues involving ethics and values. It is not so much concerned with what-is or how-to questions as with concerns about what might or should be. It seeks to achieve clearer understandings of such crucial and complex questions as what it means to be musical; what it means to educate musically; who should execute or benefit from educational interventions; what (of all we might like to teach) must be taught; and what happens when such questions are neglected.

Music education philosophy as we are suggesting it be envisioned is not an esoteric body of knowledge and should not be regarded as an isolated discipline. It overlaps with other domains, contributing to them in vitally important ways. Music education's disciplinary specializations stand to benefit significantly from philosophical inquiry, then, and at the same time they have a great deal to contribute to it. Philosophy is too important to be left to philosophers.

The Range of Philosophical Practice

The chapters in this volume are intended to exemplify some of the interesting ways philosophical work may be approached. Each contributing author brings her or his own assumptions about the range of things properly understood as instances of music, as education, and as philosophy. Music education philosophy is a three-dimensional construct, with each dimension open to various, sometimes conflicting interpretations. Tensions often arise among these dimensions: assumptions about the nature of musical practice may conflict, for instance, with our understandings of education or vice versa. What counts as music education philosophy and by what criteria it should be judged are clearly complex matters.

Whether because of this complexity or because of unfortunate beliefs that such concerns are devoid of practical implications, the systematic, deliberate pursuit of philosophical inquiry has been a rather marginal concern in the professional

preparation of music educators. Relatively few resources and little instructional time are devoted to its practice or improvement. We hope that this volume may help demonstrate its importance to the field and that it will raise useful questions about the ways musical, educational, and philosophical endeavors interrelate.

We are deliberately stretching the boundaries of what has often been considered music education philosophy because we see it as a tool that is far more broadly useful than conventional beliefs have allowed. Some chapters veer toward what some may consider historical deliberation, while others will explore practices that have been consigned by convention to domains like curriculum. But again, we believe that confining music education philosophy to a disciplinary ghetto—a domain that deals with concerns that are "all philosophy's own"—is the surest way to assure its irrelevance. Philosophy's contribution to the music education profession involves asking tough questions about the full range of our beliefs, habits, and practices: seeking alternative possibilities, and interrogating habitual modes of thought and action with the intent of identifying better ones where needed—"better" in the sense of improving professional practice.

As we have said, because philosophical inquiry is at least as concerned with questions as it is with answers, readers should not approach this volume in hopes of finding neat or ultimate solutions. The field is, by its very nature, not neat; nor should it aspire to be; nor do its utility and value require it. The essays collected here coalesce loosely around a handful of general themes intended to show ways philosophical work offers to inform, redirect, and thus improve practices of music teaching and learning. Because these practices take place in diverse settings serving markedly different ends, we resist their equation with school-based music instruction. Our concern with disciplinary boundaries is not just academic or theoretical. Boundaries influence our assumptions about the proper *object* of philosophical inquiry, about *whom* it is for, *by whom* it should be done, and ultimately, *how* it is best done—concerns that are both practical and political.

Another reason this handbook does not advance one authoritative music education philosophy is that we do not see that as philosophy's purpose. Its point is not so much to achieve closure or to provide final answers—things that bring inquiry to a halt—but to improve practice, making it more intelligent, more effective, more useful, and more responsible. However, to approach philosophy looking for immediate or direct "implications for practice" would be equally shortsighted. Philosophy improves practice not technically or directly—by prescribing rules for practice—but incrementally and indirectly: by refining and improving habitual ways of thinking and acting. Philosophical inquiry opens us to future trajectories and possibilities in the way Dewey (1916, 297) once claimed for the arts: it contributes to the formation of the "standards for the worth of later experiences." It does this by "arousing discontent with conditions which fall below [its] measure," revealing depths and ranges of meaning that might otherwise be passed over as insignificant or uninteresting. Philosophical inquiry helps shape what Dewey called our "organs of vision."

In short, this handbook is intended to show something of the richness and diversity of philosophical practice in ways that may lead to a more vital,

grounded, and inclusive understanding of its importance to the field(s) of music education.

Music, Education, and Philosophy as Practices

Implicit in what we have said thus far is the conviction that music, education, and philosophy—and therefore music education philosophy—are practices. They are modes of human action, deeply embedded in collective human processes of life and living. Their natures and their values—what they "are" and their proper uses—are not given, but are loosely consensual affairs that emerge from and exist amid human action. Their full understanding thus requires attention not just to the artifacts or entities they generate but to the shifting sociocultural processes from which they emerge and in which they are grounded.

This means that, for instance, what legitimately constitutes a musical piece, work, improvisation, or composition is always a function of social values: a function of what influential actor-agents within a particular social milieu regard as properly musical action. Such determinations are historically and culturally situated: they change over time and differ across practices. The same can be said for educational processes. What constitutes a genuinely educational action, aim, or outcome is not "given" but a matter built on often-fragile consensus. What constitutes good or bad practice, useful or wasteful effort, are not matters that are set in stone. Rather they are negotiated, situated, and often temporary. What music education philosophy is and what its worth may be are matters requiring dialogue and careful communication.

Understandably, then, the chapters in this volume involve different, sometimes divergent assumptions as to what music education philosophy means: what it should look like, what its value may be, and how best it should be done. Chapters have been deliberately chosen to make this diversity and divergence apparent. Philosophical inquiry (like music, and like education) ultimately means what its practitioners agree it means. This points to what we believe is crucial to philosophical practice: the ability to engage in communicative action, guided by ethical commitments to fairness and clarity.

We believe that philosophical truths are, like all truths (scientific truths included), for now: as far as we know; until further notice; subject to revision in light of better information or in light of shifts in actions and their attendant values. Accordingly, differences and disputes are not anathema to music education philosophy but rather its lifeblood. Unanimity is neither very common in philosophical practice nor is it particularly desirable. As we have said, the point of philosophical inquiry is not to create doctrine but to engage in communicative processes dedicated to improving practice; its desired outcome is not so much a set of ultimate answers but the ability to ask better questions. Philosophical practice is as much about framing and exploring useful questions as it is about answers.

This is not to say that answers do not matter, or that any answer is as a good as another: Not only would that be irresponsible but it is not at all representative of the

spirit and depth of conviction typical of philosophical disputes. Because both questions and answers are of time and place, though, we should not be too quick to embrace one era's or one culture's philosophical beliefs as universal or absolute. Philosophy is no more that kind of thing than is music—or education for that matter. Again, do not expect the chapters in this handbook to coalesce into a uniform position that eliminates all need for further inquiry. That is not their purpose or our goal. Our hope, rather, is to create more nuanced frameworks for belief and action.

To ends like these, not just anything will do: one view is not just as good as another. At the same time, what constitutes things like "better," "more useful," or "more refined" are themselves philosophical issues. Accordingly, one of philosophy's fundamental obligations—at least in a human field of practice like music education—is to show why its questions and answers represent potential improvements over other ways of approaching practice. Some chapters in this volume address these concerns more explicitly and directly than others; some, it might be argued, exemplify better philosophical practice than others. But the criteria for drawing such distinctions we intend to leave to you, our readers. Doing so is consistent, we think, with the view of philosophy we endorse: as an open and evolving practice.

Toward Greater Inclusiveness

We have asserted that philosophical inquiry is contextually situated: of a time, of a place, and so on. However, North American and European scholars and music educators have generated the vast majority of the field's philosophical scholarship, to the near total exclusion of those from other geographical and cultural settings, to say nothing of those North Americans and Europeans whose musical and educational concerns derive from practices that differ substantially from those of English-speaking academics in more privileged or "developed" parts of the world. It has become commonplace to acknowledge that music is many things and that it is practiced in many ways; however, as Luis Estrada argues in his chapter, the plurality and diversity of musical and educational practices require that efforts to account for them be similarly diverse, plural, and open-ended.

Because we believe music education philosophy has too often proceeded as if it were perfectly obvious what musical, educational, and philosophical theorizing should involve, we have sought in this volume to draw upon views and voices that have been underrepresented in—and in some instances wholly absent from—philosophical dialogue about music education. We have sought a greater presence for work from other cultures, a more extensive representation of women among our contributing authors, and a balance between established scholars and individuals new to or outside the discipline of music education. Believing that who speaks and who is heard cannot be fairly separated from what is said, we have tried to take at least preliminary steps toward more diverse and inclusive practice.

To gesture in the direction of greater inclusivity is the easy part, however. If a publication is to show and respect what other cultures think about musical education—what they understand music and education and philosophy to entail, and

what they see as problematic and requiring philosophical scrutiny—we as readers need to be prepared to question what we ourselves "know" about such things. We need to be prepared to allow differences to be different and to allow challenges to influence our conceptual habits and assumptions. This can be an enormous challenge to those accustomed to thinking about philosophy in terms of right and wrong, true and false—a challenge that extends to the very basis for our identity as musicians, educators, and scholars.

By whom and for whom should music education philosophy be conducted? Whose domain is it? Whose needs and whose interests should serve? To what ends should a more inclusive philosophical practice be directed? By what criteria is its effectiveness properly gauged? If philosophical inquiry is to improve action in ways that are ethical, responsible, or professional; and if what constitutes valid practice is culturally relative, then a universalistic, gods-eye conception of philosophy (devoted to identifying the "really real" or "the one true way") will not do. Twenty-first-century music education philosophy cannot simply assume that what is good or useful or even demonstrably "true" of music and music education in one part of the world is equally valuable, practical, or valid everywhere—except where we can identify genetic universalities that ameliorate differences.

As we have said, philosophical practice in music education must accommodate diversity in its own practice. But how diverse can philosophical practice become before it is no longer coherent and useful; before it no longer serves the goods it exists to serve in the first place; before it deteriorates into multiple, incompatible arguments incapable of advancing the common good? How inclusive can it be, how many interests/concerns can it accommodate before it no longer warrants the name philosophy? What counts as bona fide philosophical practice? What counts as a legitimately philosophical problem? Who gets to decide?

These too are important philosophical issues. We hope our readers will use them to help guide their readings of the chapters that follow: to inform judgments about their utility, relevance, and rigor, and to help refine their expectations of philosophical practice in the diverse field we find convenient to call music education.

Tolerance for Complexity, Plurality, and Change

The result of the assumptions we have been exploring here is an orientation to music education philosophy that blurs conventional boundaries, mixing unfamiliar voices and perspectives with familiar ones. There are risks and challenges associated with this. Perhaps the greatest challenge is the conceptual dissonance created when differing views and values—competing conceptual and cultural frameworks—collide. Yet, with this challenge come potential benefits. Awareness of perspectival limitations has too often been absent from music education's philosophical discourses, to the detriment of such discursive virtues as responsiveness, flexibility, and communicative intent.

Some of the chapters in this volume may create discomfort, calling into question beliefs and habits regarded as givens or irrefutable. But again, part of

philosophy's practical value lies in the conceptual realignments to which such discomfort may lead. Diverse views and assumptions afford opportunities to weigh the pros and cons of differing value systems and to think carefully about the grounds for our own. We hope this collection of essays—from one perspective a rather eclectic compilation—will contribute in a preliminary way to forging a music education profession that is more philosophically conversant, more philosophically self-aware, and more philosophically engaged. For this to happen, differences and discomfort need to be approached as potentially valuable resources—as opportunities to clarify, enrich, and enliven the practices of music education.

Doing philosophical work requires diligence, patience, tenacity, and courage. Exposing one's ideas to critical scrutiny (and to criticism, since that is crucial to philosophical progress) is not easy. We are deeply appreciative of the efforts of those whose work appears here. We are particularly grateful to those whose first language is not English and whose cultural roots lie outside the discursive spheres of Western English-speaking academic culture. A great deal of excellent thinking occurs in the non-Anglophone world, thinking that does not make its way into English because of expense and difficulties of translation. At the same time, much of the excellent thinking that goes on among speakers of English is unavailable to the millions of music educators outside the English speaking world. We have tried to address the former concern by involving contributors whose linguistic and cultural frames diverge from the ones typically associated with philosophy of music education. The cultural imperialism of the English language is a problem contemporary English-speaking scholars need to acknowledge and address. English writers and speakers are culturally privileged in many ways. Non-Anglophones—and even more so those from non-Western cultures—must make enormous efforts to participate in discussions others of us simply take for granted. We are especially grateful for the participation—and for the patience and persistence—of our non-English contributors.

Organization of the Volume

We have chosen somewhat arbitrarily to divide this handbook into five sections. These do not represent discrete areas of concern, but differences in emphasis. Similarly, the significance of individual chapters often extends beyond the section in which they appear. While we devote a section to philosophy, for instance, each chapter in this volume contributes to that topic—whether through the strategies it employs, the issues it seeks to clarify, the kinds of arguments it advances, or the things it offers as evidence. And while we have dedicated a section to the nature and value of music—an obviously foundational concern for those who presume to teach it—discussion of these matters often implicates consideration of educational, curricular, and instructional matters. Similarly, while one section is more explicitly

devoted to challenges faced by music education philosophy, each of the volume's chapters presents at least implicit challenges to the practice: that is in no small part what philosophical inquiry does, after all.

Because we believe there is a significant need for more discriminating philosophical practice within the field, the first section is intended to shed light upon the aims of philosophical practice in music education—what it involves, the kinds of issues it should address, the range of evidence upon which it should draw, and so forth. Many disputes among music education philosophers can be traced to divergent assumptions about the aims, purposes, methods, and standards of the practice. There is, therefore, a pressing need for greater clarity about our aims and aspirations. If philosophy amounts to no more than the passionate expression of deeply held convictions, for instance—strong opinions buttressed by stirring rhetorical skills—we have no way of distinguishing between philosophy that is useful or worthless, rigorous or sloppy, compelling or trivial. Where persuasion is its point, anything goes and winning the argument is paramount—as distinct from more properly philosophical concerns like coherence, validity, clarity, fairness, and utility. If music education philosophy is to achieve its professional potential, it is imperative that we think more carefully and critically about what it is—how it differs, or should differ, from things like mere opinion, ideology, dogma, or advocacy—and how distinctively philosophical skills can best be developed. Inspiring narratives designed to justify prevailing practices have too often been mistaken for philosophy. Style has been mistaken for substance, with dire consequences for our understandings of philosophy's practical value. Especially since agreement can be a relatively rare philosophical commodity, developing more rigorous and better informed expectations for philosophical practice in music education is a major professional challenge.

The second section explores questions and assumptions about what music is, and what these imply for instructional practice in music education. While considerations like these are clearly foundational to informed practice, it has often been wrongly assumed that they are sufficient to music education philosophy—that identification of an innermost essence of music (a level on which it is all alike) answers all important questions about how best to teach it. The more we know about music, however, the more apparent it becomes that it is not the kind of thing that has an innermost essence, a single, unifying nature and value. Musics are diverse and changing human practices, modes of action that are bearers of multiple meanings and values. The notion that music education philosophy takes its ultimate direction from *the* nature and *the* value of music is thus one whose persuasiveness has rightly begun to wane. This does not mean such concerns are no longer philosophically relevant; but it does suggest that they be regarded as plural, diverse, fluid, and culturally relative. If music's nature and value are culturally modulated—rather than resident in pieces or works, as the Western notion of "art for art's sake" has implied—then we must attend much more closely to what people do with and through music, and how. Understandings of music's nature and value are clearly essential to music education philosophy but they are not sufficient.

The chapters in the third section revolve around concepts of education, exploring what the notion of musical *education* commits us to—as distinct from musical instruction that is more closely aligned with other ends. At issue, ultimately, are the relationships between musical instruction and the diverse ends it may serve. Philosophical inquiry in music education depends importantly upon our understanding of the aims and outcomes of education. Or, put differently, the educational validity of our instructional methods and strategies depends upon the aims to which they are devoted, the ends they demonstrably serve, their educational consequences. What are the aims of education, then? In what ways is music especially well suited (or perhaps ill suited) to their attainment? What educational outcomes are reasonably expected of musical instruction? Or, as Vernon Howard asks provocatively in his chapter, is education even the kind of process that has "an aim"? To what concerns and responsibilities do our claims to educational benefits oblige us? Does instruction that is explicitly educational involve philosophy more essentially than other instructional endeavors? Such issues are at least as fundamental to music education as our understandings of music's nature and value.

The relationships between one's understandings of music, of education, and practical concerns like curricular content, structure, delivery, and evaluation are—or they should be—very intimate. The essays in the fourth section examine some of the practical actions implicated by our philosophical understandings of music education. How should musical experiences be structured, coordinated, sequenced, and evaluated in order to realize their educational potentials? Of all the ways we might engage with music, which (given our understandings of music and of education, and available resources) must we pursue? Why this way rather than that one? What is the proper focus of musical actions that are intended to serve educational ends? How might concern to develop things like musicality, creativity, character, and agency manifest themselves in the experiential opportunities we design for our students? How can music education's lifelong and lifewide objectives best be achieved?

Although each of these sections (and indeed, each chapter in this handbook) raises implicit questions about the nature of philosophy and the ways it should be practiced, our fifth section addresses these questions more directly. How successful has music education philosophy been? What is it doing right or wrong? To what extent and in what ways has it realized or fallen short of its potential? Whose interests has it served, and how? If philosophical inquiry in music education is to fulfill its distinctive mission, it is essential that we become clearer about the nature of that mission, more fluent in its practice, and more broadly engaged in the quest to improve it.

Conclusions

Like all practices, philosophy is situated—of a place and time. Yet, again like all practices, it is never *only* of a particular place or time. Philosophy that seeks to be

communicative—to engage other inquirers and practitioners in a quest for shared perspectives capable of informing practice— must identify common horizons: it involves what Habermas has famously called communicative rationality. It must accommodate diversity and plurality without becoming solipsistic. It must seek improved understanding and more effective practice without insisting upon a single, definitive, or ultimate point of arrival. Continued growth is its ideal.

Because philosophical inquiry does not reduce to mere personal opinion, and because its validity must be grounded in more than claimed authority or rhetorical panache, not just anything counts as genuine philosophical practice. One view or argument is not as good as any other. Philosophical practice is grounded in the collective actions and beliefs of a culturally and historically extended community, one that is devoted to goods that—in the views of its participants—serve philosophical ends. Philosophers bring different perspectives and various ways of participating to an endeavor that resembles an extended conversation: an exchange that invariably involves both understanding and misunderstanding yet remains deeply committed to pursuing of the former.

Again, one of the important goals in this volume is to achieve greater inclusivity in these important conversations, to draw more voices into philosophical discourse in order to make it more interesting, more vital, and more connected to the diversity and change that characterize music and music education. Where having a voice, speaking, and being heard are our sole concerns, the result is noise and chatter, not conversation: activity rather than action, behavior rather than practice. Things like coherence, clarity, fairness, and responsiveness are thus crucial concerns for philosophical discourse. To achieve them, we must attend carefully to nerve of the practice: to the ends it exists to serve; to the *habitus* that distinguishes rigorous philosophical practice from mere assertion or expression of opinion; to the distinctions between philosophically motivated inquiry and arguments advanced largely for the sake of winning or impressing others.

The challenge before us is to make music education philosophy a more culturally inclusive and diverse practice while at the same time refining the disciplinary rigor essential to its claim to a place of prominence within music education. As the process devoted to nurturing a continuously evolving relationship between theory and practice, philosophy involves diversity and dispute. However, these must be directed to better understanding and improved practice; to action that is more intelligent; to intelligence that is more active.

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SECTION I

THE NATURE AND VALUE OF PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 2

WHAT SHOULD THE MUSIC EDUCATION PROFESSION EXPECT OF PHILOSOPHY?

WAYNE BOWMAN AND
ANA LUCÍA FREGA

Philosophy emerges from the fundamental human needs to make sense of experience and to explore its meaning—needs that have been with us since earliest recorded history and probably since the very dawn of reflective thinking. This business of making, refining, and clarifying meanings has been aptly characterized as big, messy, and multidimensional.[1] It is also unavoidable: a process in which each of us engages on some level or other as part of the fundamental human task of making sense of the world and our place in it. While almost everyone thinks casually about such matters from time to time (some call this small-p philosophy), most people simply pause to wonder and then go on about their lives, following habitual or culturally prevalent norms for thought and action. However, these reflective tendencies can also be cultivated, refined, and systematized in ways that

1 Johnson 2007, *ix*.

enable us to choose or modify our actions—to act intelligently in light of anticipated consequences. Capital-P Philosophy tries to enhance the rigor and effectiveness of our basic human efforts to make sense of the world and to achieve harmony between our beliefs and our actions. The latter is the kind of philosophical practice that concerns us here.

Philosophical inquiry is a lively and provocative, daunting yet rewarding practice that questions received views, challenges habits and assumptions, and painstakingly investigates how things might be other than they appear to be or better than they are. By challenging habitual patterns of action and thought, exposing myths or misconceptions, and seeking more useful "truths," philosophical inquiry seeks to enhance the bonds between justified belief and action. Its results are often unsettling and destabilizing; but they may also be exciting, exhilarating, even liberating. Done well, philosophical inquiry differs dramatically from the stuffy, impractical pursuit its detractors often claim it is. It is not the dry academic pursuit of the arcane, the obscure, or the merely theoretical, but rather an imaginative quest to think more actively, to act more intelligently, to pursue practices more fruitfully, and to live life more fully and more responsibly.[2]

Philosophical practice need not be confined to the concerns conventionally associated with the academic discipline called philosophy. More than a "subject matter" or the study of philosophers, philosophy is an attitude and a process: one that probes and explores whatever it encounters, seeking to reveal more useful meanings, more imaginative possibilities, more novel alternatives for action. When we approach it as a mere "research methodology," sequestering it within disciplinary walls or specialized journals,[3] we compromise its potential professional value. Philosophical inquiry by and for philosophers on purely philosophical matters often becomes an isolated, inward affair, detached from the interests and concerns of the music education field as a whole. Left to others, separated from practical concerns, it may become dull, stagnant, unresponsive, and irrelevant. Historically, music education's philosophical practice has been left to a small cadre of specialists: philosophical habits and skills have not been cultivated or refined in the profession at large; and as a regrettable consequence philosophy has come to be regarded by many music educators as a peripheral and largely dispensable concern.

Among the other reasons for philosophy's neglect within the field of music education is its critical orientation to received truths and conventions. Those privileged by the prevailing order may therefore describe philosophical inquiry as a waste of precious time and resources. People's attention is better devoted to "what is" than to questions about what might or should be, philosophy's detractors

2 See Bowman 1992, 2000, 2003, and 2005a for more extensive explorations of these claims for music education philosophy.

3 This is not to deny the value of specialization; however, it is worth noting that an unintended result may be to remove philosophical work from broader circulation in professional discourses such that those who do not profess particular "interest" in philosophical work need never encounter it.

often argue. It is more important to *do* music education, in other words, than to explore troubling and distracting questions about how it might be done differently or more effectively. The idea of philosophical inquiry into music and music education is thus often regarded—and particularly, it seems, in economically deprived or less "developed" parts of the world—as an unnecessary extravagance or a diversion from the "practical" business at hand.

Most of these reservations about philosophy, as well as its widespread neglect by the profession, stem from misrepresentations and misunderstandings of philosophical practice: confusion that can often be traced to philosophy done poorly. Philosophical practice revolves around questions, dialogue, and debate. Often, it exists amid conflicts and controversy. But its ultimate aim is to reconcile or resolve differences in ways that are both theoretically and practically useful. Philosophical inquiry thus requires a delicate balance between tolerance and impatience; between freedom and restraint; between humility and courage or conviction; between respect for others' views and contempt for things like dishonesty, deceit, and diversion. It also requires a keen awareness of the potential fallibility of one's answers—lest they become rigid, unbending ideological positions, and lest they exacerbate problems rather than contributing to their resolution. In music education, philosophical inquiry seeks to render practice more effective and more satisfying. The measures of its worth are the practical differences it makes.

What are these differences? In what ways have our conventional expectations of music education philosophy fallen short? What should the music education profession expect of music education philosophy? These are the questions with which we are primarily concerned in this chapter.

What Is Music? Why Music Education?

We have suggested that philosophical inquiry is a practice whose aims, objectives, and processes are often misunderstood, a concern to which we will return shortly. The domain of music education also means many different things to different people, an issue that warrants careful consideration since its bounds are crucial in determining the range of issues with which music education philosophy is appropriately concerned.

Music education philosophers have often equated music education with formal schooling. Schools, however, are not the only places where musical education occurs; nor are the profession's concerns restricted to school-age children in institutional settings. Indeed, some of music's important educational potentials may be more compatible with other situations and circumstances. Equating music education's philosophical concerns with school music programs neglects many important musical and educational endeavors, significantly narrowing the range of

instructional practices to which philosophical inquiry is deemed relevant. There are important differences, then, between music education philosophy and philosophy of school music—although clearly the two may overlap. Music education philosophy does not so much seek to rationalize or defend particular instructional practices as to critically examine the aims and processes of musical teaching and learning wherever and whenever they occur.

Music education philosophy has also often been approached as if music education were a mere variant of "arts education"—as if what is true of instruction in "art" or "the arts" is necessarily true of musical instruction. If this were so, a philosophy of arts education would be an acceptable substitute for music education philosophy. We believe it is not, and that the primary objects of music education philosophy should be musical and instructional practices devoted to educational ends. Indeed, *whether* and *in what senses* music is appropriately considered "art" (what musical practices the notion of art may rightly or wrongly exclude) are themselves significant issues for music education philosophy. In other words, the assumption that all musical practices are instances of art begs an important philosophical question. Not all musical practices are, or aspire to be, artistic.

We assume that most readers will come to this volume not through "the arts" or philosophy, but through their love of music and their interest in teaching it. So let us begin there, with what *music* is and what it involves. Music is a ubiquitous human phenomenon: a prominent and vital presence in nearly all human societies and one of the things that distinguishes humans importantly from many other living beings. The range, the diversity, and the multitude of uses for human musical actions are remarkable, especially given that music is not an obviously biological necessity. Why does it figure so prominently in human social life? What is the fundamental nature of this immense category of diverse behaviors we casually designate as "music"? Does it have a unifying essence, or is it rather a loose-knit and shifting collection of human actions? Of what value is it to human life and living? Clearly musical practices fulfill fundamental human needs, because they often thrive amid even the most adverse circumstances. That people invest such copious amounts of their energy, their time, and in more affluent societies, their money in music and music-related activities is simply remarkable. Again, why? Although it is clearly a source of pleasure, human pleasures are many. Why musical pleasure? Why our obsessions with sound seemingly divorced from its survival-related functions?[4] What is this thing we call music (or is it properly considered a "thing"?), and why is it (or is it better considered a "them"?) so important?

Questions like these confront almost anyone who seeks to understand musical actions or to defend their importance to others. What does music education

4 "Seemingly" because many scholars argue convincingly that while its values may not be direct or immediate, like eating or sleeping, music does have important survival value and is deeply rooted in our psychobiology.

contribute to human well-being, and how? Aside from their obvious passion about music, why do music educators deserve resources that might be put to good use elsewhere—especially when musical practices often thrive without educational interventions? Why teach music and why learn it (especially in formal settings) when so many people in so many places engage in it successfully just by being active participants in society?

A common response to this last question goes something like this: "Because formal instruction gives people access to more of what is potentially available through musical experience." But again, what is *that*—this thing or value or experience that is potentially available primarily or solely through music? What kind of understanding or insight is music supposed to afford? What evidence is there for such claims? Or perhaps the point of being musically educated is not so much to "understand" anything as to experience life more fully: not so much its cognitive benefits as its capacity to enrich the quality of life or, say, to shape character in certain ways? There are many uses to which music may be put, and many benefits potentially derived with its experience. While knowing may be among these, perhaps that is not the primary reason for teaching and learning it. Musical engagement can be therapeutic. It can enhance things like one's sense of belonging, one's self confidence, one's personal identity. In rare instances, it can lead to fame and fortune. There are many different reasons for teaching and learning music, many different answers to the questions "Why teach music?" and "Why learn it?" There are, accordingly, many different kinds of music education. If all this is true, the pursuit of a single, definitive answer to the question "Why teach music?" is probably a question to which there is no single best answer.

Even if we simply grant the importance of teaching and learning music, bypassing questions about why and how, troublesome issues remain. For one thing, music is not a single, uniform entity but a far-flung, ever-shifting constellation of human practices. If that is so, the notion that musical education benefits people in one fundamental way may be very difficult to sustain. If music education's potential benefits are diverse and divergent, it is difficult to stipulate precisely *how* it should be taught and learned—to which of its potential educational benefits our efforts should be devoted. Establishing to everyone's satisfaction that musical instruction is delivering the goods rightly expected of it is thus a significant challenge.

Explaining what music is and why it is important does not necessarily tell us why it should be taught and learned formally. And establishing *that* music warrants systematic instruction leaves unanswered questions about what that instruction should involve, and how to distinguish instructional successes from failures. What is music? What is its value? Why teach it? How should it be taught? By what outcomes can instructional success be discerned? Because these are but a few of the philosophical issues confronting music educators, the achievement of a single, definitive justification for music education is probably not a realistic expectation of music education philosophy.

Why Philosophical Inquiry, and by Whom?

To those who see philosophy's primary purpose as the provision of unequivocal answers and ironclad justifications for practice, the claim that philosophy is an open-ended process—in which questions and disagreements figure centrally and final answers are frequently misleading—is irresponsible. It negates the whole point of engaging in philosophical inquiry. Music education philosophy's function, it is apparently assumed, is to formulate and disseminate answers that are absolute, irrefutable, and logically binding.

However, on the view we propose here, the purpose of music education philosophy is not so much to identify timeless or universal truths as to develop and refine theoretical perspectives that are provisionally useful: hypothesized relationships between belief and action. The validity of such orientations must be continuously tested and revised in light of emerging (and often unforeseen) circumstances. Philosophy's truths are contingent and contextual—for the time being, under present circumstances, until further notice. That may be all philosophy can reasonably aspire to achieve; but perhaps it is all we really need.

Disagreements about the nature and aims of philosophy are also often manifest in beliefs about who should do it. Some believe it should be reserved for experts with specialized training, skills, and tools: philosophy is for philosophers. However, while specialization has its obvious benefits we are wary of the notion that philosophy is a domain where experts prepare and dispense answers for dutiful consumption by musical practitioners.[5] A professional philosophy's value, we submit, lies not so much in its conclusions as in the processes by which these are defined, refined, and revised. The philosophical process—the process of identifying cogent questions and exploring them carefully—is at least as important as its answers. The point of philosophical inquiry, then, is not to purge practice of problems (thus bringing itself to an end) but rather to make the practices to which it is directed more fruitful. This is a collective responsibility, one that extends to all practitioners.

If music, education, and philosophy each name diverse human practices, what hope is there for achieving consensus about any one of them, let alone the way they should operate conjointly? What is the point of pursuing something as potentially complex and elusive as philosophy? Surely music educators have better things to do?

5 As is so often the case, Dewey makes this point with particular cogency: "Those who wish a monopoly of social power find desirable the separation of habit and thought. . . . For the dualism enables them to do the thinking and planning, while others remain the docile . . . instruments of execution" (2002, 72).

First, the alternatives to widespread engagement in philosophical inquiry are not very palatable. A field or discipline without philosophical guidance, without critically examined ideals and commitment to their revision in light of the diverse and changing needs of those it seeks to serve, is more akin to an occupation than a profession. Without philosophical inquiry, instructional actions may become habitual or haphazard. And without the active, collective engagement of practitioners, philosophical responsibility may be deferred to individuals not particularly conversant in music educational practice. Philosophical inquiry that does not contribute to the clarification or resolution of practical problems quickly deteriorates into untethered abstraction: distinctions without a difference.

Second, the existence of many musics, of conflicting understandings of education, and of divergent notions about what philosophy should be and do (and in turn who should do it) does not mean that none is better than any other and that, therefore, "just any" will do. Practitioners have a crucial role to play in determining what counts as useful philosophy and in refining its practice. When it comes to professional philosophy, openness has both its value and its clear limitations. Despite our skepticism toward claims to ultimacy, certain philosophical strategies or orientations are indeed better than others: not so much "better" in the sense of being inherently superior or of capturing more "truth" than other contenders, but in the sense of having clearer or more useful implications for action. The understanding of philosophical inquiry we endorse is a process dedicated to making action more intelligent by enhancing congruence between beliefs and actions, between intentions and discernible outcomes.

A third reason we need music educators to engage in philosophical inquiry is that it is not a one-size-fits-all affair: a commodity that, once developed, is universally applicable. Philosophical problems and solutions are contextually situated affairs. Philosophical inquiry exists to serve practical human needs, and these are not the same for everyone, everywhere, cross-culturally, or across time. European or North American answers and the questions they purport to address differ from those in other cultures and locations. Philosophical conversations must therefore remain open and responsive to diverse cultural realities. Philosophical inquiry is a continuous, exploratory process in which the journey is at least as important as the point of arrival.

We have advocated openness, yet warned against its excesses; and we have emphasized the necessity for standards of philosophical practice, while stressing the need for these to be flexible, responsive, adaptive, and responsible. At issue, then, is not whether openness or robustness is inherently more important; rather, the question we should ask is which is more important for specified needs, more useful for the ends at hand. In a practice like music education such determinations must be made in light of practical problems and issues, and in light of the needs of those for whom the practice exists. Practitioners play an indispensable role in this process: our expectations of philosophy involve beliefs about who should practice it, why, and to what ends.

A "Practice" Alternative to Grand Theory

The meanings of music, education, and philosophy and how they should be approached have been objects of heated debate throughout human history. There is no particular reason, then, to think these controversies will subside any time soon. Nor, as we have suggested, is the definitive resolution of all disputes and differences necessarily a desirable goal: disputes and differences are constitutive parts of living human practices. At least one of the questions we need to address, then, is how to engage in philosophical inquiry that recognizes, honors, and seeks to accommodate things like plurality, difference, and change. What we are alluding to here is the distinction between localized or grounded philosophical inquiry and what is sometimes referred to as "grand theory": accounts whose universality, abstraction, and generality neglect the living contexts and concerns that make action meaningful. Too often, the philosophical accounts that have prevailed in music education have been dogmatic, knock-them-dead affairs: answers presumed to have achieved a point of view beyond point of view; perspectives believed to have transcended perspective. Conceived as ends rather than means (as conclusions rather than as tools or hypotheses), these tend to arrest inquiry rather than refining it. Rather than facilitating the critical examination of action, they often lead to unexamined action.

This is not to suggest that the quest for unified theory is wholly misguided. It is to suggest, however, that philosophical conclusions are best regarded as hypothetical and fallible—as tools with limited and conditional validity. It is not to suggest that underlying similarities among musical practices are inherently illusory and that differences are somehow more "real." It is to suggest, however, that philosophical method must acknowledge and accommodate the plurality and fluidity of musical practices—and that these are, where musical instruction seeks validity or authenticity, more important than music's uniformity. Instructional methodologies in music often take the form of prescriptions: of definitive solutions to instructional and curricular concerns. The universality of methodologies (as distinct from the qualified principles of instructional method) typically rests upon implicit assumptions about the nature of all music; about whose music warrants study and preservation; and about what or whose musical practices are unworthy of educational efforts.

The hazards of universal philosophical assumptions are hardly limited to instructional method. Consider, for example, the influential convictions that music is an inherently "aesthetic" phenomenon, and that music education should therefore be conceived and practiced as a form of "aesthetic education."[6] Here, a

6 Not all the original adherents of what has been called the "aesthetic rationale for music education" espoused a point of view that is this reductive; but many, perhaps most *disciples* of these orientations do.

normative ideal specific to a particular range of European musical practice (a receptive, appreciative mode of engagement with "works of art") is advanced as *the* end to which *all* musics and all genuinely musical engagements are properly devoted. When the norms of a given musical practice are generalized to all practices, everywhere, for all times, philosophy is effectively replaced by ideology. Deliberation and evidence are replaced by politics and advocacy. Instead of providing its basis, philosophy becomes a substitute for critically informed practice.

Music education philosophy does not need once-and-for-all answers, we submit, so much as it needs to ask better questions. Our expectations of philosophy should accommodate the contextual specificity and potential multiplicity of valid answers and acknowledge that they may change over time.[7] Because music, education, and philosophy are not entities but human practices—modes of human action and interaction—it is probably misguided to approach them as fixed phenomena with immutable essences.[8] Our philosophical work should be more modest in its aspirations, more piecemeal in its strategies, more tentative in its convictions, more sensitive to its potential fallibility. It needs to be more responsive to the evolving "truths" and shifting insights of a multicultural, postmodern, postcolonial world. Although we are right to regard it as foundational, then, philosophical practice is probably not the kind of foundation we have traditionally considered it to be.[9]

Human practices are not singular, unchanging things.[10] Nor is their value. The nature and value of practices are various, plural, and functions of the uses to which we put them (and these functions are, in turn, plural, various, and subject to change). Accordingly, the question most appropriate to practices like music, education, and philosophy is not so much whether they are "good," but what they are potentially "good for": what ends they serve, and how well. The nature(s) and the value(s) of practices are relative to the aims, actions, and interests of the human agents who engage in them. The purpose and worth of practices are created, contested, modified, and recreated amid human social interaction.

What music is, then; by what ends its value should be determined; whether a given instance is authentic, or desirable, or worth pursuing, or listening to, or

7 Put differently, still: what constitutes a valid answer depends upon one's understanding of the questions being asked.

8 This is not to say, we hasten to add emphatically, that they do not have answers, or that one old answer is as good as another. This is, as Richard Rorty (1991, 203) once put it, the difference between being open-minded and having minds so open that our brains fall out.

9 See Bowman 2003 for some preliminary considerations of what this might involve.

10 No doubt some will object that this very claim is global and absolute and, as such, contradicts the ideas that precede it. It is not intended, however, as an absolute claim, though: only as a claim for which there appears to be a reasonable amount of empirical support. It is, in effect, a claim that the reasons for holding this view are, at least for now, more persuasive than the reasons for holding alternative views. This stance is, we believe, congruent with Bertrand Russell's claim to the effect that both dogmatism and skepticism are absolute philosophies, one being certain of knowing, the other of not knowing. What philosophy should dispel, Russell concludes, is certainty, whether of knowledge or ignorance.

teaching—all these are subject to temporary, sometimes fragile, and often precarious consensus. What counts as an authentic instance of music or education or philosophical inquiry is not so much a question of fact as of perspective. "What is music?" is a question whose answer varies depending upon whose practices one has in mind. Likewise, "What is music's value?" is a question about the ends fruitfully served by particular musical engagements. And "What music should be taught?" is fundamentally a political question.[11]

In short, musical (and educational, and philosophical) practices are modes of human interaction in which various interests compete for influence. What counts as a legitimate or authentic instance of a practice and what does not are always open questions—functions of whose voices are heard and whose are persuasive. Were we to create a list of musical universals it would be a rather brief one. Since social interaction is processual, fluid, and mutable, so is music: that is the kind of "thing" it is. These claims have the strategic advantage, it seems to us, of leading to continued and potentially more fruitful inquiry rather than to closure.

All this is to say that, in effect, there is no such *thing* as music; no such *thing* as education; no such *thing* as philosophy.[12] These are more usefully considered processes than entities.[13] The skills this orientation demands of us are considerably more creative and responsive than those required by a world consisting of irrefutable facts and unchanging entities.

Disagreements within music education philosophy are commonplace. But they are potentially valuable, signs of vitality rather than embarrassments. Unanimity is neither a realistic expectation of philosophical practice nor is it particularly conducive to philosophical progress. It is not so much a body of knowledge as a way of being, devoted to exploring and refining the relationships between meanings and

11 This is a point, we think, of fundamental importance. It is also a consideration that must not be dismissed as "merely political"—as if political implications were somehow nonphilosophical. Philosophy is and should be, on the view we are advancing here, a political process. Note that, consequently, even within a given society there almost invariably exist multiple and competing claims as to the importance of music and the reasons and ways for teaching it: those of religion, of schooling, of economic gain, and so forth.

12 The point of these claims may be more evident with regard to music than to education and philosophy at this point. When it comes to education, though, the competing claims include education as cultural transmission, as cultural induction, as indoctrination, as cultivation, as empowerment, as liberation, and many more. Additional points of contention are whether we should view music as a component within a broader realm of education (music in education) or as a domain in itself (education in music). We see education as a process devoted to enhancing capacities like creative imagination and progressively more intelligent and more just action. We have alluded already to the range of expectations people bring to philosophy; and it is probably clear that the view we are advancing here is a view of philosophy as a process dedicated to raising questions that make our actions both more intelligent and more responsible. The similarities between our views of education and philosophy show why we think philosophical inquiry is so crucial to music education.

13 Frega explores this processual view as it relates specifically to creativity in Frega 2007.

actions. It is a voracious creature, with diverse appetites. Disputes are not aberrations but normal, and in many ways desirable: part of the process, done right, by which human practices grow, change, adapt, and remain vital and relevant. Heated discussion and debate are what keep human practices humming along. Whether they are destructive or constructive depends—like most other things in the human world—on how they are done.

Critical thought about what to expect of things like music, education, and philosophy can be extraordinarily helpful in clarifying expectations, in refining or modifying practice, and in developing tolerance and appreciation for alternative practices and frames of reference. On the other hand, many disputes remain just that: arguments whose primary purpose is to win, or to discredit adversaries. Debate may be used to fortify territory or it may enhance understanding, making action more mindful of its assumptions and consequences. It is the latter, we submit, to which philosophical practice should be devoted.

In sum, multiplicity and relativity do not render critical thought and debate pointless: on the contrary, they create the conditions required for ongoing inquiry and establish its importance. There are many ways music and education and philosophy may be, but that does not render them subjective, arbitrary, or abjectly relativistic. "Many" does not mean "just any."[14] Determining what kind of questions and answers are most needed, most useful, most beneficial in light of available means and potential outcomes—these are crucial philosophical concerns for all music education professionals.

14 There are those who like to assert that taking a stand against essentialism and absolutes automatically rules out taking any stand at all—that it is self-contradictory, for instance, to advocate relativism and at the same time to assert that some positions are better than others; and that, in fact, it is self-contradictory to argue that relativism is a more useful way to look at things like music, education, philosophy, and so on, than absolutism, since such an assertion itself amounts to an absolute claim. Clearly, we do not think so. We take the stances we do because the evidence at hand (at this moment, under these circumstances) makes it appear reasonable to do so. One draws the line between right and wrong or true and false where one does (when one does) because of what one takes to be persuasive evidence for drawing it there rather than somewhere else. When it comes to music, for instance, we see sufficiently compelling evidence of considerable diversity and difference that we are inclined to conclude that it is not one thing, but many. However, the counterargument tends to go, most people have little difficulty recognizing a given mode of human interaction as "musical": surely, then, there must be a level on which all music is alike—one collective attribute that all music shares; one thing that all music is and does. This is a very curious way of talking and thinking. A humanly perceived world always consists of both differences and similarities. Things are what they are both in virtue of qualities and characteristics that are absolutely their own (the sense in which everything is unique or particular) and in virtue of their being kinds of things (involving resemblances to other entities of similar kind). The issue isn't whether similarity or difference is more "real" or more fundamental, but rather which is more interesting, more important to take into consideration in light of our intended actions. This is a pragmatic interpretation of the reasons for engaging in philosophical inquiry.

The Music Education Profession's Neglect of Philosophy

Although critically examined beliefs about the nature and value of music and the aims of education should inform all professional decisions and actions in music education, developing and refining such capacities is not a prominent concern in the preparation of music educators. To address this neglect we need to understand its sources.

In many parts of the world, music education programs are housed within university schools of music, institutions with deep roots in conservatory traditions devoted to developing sophisticated musicianship and refined performing skills—most often, those of Western European art music traditions. Within these settings, presentational performance practices[15] are the ends to which musical instruction is most often devoted. Such practices are also the means by which these ends are typically pursued. That is, the institution exists to advance musical skills and habits of particular kinds; and performance training is the primary approach to developing them. In such contexts music education's status is equated with (even, it often seems, defined by) the musicianship and performing skills of the conservatory system.

Within such systems convictions about the nature of music and the purposes of musical instruction are seldom subjected to scrutiny. Accordingly, critical reflection and philosophical inquiry tend to be regarded as unnecessary, even undesirable diversions from the fundamental business at hand. The institution exists to replicate (to *conserve*) "what is," conferring privilege to those whose actions contribute most promisingly to this function. Because music's nature and value are self-evident, the primary concern is how best to accomplish instructional ends efficiently and effectively. Music education means teaching music (*this* music, to *these* ends) and the point of learning music is to develop musicianship. End of story.

These assumptions isolate music and musicians from broader social, political, and educational concerns, assuring the single-minded pursuit of ends often regarded as intrinsically valuable. The resulting insularity has been a recurrent philosophical concern for thousands of years. Plato, for instance, mounted a blistering attack on the self-centeredness and self-indulgence of musicians who, largely because of the self-centeredness and self-indulgence, were to be banished from his ideal city-state. Many centuries later the problem of musical instruction's sociopolitical insularity remains a significant problem: if not for the preparation of professional performers, certainly for those concerned with the broader aims and processes of musical education. The problem is perpetuated by the unexamined assumption within conservatory-based institutions that *educating in* music is the fundamental point of musical instruction, and that *educating through* music is largely nonmusical.

15 Turino (2008) explores a highly useful distinction between what he calls participatory and presentational performance practices.

Another reason for music education's neglect of philosophy is the profession's methodological obsession. It is considerably easier to build curricula around techniques for transmitting knowledge and developing technical skills than it is to engage in open-ended philosophical pursuits. The resultant how-to curriculum, however, disregards such crucial professional concerns as whether-to, when-to, and to-what-ends-to—questions that distinguish education from training, and professionals from skilled laborers. The costs of methodolatry[16] are profound: methods become substitutes for thought, critical analysis, and transformative agency; theory becomes the opposite of practice; and intentional action is replaced by technical execution. Where the aims of musical instruction are reduced to training and transmission, the profession's claims to educational status are seriously compromised.

At times philosophical practice is its own worst enemy, contributing to its marginal status through language that is needlessly complex and academic. Too often the point of writing philosophy is to establish or advance careers rather than to improve theory, action, and professional practice.[17] The gratuitous use of needlessly complex language results in exclusive, "insider" conversations rather than inclusive professional dialogue. Too often philosophers adopt stylistic mannerisms that obscure rather than clarify meanings, that impede rather than enhance the constructive exchange of ideas. Practices like these create unfortunately exclusionary views of music education philosophy.

Similarly, music education philosophy's historical penchant for universals and absolute truths—its unfortunate predilection for doing others' thinking for them—contributes to its perception as an exclusionary practice. When philosophy becomes dogmatic, losing the conditional or speculative character of theory, its priorities become aligned with the pursuit of authority, power, and influence rather than open inquiry and the improvement of practice. Too often music education philosophy has left the impression that there is little room for new or different views; that its disciplinary boundaries cannot be extended to accommodate new, diverse, or divergent voices, needs, and concerns; or that all questions of importance to the profession have been resolved.

We have asked readers to consider music education philosophy a human practice. Like all human practices, whom it includes and excludes are central concerns that can never be fully resolved. What counts as an instance of philosophical inquiry and where the boundaries are to be drawn—whose issues, concerns, and arguments warrant consideration—are questions with far-reaching implications. To what and to whom should we listen? Whose concerns should be ignored? Which beliefs or

16 The term *methodolatry* has been in circulation since at least the mid-1990s, but music educators may be most familiar with its use by Regelski (2002).

17 As in many other academic fields, there exists in the discipline of music education philosophy a fair amount of what has been aptly called "journal science": scholarship whose purpose is not so much the advancement of important or substantial professional dialogue as getting published for purposes of career advancement.

analyses warrant a central place in the definition of the field, and which are diversions or dead ends?

One way of disposing of such questions is to approach music education philosophy as a discipline whose members are, in virtue of that membership, the field's authorities. But again, such disciplinary specialization exacerbates the isolation and marginalization that concern us here. Philosophy becomes club of sorts, distinguished by concerns, habits, and capacities of little interest to mainstream music educators. Where philosophy is undertaken by and for philosophical insiders, rank-and-file practitioners are relieved of meaningful roles in the process.

Furthermore, most work in music education philosophy—or at least the work that benefits from established networks of production and circulation— has been done by Westerners from "developed" countries. As an unfortunate consequence the cultural frames of reference that inform music education philosophy are predominantly North American and European. As a further consequence, the problems deemed amenable to philosophical inquiry in music education are frequently those of relatively affluent, Western cultures. These exclusionary practices warrant careful attention and strategic remedial action. At the same time, however, the quest for greater inclusivity must be carefully balanced by resistance to irresponsible notions that any and all arguments are philosophically valid; that there are no grounds for distinguishing good philosophy from bad; and that philosophy is the mere expression of opinion (which everyone has, usually in abundance). Balancing cultural and philosophical inclusivity with the clear need for standards of philosophical practice is a daunting challenge for the music education profession.

Advocacy and Philosophy

Were we to base our understanding of music education philosophy primarily on conventional uses of the phrase within the field we might be tempted to equate it with music education advocacy: a tool for rationalizing and affirming the integrity of current instructional practices; a tool for persuasion, intended primarily for uncritical consumption; arguments whose relation to local issues and circumstance requires relatively little in the way of ongoing calibration or recalibration; declarations to be marshalled in unqualified defense of musical experience and instruction. However, these are not among philosophy's primary benefits; and the assumption that they are is yet another reason for its neglect. Philosophy and advocacy are very different undertakings with markedly different aims.[18]

18 Music education philosophers spend a great deal of time thinking and writing and talking about what music is, and what it is "good for." So do advocates. But while advocates and philosophers appear on the surface to be doing the same thing, they're not the same at all. Advocacy is by nature a political undertaking, not a philosophical one. The worth of a

Advocacy arguments require relatively little by way of instructional time or priority because they are not primarily concerned with the complex, dynamic relationships between belief and action, between theory and practice. Whereas philosophy's concerns are critical and transformative by nature, the point of advocacy is to win increased support for what is already being done. Philosophy, we might say, is a catalyst for change while advocacy functions more often to support the status quo.

Historically, music educators have seen philosophy as the practice of formulating rationales, justifications, and defenses of existing practices. Its presumed purpose has more often involved persuading skeptical others of the worth of current arrangements than envisioning other, better ways of doing things. Advocacy is a fundamentally political process, then, whose ends are apparently believed to justify whatever the means necessary to achieve them. While advocacy is useful and sometimes necessary, its unqualified and often extravagant claims compromise processes of critical examination, renewal, growth, and change—processes properly aligned with philosophical inquiry.

No single rationale can account comprehensively for the significance of fields as complex and dynamic as music and education, or accommodate each and every valid instructional priority. It is therefore imperative that individual music educators develop the skills and habits required to devise their own rationales, and to modify them as necessary (and, indeed, to determine when modification is required). How best to harness music's powers and assure its blessings: these are complex questions to which no single answer can be more than temporary, local, and contingent.

Because we have failed to distinguish philosophy from advocacy, music educators have been more concerned with persuading skeptics of the inherent worth and nobility of music—and the unqualified good of teaching it—than with bringing instructional practices into better alignment with diverse and changing educational

philosophical argument is gauged by things like its validity or cogency, whereas the worth of an advocacy argument is gauged by whether it gets one what one wants. A philosophical account of music's nature and value may not necessarily serve the ends of advocacy: it is entirely possible, in fact, for philosophical truths to undermine what advocacy seeks to achieve. Advocates have clear ends in mind and are primarily concerned with persuading others to their points of view—with convincing others of the worth of what they want to do, or are already doing, and with convincing skeptical others that these doings warrant support and resources. Thus, advocates often rule out from the beginning questions, procedures, and observations that may be at odds with existing practices or that might require fundamental change. Because what counts in advocacy is persuasion, it tends to be an "anything-goes," "no-holds-barred" kind of affair in which the ends justify whatever it takes to get the job done. In advocacy, promises are often made on which music educators cannot really deliver. Advocacy also often commits us to things we might be able to deliver, but that, as professional music educators, we probably should not. These dangers become all the more worrisome when music educators turn over responsibility to professional persuaders whose interest in our instructional aims is subordinate to their determination to win resources, time, recognition, or whatever is at stake. For a more extended discussion of distinctions between advocacy and philosophy see Bowman 2005b.

needs. From the resultant perspective, philosophy is something to which one turns to justify threatened practices. Since it is not much needed except under conditions of adversity, it can be set aside when things are going well; and if things are not going well we can draw upon an arsenal of claims prepared for us by people who specialize in such things. In this way, philosophy is reduced to a commodity for optional and hopefully infrequent consumption by practitioners. And in this way, theory and practice become mutually exclusive concerns rather than complementary and indispensable dimensions of professional practice.

Rather than designing claims to glorify past achievements and preserve the status quo, music education philosophy's great professional promise lies in its service to unforeseeable future circumstances: in its capacity to transform beliefs and practices to serve human needs and interests that are ever evolving. As we have suggested, then, what distinguishes philosophical inquiry is not final answers but promising questions. And the capacity to formulate such questions stems from traits like curiosity, imagination, adaptability, critical awareness, and courage—traits that can and must be nurtured if philosophy is to fulfill its potentials.

Conclusions

The primary reason for philosophy's marginal status in music education is our failure to demand the right things of it. Where we have not held music education philosophy accountable for the goods it should deliver, its marginal status is hardly surprising. In this chapter we have argued that music education philosophy should not be regarded as a mere commodity, prepared by philosophical specialists for consumption and use by rank-and-file practitioners. It is, rather, a shared professional responsibility in which all music educators must be conversant. Philosophical habits and assumptions influence virtually every decision, choice, and action music educators make—matters that are far too diverse and important to leave to others to decide for us.

The "nerve" uniting music education philosophy, we have suggested, is commitment to systematically exploring the grounds for our beliefs and actions as music education professionals: to critically examining what we think and do, to whom, for whom, when, and why. Participation in this process is a fundamental obligation of all who teach music, whether to preschoolers, in public schools, in conservatory master classes, or in retirement homes. Active philosophical engagement is necessary in no small part because music education is not a uniform practice, governed by a single best way of teaching and learning. There is no one best way to be musical, no single thing that music invariably "is," and no rationale for educating musically that trumps all others.

We have said that the philosophical process is at least as important as the products it creates along the way: the journey is often as important as the destination. We

have suggested, too, that there are no fixed ends to which this journey inexorably leads. But—and this point warrants particular emphasis—this does not mean that there are no grounds for weighing the force of competing claims, or that one person's conviction is as useful as another. To say the standards of philosophical inquiry are various and subject to change is not to declare them merely arbitrary. Philosophy is a progressive, evolutionary process: a cumulative practice improved by identifying shortcomings and dead ends—paths pursued that may not be worth pursuing again. To stress the importance of the philosophical process, then, is not to invite the creation of new philosophies ex nihilo or to dismiss past practice as irrelevant and obsolete. These are inappropriate expectations of philosophical practice.

We have argued here that the music education profession significantly underestimates the potential significance of philosophical or theoretical inquiry to its instructional, curricular, and research efforts; and modest expectations invariably yield modest results. Too often music education philosophy is perceived to offer inspiring answers to questions of dubious practical significance. Too often it is regarded as an abstract practice without concrete implications. Too often its substantive disputes are mistaken as mere differences of opinion. Too often it is seen as an introspective, speculative endeavor: a quaint historical predecessor to the rigors of the scientific method.

Notions like these have little to do with philosophical practice and a great deal to do with its misrepresentation, neglect, and abuse. Philosophical inquiry is not (or need not be) dogmatic, doctrinaire, or ideological. It is not (or need not be) more concerned with dispensing answers than with identifying and exploring important practical issues. It is not (or need not be) passive or merely reflective. It is not (or need not be) abstract and detached from concrete, lived realities and concerns. It does not (or it need not) consist primarily of struggles over who is right or wrong. It is, rather, concerned with enabling action that is more ethically responsible, more discerning of potential consequences. Its primary concern is the improvement of professional practice.

Surely, though, philosophy is a distinctive kind of inquiry, a mode of research with unique concerns and methods? It does, after all, involve special skills, insights, and abilities—capacities whose development requires, exactly like music and teaching, many hours of careful practice. Music education philosophy also has its own journals and conferences at which the philosophically inclined congregate to share ideas with each other.[19] Obviously, philosophy is a distinctive mode of inquiry. And yet, despite its potential value to the profession, philosophical expertise in music education is relatively rare. Music education philosophers tend to be autodidacts,

19 These journals and conferences are primarily, it is very important to note, English-language undertakings. There is very little organized discourse on music education philosophy or philosophical issues in music education in non-English-speaking cultures. The difficulties and disadvantages associated with this problem are not restricted to those in non-English-speaking cultures. Indeed, lack of familiarity with philosophical issues in other cultures disadvantages Anglophones as well. For more on this matter, see Vogt 2007.

and courses or programs devoted to the refinement of philosophical skills are not widespread.

We urge that philosophical inquiry become a more prominent curricular concern in music teacher education. Conceiving of philosophy as a discrete research methodology with unique objectives and interests has had the unfortunate result of separating it from other kinds of inquiry and from the practical considerations it exists to serve. We create, in effect, an academic ghetto where those with philosophical predilections can pursue them without troubling the rest of the profession. Where philosophical inquiry is consigned to specialists who prepare it for supposedly nonphilosophical practitioners it becomes effectively quarantined.

Philosophy's potential value to the profession consists, we submit, not in knowledge about philosophers, or in lists of "isms," or in answers to questions whose currency has long since passed. Rather, it is a multipurpose tool whose value depends upon the uses to which we successfully put it; the problems it helps us identify; the unexamined habits it helps us challenge; the ethical discernment it helps us enhance; the imaginative, creative, and critical dispositions it helps us nurture. Among philosophy's most important assets are habits like intellectual curiosity; skepticism toward "common sense" and convention; impatience with unexamined belief; and the pursuit of more imaginative practice. Without these, professional practice atrophies into mere method, the technical pursuit of unexamined ends—guided by taken-for-granted assumptions about "what is" rather than "what should be" or "what might be."[20]

The purpose of philosophical inquiry is not so much "to know" or to discover "truth" as to improve musical teaching and learning by broadening the range of intelligent possibilities at our disposal, and by better harmonizing our professional actions and their consequences.[21] Philosophical knowledge is not a residue left behind once our minds are purged of ignorance; indeed, ignorance is an inescapable part of knowledge—the more we know, the more we recognize we do not know. Things like uncertainty and ambiguity are not contaminants or impediments to knowledge but resources that help us maintain the suppleness required for growth and change. They are grist for the philosophical "mill."

Thus, problems are not inherently negative things to be dispensed with: they may be valuable assets. Philosophical inquiry does not so much solve problems as

20 If the claims we have been making about philosophy's potential are valid, what might its neglect say about the music education profession? Where in music education do we learn what philosophical inquiry entails, or what its potential abuses look like? Where else in music education do we systematically explore the inconvenient and uncomfortable questions that might serve as impetus to meaningful change?

21 To these ends, we believe that rational inquiry and disciplined thought are philosophically essential—as is instruction devoted to nurturing such capacities. At the same time, we need to nurture inclinations to hold beliefs and convictions provisionally and flexibly. This dialectical tension between flexibility and rigor is one of the more interesting and important concerns of a professionally oriented philosophy as we conceive of it.

transform them into other problems, problems that are more compelling, more relevant to practice, richer in implications for action. Philosophy's goal, then, is not to eliminate problems but to clarify, transform, and use them to improve practice. The existence of philosophical problems is not a deplorable situation from which inquiry seeks to deliver us. The resolution of problems is useful and desirable, but for reasons that have nothing to do with their elimination. Philosophical inquiry is a search for better beliefs and more effective action.

As John Dewey famously suggested, to educate is to develop the capacities and inclinations conducive to continued growth: the aim of educational growth is to facilitate further growth. Similarly, a crucial aim of philosophical inquiry in music education is to develop dispositions and habits that favor ongoing growth and change—to nurture the habit of changing habits when circumstances warrant, and the ability to discern when change is desirable or necessary.

The point of philosophical inquiry is not just to analyze habits and practices but to change them, to improve them, assuring that change happens along lines we have anticipated as best we can. Philosophical inquiry should therefore figure centrally among the basic dispositions and fluencies all music educators bring to practice, and should be a capacity we seek to refine throughout our professional careers.

While philosophical inquiry is essential to the improvement of practice, it does not improve educational practice directly. It works indirectly, as Dewey (2008) observed, by expanding the range of possibilities for future actions and decisions—"through the medium," as he put it, "of an altered mental attitude" (15). Philosophical inquiry improves music education by helping us approach problems more intelligently, more imaginatively, more creatively, more flexibly, more rewardingly. It does this not by discovering and dispensing facts but by helping us better understand problems and their significance for action. While philosophical inquiry is a professional imperative, the criteria by which its worth is gauged must remain open, drawn and redrawn in light of the many important uses to which it lends itself.

The question confronting us as music education professionals is not whether to engage in philosophical practice, but in what manner, and how effectively. Like it or not, the pursuit of music teaching as one's life's work situates one amid a host of profound philosophical issues and problems. To commit to philosophical inquiry is simply to acknowledge them and to accept (not so simply) the responsibilities they entail.

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CHAPTER 3

RETHINKING PHILOSOPHY, RE-VIEWING MUSICAL-EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES

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What is the use of studying philosophy if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with some plausibility about some abstruse questions of logic, etc., and if it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life.

Ludwig Wittgenstein*

What is philosophy? In the simplest sense, philosophy is thinking about thinking and action. From this perspective, many people "do philosophy" from time to time as part of their everyday lives. For example, people often puzzle over their decisions,

* *Epigraph.* Quoted by Norman Malcolm in *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 39.

ideas, beliefs, relationships, actions, and the actions of others. Let us call this "everyday philosophy." On another level, some people are inclined (because of an inquisitive or educated disposition) to think often about their lives and actions with care and critical reflection. Let us call this "informal philosophy." Last, there is "Capital-P Philosophy," which manifests itself in two forms: (a) the extremely fine-tuned, logical, and learned analyses published by academic philosophers and (b) the keenly reasoned beliefs that rare individuals communicate not through theoretical writings, but through the critically reflective and purposeful conduct of their admirable lives—through modeling inspiring modes of life in the pursuit of self-knowledge about and for their own and others' well-being.

Capital-P academic philosophers seek to probe and debate the "big issues" of human life. They question unexamined assumptions and unargued opinions through conceptual analyses and logical forms of argumentation and debate. As the Oxford philosopher Anthony Quinton (2009) explains, whereas some people consider the basics of their daily existence, the branch of philosophy called metaphysics replaces casual speculation with rationalized claims about human reality; whereas some people are inclined to doubt their own and others' beliefs, with little idea of what they're doing, epistemology argues and explicates the processes of belief formation; and whereas many people have a sense of what's right and wrong to do in the pursuit of their desires and happiness, the branch of philosophy called ethics attempts to provide systematic principles of moral conduct (702). Overall, then, it might be useful to think of philosophy as a continuum of reflective activity ranging from casual, to serious, to highly disciplined, rational thinking about the nature and validity of ideas, beliefs, actions, and social practices.

Given these explanations, it is not surprising that "philosophy" is a contested concept. Indeed, there is wide debate among professional philosophers about metaphilosophical issues, including questions of the nature and value of philosophy and its proper aims, topics, and methods. These issues, the debates surrounding them, and efforts to explain the nature of philosophy to laypeople are complicated by the fact that, unlike other fields (e.g., sociology, cultural studies, and linguistics), the term *philosophy* is part of everyday public discourse. Thus, many people have a vague or incomplete notion of what philosophy means (e.g., a credo, a mission statement, a modus operandi, a body of "deep thinking") and too few have a clear idea why or how "being philosophical" might be useful. So, while it is true that people do not need Ph.D.s to have "a philosophy of life," knowing how to think critically toward this goal takes more than idle musing.

Clearly, philosophy is not one dimensional. Philosophy is a multidimensional world of concepts, topics, and methods. Accordingly, the best answer to the question "What is philosophy?" probably lies in reading (if not writing) philosophy oneself. This handbook offers many examples. Here we see divergent approaches to philosophy that follow, overlap, or combine a variety of old and new traditions, including (for example) different approaches to analytic philosophy, ordinary language philosophy, quietism, and naturalism.

Analytic philosophy (sometimes called "ideal language philosophy") describes both a movement and a way of doing philosophy that began in England in the early

twentieth century (principally at Oxford and Cambridge) and swept Western universities until the 1960s, when opposing philosophers began challenging its obsessive focus on methodological purity, its abstract language, and its impracticality. That is, while most philosophy is concerned with careful analyses of concepts, definitions, language use, and logical reasoning, analytic philosophers (e.g., Bertrand Russell, Rudolf Carnap) took these concerns to a methodological extreme by unpacking (often by means of symbolic logic) the underlying structures of sentences that express propositions.

Ludwig Wittgenstein's early work followed the form and style of analytic philosophy. Around 1930, however, his concept of philosophy changed radically. In his *Philosophical Investigations* he rejects the extremes and failures of analytic philosophy (including his own) and makes a transition from the "heavy" style of systematic logic to a more concise style that became known as *ordinary language philosophy* (OLP). OLP philosophers (e.g., Wittgenstein, Gilbert Ryle, J. L. Austin, John R. Searle) believe that ordinary language is best for philosophical discourse, and that by examining ordinary language (its forms, functions, and meanings in everyday contexts) and demonstrating how its usage can reveal truths, philosophers can better understand basic problems.

Quietism evolved from Wittgenstein's concern for linking philosophical thinking to the social world and eschewing its "special" languages (e.g., symbolic logic), which quietists view as the source of needless diversions, complications, and confusions. Quietism is not a body of philosophical thought in the traditional sense: it does not aim to develop propositions. Instead, quietist philosophers ask, "Is X a real philosophical or practical problem, or is it simply a pseudo-problem that arises from confused language use or misguided thinking?" Quietists (e.g., Wittgenstein, John McDowell, Alice Crary) question and peel away philosophers' and laypersons' orienting questions, claims, and concerns. They aim to extinguish philosophical fires before they start—to restore intellectual "peace and quiet." In this sense, quietist philosophy is "remedial." Quietists focus on others' use of words to untangle basic confusions caused by weak logic or the "purple prose" that some writers use to merely "sound philosophical." For example, in the process of clarifying several basic concepts and processes, including the nature of the "listening self" and human emotions, this chapter may expose some long-standing pseudo-problems associated with conceiving musical experience in terms of "aesthetic experience" and the "education of feeling."

Naturalism is an umbrella term for a range of philosophical positions. Nevertheless, various naturalist philosophers (e.g., John Dewey, William James, Richard Rorty) tend to agree on certain basic principles. First, naturalists hold that philosophy, properly construed, has no distinctive or "ideal" language or method. Second, they reject traditional philosophers' views of philosophy as a priori theorizing focused on uniquely philosophical problems. Thus, some naturalists draw from, adopt, or work in relation to the methods of various sciences (e.g., neuroscience, psychology) and other fields (e.g., sociology, political science) toward understanding practical problems and the practical outcomes of philosophical claims (Leiter, 2004; Jacobs, 2009). In fact, to an emerging group of "new philosophers," philosophy