

Intersecting Social Justices and Music Education

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Abstract and Keywords

In this chapter, responses to three interrelated questions are sketched: Why should music educators be interested in justice? What is meant by the term “social justice” and what are the sorts of social justice? How should music educators act on behalf of justice? The case is made for a multifaceted view of justice broadly construed. Aspects of distributive justice, communitarian justice, commutative justice, contributive justice, procedural justice, retributive justice, restorative justice, poetic justice, instrumental justice, legal justice, divine justice, and justice viewed through natural law are applied to notions of social justice from the perspective of education and music education. Several practical steps in working against injustice and toward justice in and on behalf of music education are offered.

Keywords: justice, distributive, communitarian, commutative, contributive, procedural, retributive, restorative, poetic, instrumental

THREE interrelated philosophical questions lie at the heart of this chapter: Why should music educators be interested in justice? What is meant by social justice and what are the types of social justice? How should music educators act on behalf of justice? Throughout this chapter, I make the case for a multifaceted view of social justice. I also meld theoretical and practical facets of social justice and sketch some implications for music education theory and practice. Thinking of justice in the plural complicates the analysis; outlining the practical implications of these ideas moves ideas closer to the phenomenal world in which music education transpires. Although I deal with each of these questions in conceptually independent ways, practically speaking, it becomes clear that they intersect.

Why Should Music Educators Be Interested in Justice?

Matters of justice constitute an imperative for music educators for at least four principal reasons. There may be other and more pressing considerations, and I do not claim that

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my list is exhaustive. Still, these reasons seem to be resilient in various communities and cultures and throughout history. Writing against the backdrop of a North American reality, in which music education has been a part of publicly supported education for the greater part of two centuries, it is natural to construe this problem in political and secular terms. In North America, at least, music education is conducted particularly within the aegis of the state and is manifested in its various political institutions. Viewed (p. 8) within a pervasively secular framework, music education has also taken on a humanistic cast (e.g., Mursell, 1934). In the West, it has adopted a democratic and communitarian stance influenced by the ideas of such writers as John Dewey ([1916]1944). In parts of the world, religious, familial, commercial, and artistic institutions are some of the principal means for musical education writ large (Jorgensen, 1997). Even within North America, the private studio, conservatory, and church, as well as informal family and peer instruction in music, remain important ways through which people come to know music. Each of these institutions (and the musical communities that comprise and represent them) has its own value sets, some of which run counter to those of state-supported music education. Among state music educators, different values also obtain, exemplified in various curricula, instructional methods, administrative approaches, and means of teaching and learning. These realities complicate what might otherwise be a too simplistic or facile response to the question of why justice matters to and for music education. As the interests of state-supported music education remain paramount in the profession's consciousness, I begin by addressing the reasons that have the widest currency for music education. Some of the complications and dissonances—when the interests of other societal institutions in matters of justice and music education are taken into account—also become apparent.

First, from antiquity, justice underlies conceptions of humane and civil society. Its reference to conduct that is just, noble, and righteous is premised on particular conduct that is normative and prescribed by systems of rules that govern it. Rooted in mythic and theological ideas, justice is also spelled out in secular notions of how society should be organized and governed (e.g., Plato, 1993). The ancient Greek notion of *paideia* (Jaeger, 1943–1945), the ideal of an educated and cultured citizen, has been rearticulated and defended in our time by writers such as Martha Nussbaum (1997) and applied to educational thought and practice by Mortimer Adler (1982, 1983, 1984), among others. Justice is premised on the reality of pervasive evil-doing, inhumanity, and incivility, and the imperative to delimit and redress them insofar as possible. It both prompts right-doing and punishes evil-doing.

Practically speaking, what is considered to be “right” conduct is framed by those with the power to create and enforce the rules that define it. Societal institutions, whether political, religious, commercial, artistic, or familial, are characterized by different rule sets and power brokers from place to place and time to time. For music educators located within a pervasively political milieu, these rule sets are inscribed in laws and regulations that are enforced by courts (Heimonen, 2002). Each institution has rule sets that possibly conflict with those of other institutions, and these rule sets are contested in the public arena. Conduct valued as “just” or “right” by one institution may not be accepted as “just” or “right” by another. For example, justice conceived in terms of providing a gender-blind

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musical education in state-supported schools may not be acceptable in conservative Islamic, Jewish, or Christian-supported schools. Although they represent Abrahamic faiths, committed alike to broad principles of humanity and civility, their particular theologies give rise to differing conceptions of justice in taking into account gender in music education. All may seek to redress differing evils and point (p. 9) toward various conceptions of righteousness, articulated by the governors of these faith communities and schools. Nevertheless, what one institution may view as just and right may represent for others what is unjust and wrong—this, notwithstanding that all may ascribe to the value of justice in the educational community or society. Music teachers may agree in general terms about the importance of justice as a value underlying humane and civil society, but the particular circumstances in which they do their work are likely to shape the specific ways in which their notions of justice are framed and realized in their musical instruction. While there may be widespread general agreement about the proposition of justice as a basis for humane and civil society, the closer one comes to the ground of music educational practice, the more fraught the problem of what is meant by justice and how it can be achieved practically.

Second, music education is centrally concerned with matters of justice because music education is a facet of cultural and public policy. It constitutes a means of developing dispositions of citizens within a particular society (Arnstine, 1995), recognizing and rectifying evil and wrongdoing and transforming society toward greater civility, humanity, and artistic expression (Jorgensen, 2003). Dewey ([1927]1954) makes the case that communities, institutions, and societies are predicated on the idea that the people who comprise them delegate authority (or it is delegated on their behalf) to those who perform tasks that cannot easily be accomplished by individuals acting alone. Such public actions especially benefit the very young and old, those who are vulnerable in society and may be physically or mentally unable to act on their own behalf, and those who do not possess the education, money, and power to act on their own behalf. This is especially the case in educational and artistic endeavors that often require decision-making on behalf of the collective good (Gingell, 2014). Whether under the aegis of the state, religion, commerce, family, or the music profession, music education lies within the realm of policies or general principles that guide action in regard to which particular musical beliefs and actions are valued as contributors to the well-being of the sponsoring group, community, institution, or society. Music education's value to a particular group is also adjudicated on the basis of its contribution not only to music but to the other beliefs, values, and mores by which this group lives. From the beginning of state-supported music education in the nineteenth century (Woodbridge, 1831), music education has been expected to develop the propensities to act in ways expected of citizens. This expectation has continued as a compelling argument during the twentieth (Mursell, 1934) and into the twenty-first centuries (Jorgensen, 2002, 2003). The same is true of religiously supported music education in the ancient world (Wellesz, 1969), and within the education of Cathedral choristers in the Christian church (Rainbow & Cox, 2006).

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The notion of cultivating dispositions as the end of education admits that education cannot be wholly successful, and that some students may not develop the desirable character traits or ways of living for which educators might hope (Highet, [1950]1955). Being disposed to think and act in particular ways does not mean that one will always do what one wishes one might do or knows one should do. Kant's recognition of human frailty and imperfection aptly suits the human predicament (Berlin, 1990, foreword; Kant, [1784]1923, p. 23). Recognizing and rectifying evil and transforming education and (p. 10) society toward more civility and humanity are contingent and problematic. Practically speaking, much depends on how evil and wrongdoing are defined within the sponsoring groups, communities, institutions, or societies, and the degree to which educators are empowered to solve often intractable problems. The notion of transforming music education is a complex one, depending on what one means by transformation and how it can take place (Jorgensen, 2003). Societally based notions of the particular good and right-doing toward which music education aspires are contested within and outside music education. Even if music educators agree on the particular ends they seek, there is the ever-present problem that they will not do what they believe they should. The notion that one could train music educators to act in particular ways is ultimately fraught and unsuccessful. Donald Arnstine's (1995) more modest project of seeking to develop dispositions to act in ways that improve the situation in education, as well as more broadly in society, is a more realistic plan. This approach admits that one might hope for music educators, as cultural workers (Giroux, [1992]1993), to seek justice. Ultimately, one cannot be assured of success in the project. Transformation from evil-doing to right-action, toward that which is just, is not only relative and contingent but far from assured, even if there is agreement and collective effort in the direction of the particular justice that is sought. My response to this dilemma is that even though this is the case, education remains a hopeful enterprise (Freire, 1994). Albeit an idealistic hope—hope in the face of the prospect of defeat—educational hope still represents a powerful incentive to improve the situation.

Third, justice emphasizes the worth, dignity, and preciousness of individual human beings (Gaita, 2000) and reinforces a sense of self-respect and self-worth in those who pursue and receive it. Thinking of justice in these humane and personal terms brings notions of justice closer to the beliefs and practices of music educators. Music teachers typically think of their work as having to do with valuing all of their students and developing their personal confidence, self-worth, and self-respect. Notwithstanding the different genders, ethnicities, colors, languages, ages, religious affiliations, social classes, and musical proclivities of their students, doing justice necessitates a commitment to all one's students, irrespective of their particular characteristics. Doing justice requires that one regards all people of worth with the same claims to honor, courtesy, and care.

This is more easily said than done because differences between people often prompt bias, suspicion, and hostility. When empathy falters, these biases are caricatured as stereotypes that harden into habits and mores. It then becomes easy to act dismissively, disrespectfully, critically, and thoughtlessly against different others. Carried to an extreme, this behavior may incite injustice and violence. Paulo Freire (1990) points to the tendency for those who once were oppressed, disempowered, and alienated but now come into

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power to act just as those who oppressed them, so ingrained is the “image of the oppressor” in their consciousness and unconsciousness. When people throw off the yoke of oppression, they may act like others did to them; they, in turn, can become oppressors of others who do not agree with them and are reluctant to give up the perquisites of power. Although overcoming these tendencies is a principal educational task, it may not suffice. As Seyla Benhabib (2002) notes, laws may also be needed to (p. 11) settle disputes and enforce a measure of civility and humane conduct. One hopes, like Raymond Gaita (2000), to create the circumstances in which all people will be regarded as precious. Nevertheless, there is the ever present possibility that ingrained cultural and societal habits and norms, and an inability to empathize with different others and to imagine how things might be more humane and civil, stand in the way of realizing this principle.

Fourth, justice assists in negotiating the different perspectives, worldviews, and mindsets that compete for ascendancy, and it seeks to adjudicate conflicts and settle disputes through the exercise of reason, dialogue, and legal intervention (Benhabib, 2002; Morgan & Guilherme, 2014). Music education is centrally concerned with transmitting and transforming a plethora of musical traditions from one generation to the next. Negotiating today’s globally interconnected world of musics poses significant challenges for music teachers and their students. The farther from the students’ musical lives in time and space—the more disparate the musics studied from those they have experienced at home, in their place of worship, on the Internet, or in the live musical performances in which they have participated—the more difficult it is for them to grasp the claims of musics with which they are, as yet, unfamiliar. Musical values sometimes clash or rub up against each other, and each tradition is interested in its own survival. For this reason, the supporters of local musical traditions in the service of nationalistic movements may also resist efforts to introduce students to the musics of other cultures.

Justice, by its appeal to reason, hopes to negotiate the sometimes conflicting claims of this plethora of musical traditions. Paul Woodford (2005) posits that a reasoned approach to music education requires the exercise of critical thinking on the part of music educators and their students in unmasking taken-for-granted assumptions and practices and forging more humane and civil approaches. Such thoughtful approaches may fly in the face of educational and more broadly cultural realities. For example, a backlash against multiculturalism is already evident in some educational circles in the United States. As I write, the “Common Core” movement attempts to standardize certain elite knowledge as normative (Cardany, 2013; Porter, McMaken, Hwang, & Yang, 2011). This approach represents a return to the thinking of writers such as E. D. Hirsch (1987), who sought to define what every American ought to know. Hirsch privileged certain masculine, esoteric, establishment, and Eurocentric knowledge over that which was feminine, popular, accessible, and emanated from the lower social classes and other parts of the world. Educators in some quarters are now lining up uncritically behind notions of the Common Core and are applying it to all aspects of the school curriculum. For music educators desirous of introducing their students to a world of diverse musical traditions, it is now necessary to critique notions of the Common Core while going beyond it. To do this effectively requires a reasoned approach to problems that may be difficult to surmount. Although thinking of

music education in terms of justice offers an important means of carefully evaluating authorized knowledge (Apple, 2000), it cannot hope to be successful within the public sphere in circumstances where music educators are disempowered. In order to effect change, it is necessary for music educators to win (p. 12) wide public support for their positions and act cohesively to insist that their views are heard and valued. Sometimes, it is necessary to ensure change through legal means.

What Is Meant by Social Justice and What Are the Types of Social Justice?

During the past decade, music educators have theorized aspects of social justice (Allsup, 2007, introducing a special issue of *Music Education Research*; Bowman, 2007, introducing an issue of *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*). Cathy Benedict and Patrick Schmidt (2007) are among those to grasp the problematic ways in which the claims of justice have been articulated and applied in the past. My own tack in this present writing is to unpack some of the lenses through which justice has been viewed in order to construe social justice conceptually and to reflect on implications for music education thought and practice.

Among these lenses, social justice can be thought of as a form of what is generally referred to as distributive justice (Allingham, 2014a, 2014b). That is, its focus is upon ensuring the “common good,” or fairly sharing the wealth and benefits of society among all its members. This view of justice has a decidedly economic ring, articulated especially in welfare economics, a field of economic theory concerned with taking account of and attending to the well-being of members of society. John Rawls (1999a) interprets distributive justice broadly to include educational, cultural, political, and legal benefits to which people in democratic societies are entitled. Distributive justice seeks reciprocity between individual and societal rights because of the tensions and conflicts between specific individual needs, wants, and interests and those of the communities of which they are a part. It also concerns matters of access to justice in every area of life. In education, distributive justice has been thought of in terms of rights to schooling (Levine & Bane, 1975). For example, in music education, distributive justice refers to the imperative of ensuring that music education is available equitably and that particular individuals or minorities are not disadvantaged or excluded from instruction. Such a position would require working with students who differ, often markedly, in language, ethnicity, family background, social class, musicality, and musical experience and forging music programs that ensure the benefits of music education irrespective of these differences.

The communitarian purpose of the “common good,” as “justice of the community” or “justice of common welfare,” is emphasized by educational writers such as Dewey ([1916]1944), Maxine Greene (1988), and Parker Palmer (1998). These writers embrace a democratic view of the community as a group of people united around particular beliefs and practices, responsible for their own governance, holding each other in esteem, and (p. 13) acting humanely toward one another. The community is more than the sum of the

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individuals who comprise it. Individuals act not only in their own hedonistic interests but for the benefit of the good to the entire community. Welfare is understood not only to be individual, but collective or common to all those who comprise the community. Justice applies not only to individuals but also to their collective well-being and to the community as a whole. Viewed within this prism, as a music teacher, one would need to think not only of one's self or of each of the individuals who comprise one's class or ensemble, but of the well-being of the entire class or ensemble as a community. Social justice focuses on this collective, communitarian, or common welfare.

Commutative justice may also intersect with social justice. Thomas Aquinas (2013–2014) distinguished distributive and commutative justice in his *Summa theologica* (question 61). By commutative, I mean contractual obligations that exist between individuals, groups, and the societies of which they are a part. For Dewey ([1927]1954), the public has entrusted the work of teaching the young to educational policymakers, administrators, and teachers. By virtue of accepting employment in school districts, teachers are contractually responsible to teach in ways that follow certain rules and regulations. Likewise, the public, politicians, and educational policymakers are responsible for fulfilling their contractual obligations by providing the conditions under which this educational work can be carried on successfully. Too often, these obligations are unmet. When this occurs, social justice insists on their being met. In the United States, for example, the conditions described by Jonathan Kozol (2005) of crumbling schools, unsanitary conditions, inadequate supplies, and unqualified teachers in some schools represent a failure of commutative justice on the part of the public and the school boards that represent them. Social justice can be understood in terms of these contractual matters and the need to ensure that contracts are honored by all the parties to them. Where public commitments are made to music education in schools, it is just as incumbent on the public and its policymakers to provide the resources to accomplish agreed-upon ends and means as it is for music teachers to offer programs that address the means and ends of music instruction for which they have been hired.

Social justice can also be viewed in terms of contributive justice. Contributive justice concerns what people are able to contribute to society, that is, their rights to give to others and the societies of which they are a part. Race remains an important factor in contributive justice in the workplace (Gomberg, 2007; Sayer, 2009). Whereas distributive justice concerns what is given to people, contributive justice focuses on what people give to each other and to their communities. For example, in economic terms, it concerns the rights of people to work; in artistic terms, it relates to the rights of people to create artistic products and engage in artistic activities; in social terms, it concerns the rights of people to marry and raise families. Social justice concerns the rights of women to vote and to contribute economically in ways that, in the past, may have been more stereotypically male. In music education, these gender roles may play out, among other ways, in the rights of females to play musical instruments or assume musical roles typically and historically played by males.

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(p. 14) In terms of procedural justice, social justice focuses on the notion of the process and a sense of fair play whereby individuals and groups interact with each other, according to each other's rights and responsibilities (Rawls, 1971, 1999b). It concerns the means whereby justice is seen to be done in every aspect of life in ways that are transparent to all, and the procedures that are conducted in individual and collective life are understood by all in sharing the goods that society provides. This notion of justice emphasizes process rather than product and means rather than ends. For example, the process whereby music teachers select members of their ensembles is crucial in determining whether or not the teachers' conduct is perceived or understood to be just. Biases have historically been evident to people of differing cultural heritage in race-based admission to educational opportunities. Social justice may involve the effort to clarify the procedures whereby such admission decisions are made. When this is the case, social justice encompasses procedural justice that focuses on the means whereby particular educational ends are reached.

Social justice may sometimes include retributive justice. This view of justice has ancient roots in the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi (ca. 1750 BCE) and Jewish Mosaic Law. In the Law of Moses, for example, punishment is rendered to evil-doers so that they also suffer in an "eye for an eye" and "a tooth for a tooth" (Exodus 21:23; Deuteronomy 19:17–21). Notwithstanding Immanuel Kant's (1795) link between punishment and moral wrongdoing and his argument that those who have done evil to others deserve punishment that is measured and appropriate to the evil they have done, retributive justice may be harsh and vengeful. Penalties are exacted from evil-doers for the purpose of punishing them and causing them sorrow, suffering, and even death. Wishing to see people suffer in return for the evil that they have or are supposed to have done is a common human response. For those who have suffered persecution and oppression, it is difficult to see beyond a desire for their persecutors and oppressors to suffer as they have suffered. Their anger and outrage are understandable. Still, retaliating with hatred can consolidate and perpetuate an inhumane situation; instances of punishment and revenge can spiral, moving outward as they, in turn, consolidate and perpetuate themselves. Throughout history, religious dogma has often not only tolerated but encouraged this view of justice. Too often, education (and music education) has been conducted within an ethic of suffering and retribution. Some administrators, teachers, and students are mean and cruel; they delight in the suffering of others in the misguided belief that this is a necessary part of the educational process. In these and other ways, social justice may be retributive in its desire to punish evil-doers and see them suffer.

Restorative justice as a frame in which to construe social justice focuses on correcting past iniquities and inequities and, insofar as possible, putting right the evil that has been done. In recent decades, this notion has been explored in a variety of contexts, including criminal law, philosophy, and theology (Braithwaite, 1989; Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1982; De Gruchy, 2002; and Govier, 2006). This transformational and redemptive notion of justice assumes that traditional thought and practice concerning individuals and groups may need to be rethought and reworked in order to restore what has been (p. 15) lost to those who have been wronged. For example, Gaita (2000) writes of the need to restore to Abo-

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original peoples of Australia the land, livelihood, and dignity that have been stolen or seized from them. Correcting past abuse, neglect, and ostracism seeks to create a more just reality in which those who have been marginalized or excluded from society are welcomed into it as fully participating and respected citizens. In education, such a view of justice requires the special effort of atonement in order to put things right. Here, since some individuals and groups have suffered injustice in the past, it is necessary to go beyond simply ensuring that all have a fair share of the benefits of society to give special attention to their needs and wants. One is not simply creating “a level playing field,” where all play by the same rules. Rather, realizing the burden of the sins of the past and the vulnerability of those who have not had the same access to education, wealth, security, respect, and love as their more privileged fellows requires “affirmative action.” Here, an effort is made to ensure that minorities and the more vulnerable in society have the support they need to succeed in a world where long-standing biases and stereotypes may make it difficult for them to succeed. For example, music teachers who, in the past, may have been biased toward their white middle-class students would need to reach out to meet the needs and interests of their minority, differently abled, and lower- and under-class students. These efforts may be perceived as privileging their minority students. Still, this is how it will likely be when restorative justice takes hold. Social justice can involve corrective justice when it seeks to put right the evils perpetrated by one group on another. From this perspective, social justice is transformational in seeking to right past wrongs and creating or restoring a more humane and civil society.

Social justice may also be seen as a form of poetic justice (Nussbaum, 1995). Such justice recognizes that doing evil causes harm to the evil-doer. Oppression harms the oppressor as much as the oppressed. Cruelty, violence, incivility, and lack of empathy for those less fortunate than oneself render people less moral, just, and good. In so doing, they are soul-destroying, isolating one from human friendship and love and even psychologically and physically debilitating. In myth and poem, such evil people often come to a bad end. Seen in this way, social justice recognizes the harm done to the perpetrators of evils such as slavery, patriarchy, xenophobia, racism, homophobia, cruelty to animals, and raping the earth. Within the realm of education, bullying and mean-spiritedness do harm to the bullies and the mean people as well as those whom they hurt. For this reason, social justice necessitates making the point that all will be better off in a civil and humane society in which everyone is regarded as precious, worthy of respect, and treated with dignity. When minorities are valued as part of the school community, all its members grow physically and spiritually, and the educational process is enhanced for teachers and students alike.

Instrumental justice as a way of construing social justice views justice as a means to other ends (Mill, [1863]2001; Plato, 1993). Among its purposes, it can promote happiness, facilitate democratic governance, foster peace and tranquility, and ensure the maintenance of societal structures that particularly benefit the society’s establishment and powerful elites. This view of justice is parasitic on the notion of justice as a human (p. 16) creation that, as Plato (1994, book I) has Thasymachus say, can also imply trickery. As such, justice is not always agreed upon by the powerful and powerless alike. It may appear to be

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done, without being actually done to all the people. For example, teachers may invoke justice as a tool to create the appearance of beneficence and care for their students, meanwhile conducting programs that are unjust in the treatment of those who are disadvantaged by this system. Social justice, viewed within this instrumental lens, can serve to create a more humane and collegial educational environment, as it may also perpetuate commitments to justice that are more apparent than real and that benefit some people more than, or to the detriment of, others.

Social justice construed as legal justice concerns the systems of laws, rules, and regulations that protect the individual and the collective rights of members of a society in which a particular legal system prevails. Aristotle (1994–2009, book 5) distinguishes this type of justice from natural justice that he regards as universal. Overlaying the differing legal systems in nation-states is a body of international law that governs relationships among nation-states. Nation-states may or may not agree to be bound by particular principles, treaties, and obligations articulated internationally. For example, the United States is not a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations General Assembly, 1989), and does not regard itself legally bound by this Convention. Aside from precedent, professional and public pressure, or legal protections in the US Constitution, American children do not necessarily have the same legal right to know their own culture (including its music) as children living in other countries covered by this international Convention. If it is the right of every child to know the music of her or his own culture, social justice concerns contesting and possibly reworking the laws, regulations, and conventions that apply to music education in particular states and countries. Such a notion is inevitably fraught with legal and constitutional issues.

Thinking of divine justice in the Abrahamic faiths as a lens through which to view social justice envisages justice as vested ultimately in a deity who commands humans to think and act in particular ways that are considered to be just. In polytheistic religions, the gods share and sometimes contest responsibilities for justice, which is meted out to humans. Plato (1994) saw the gods as possessing the clearest and highest notion of the virtues, and human beings as grasping them less directly, less completely, and more imperfectly. Animistic religions ascribe power to particular beings with supernatural abilities that possess forces of retribution if not appeased. All these religions share the presumption that the divine beings that are worshipped will reward or punish those who follow or depart from particular religious prescriptions and proscriptions. Social justice, in these terms, is addressed within theologies of major faith traditions such as Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism and in assumptions concerning the presence or otherwise of supernatural powers or deities in animistic, humanistic, and atheistic traditions. Systems of belief and practice that have built up around deities that are worshiped or repudiated are also interpreted differently, even within the faiths themselves. This ambiguity gives rise to factions, sects, and denominations that may be hostile to each other. Present denominational conflicts within Islam evoke similar and (p. 17) often violent conflicts within Christianity. For example, in multicultural societies, questions relating to the musical education of Muslim boys and girls who constitute a minority in countries in which Christianity is established, or that of Christian boys and girls who con-

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stitute a minority in countries in which Islam is established, are matters that concern social justice. How social justice should be defined in theological terms, and the extent to which religious accommodations in education need to be made and how, are matters that go to the heart of music education. Believers in the various faith traditions begin their understanding of these matters within the frame of the divine commands or theological beliefs to which they assent.

Social justice is also interpreted in the frame of natural law, the assumption that the right to justice is a human right that is self-evident, and that all people ought to agree with this presumption (Aristotle, 1994–2009, book 5). The Enlightenment writers of the US Constitution could write in sweeping terms: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” (US Congress, 1776). In this view, human rights are universal, trump particular cultural rights, and arbitrate other rights. Where religious and other cultural rights run counter to natural law, they must accommodate to natural law. Viewed within the lens of natural law, music educators interpret social justice as applying universally, equally to musical and educational opportunities for females and males in spite of religious proscriptions and cultural stereotypes. For such music educators, the claims of natural law, envisaged in terms of human rights, transcend all other religious and cultural claims.

Seeing social justice through these various overlapping lenses provides a way of understanding a plethora of intersecting visions of social justice that relate to music education. The difficulties in describing social justice result from the ambiguity of these and other ways in which it can be construed. These types overlap, resonate with, and conflict with others. If one accepts that each frame contributes to the richness and ambiguity of the notion of social justice as it applies to music education, it becomes necessary to adjudicate the claims of these various perspectives. All have to do with aspects of human rights. The claim that human rights trump other cultural rights is a false dichotomy. One’s imagination is shot through with socially and culturally ingrained understandings that shape one’s perceptions of the possibilities of human rights. Just as the architects of the US Constitution could not see the injustice of slavery and the inferior treatment of women in the natural law they espoused in their own time, other blind spots may prevent us from seeing the injustice in ours. This fallibility suggests a more modest position of seeking to do the best one can in the particular situations in which one finds oneself. Such an approach necessitates considering which of these particular approaches to social justice most meet the claims of one’s particular situation and how they should be navigated. This is a situational approach to one’s ethical predicament, but I cannot see a humane way out of it that takes into account all of these nuances (and others besides) and the practical realities in which music teachers work. I caution that these differing perspectives on social justice suggest that one may talk past others without **(p. 18)** hearing them. These differences may be the source of disagreements about what should be done about social justice in music education. So it is important to inquire how music educators should act on behalf of justice.

How Should Music Educators Act on Behalf of Justice?

Thus far, I have unpacked some of the lenses through which social justice should be viewed. This analysis complicates the situation that music educators may face, but it may still not be a sufficiently broad view (Jorgensen, 2007). New frontiers of justice concerning such matters as disability, nationality, and species membership (Nussbaum, 2006) problematize our human and social relationships and advance the claims of the natural world and the plethora of other living things that share our planet. These complications lead me to prefer to think about justice more broadly, notwithstanding the importance of the social considerations to which social justice relates. I would prefer to focus, therefore, on the ways in which music educators may act on behalf of justice. Moving beyond my earlier writing (Jorgensen, 2007), I sketch implications of the various sorts of social justice for music education thought and practice.

Over the years, I have been concerned with the importance of dialogue within a fallibilist perspective as a means of articulating and negotiating differing perspectives (Jorgensen, 2003). When participants remain open to the possibility that they may be wrong, and they regard others' divergent and sometimes conflicting ideas with respect and empathy, it is possible to find common ground in which all may act together in the interest of certain shared interests and values and a humane and civil society. Drawing on Buber's ideas of human interrelationships, Morgan and Guilherme (2014) suggest that dialogue can serve as an important means of conflict resolution. This proposition assumes, like Greene (1995), that mutual respect and civility undergird social interaction, as one would hope they do in decent societies. Although this may be a somewhat idealistic and "improbable" hope (Benedict & Schmidt, 2007), dialogue may fail as a means of adjudicating different perspectives, and legal intervention may be needed (Benhabib, 2002), it can be a useful way in which music educators can think about and through the claims of justice in their particular situations in democratic societies.

In this present writing, I reflect on the implications of the various views on social justice and justice more generally for ways in which music educators ought to act. Among these perspectives, aspects of the distribution of music education across the population are a crucial consideration. Within the United States, for example, it is incumbent upon researchers to ascertain the state of this distribution. In recent decades, notwithstanding the importance for policy decision-making of understanding the specific situations in which music education is conducted, descriptive status studies have been eclipsed by scientific research in music education. The claims of distributive justice would necessitate (p. 19) ascertaining the precise state of the distribution of all aspects of music education, not only within particular schools, local areas, regions, and nation-states, but comparatively and internationally. One would expect such data to include musical, teaching, learning, instruction, curricular, and administrative aspects (Jorgensen, 2011a). With the availability of such comprehensive and systematic data, it should be possible to identify and defend those particular areas and people most in need of various sorts of music education

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and devise, implement, and evaluate plans to remedy shortfalls, wherever they may be. Rescuing status studies from the margins of music education research is an important initiative in thinking distributively about justice for the field's research and practice.

Communitarian notions of social justice focus centrally on ways in which music education serves the common good. The preservation of democratic ideals, while not a perfect political solution, provides one of the most humane approaches to governance of which I am aware. Even totalitarian states understand the power, or even the illusion of power, to shape one's own society. Since democracies are vulnerable to the influence of money and the exercise of power by a few, Dewey ([1916]1944) and R. S. Peters (1966) are among those to emphasize the crucial role of education as a means of cultivating civility, powers of critical thought, and a populace with the capacities and skills to participate fully in their societies. In the United States, at least from the early nineteenth century, publicly supported schools have sought to fill this role. One of the principal aims of music education in this context must be a social one of preparing citizens of a democracy. To this end, David Elliott (2012), Woodford (2005, 2014) and Richard Colwell (2014) variously consider the importance of artistic citizenship as an end of music education. Focusing on citizenship as a music educational aim necessitates planning particular ways in which music education is conducted in order to express this objective. Randall Allsup, Heidi Westerlund, and Lauri Väkevä (Allsup & Westerlund, 2012; Väkevä & Westerlund, 2007; Westerlund, 2002) are among those to reflect critically on the implications of this aim for the practice of music education in publicly supported schools.

Commutative justice in music education concerns at least two different responsibilities: that of music teachers to fulfill their contractual obligations in serving their students and the wider public to which they are responsible; that of the public in providing the resources for teachers to be able to conduct their programs effectively. In the past, music educators have been more inclined to think in terms of their own obligations to their students and to the music profession and less apt to focus on the wider public policy questions concerning the context in which music education is conducted. Professional organizations in the United States such as the National Association for Music Education (along with its predecessors, the Music Supervisors National Conference and the Music Educators National Conference), informal think tanks such as the Mayday Group, and writers such as Charles Fowler (1996) have sought to articulate the responsibilities of public education to cultivate the arts. American music education professional organizations have engaged in political and policy action nationally, have published reports such as *Growing Up Complete: The Imperative for Music Education* (National Commission on Music Education, 1991) and the *National Standards for Arts Education* (Blakeslee, 1994), (p. 20) and have lobbied for educational reforms (Aguilar, 2011). As Aguilar demonstrates, however, in notable instances, this policy decision-making has been uninformed by the extant educational policy decision-making literature. Music teachers in some states have successfully impacted policy changes by virtue of the personal connections established by music and art education leaders with policymakers and the public at large. For example, in Indiana, the Indiana Arts Coalition of stakeholders in the arts and general education (www.inartscoalition.org) is an important advocate for the arts and arts education. My

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sense is that these efforts are crucially important for commutative justice in music education, and policymaking research projects that document successful endeavors need to be emphasized. Research and policy action need to contribute to and reflect the educational policymaking literature, and strong links need to be forged between policymaking research and practice in music education. To some degree, doing this requires subverting the present scientific bias in what is considered “respectable” research in some quarters in music education and plowing the middle ground between research and practice.

Contributive aspects of social justice require that all men and women, boys and girls, of whatever ethnicity, color, language, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and social class, among the many barriers that separate people, are able to contribute musically in the many ways in which they are interested and capable. Too often, music education has privileged males over females at all levels, from elementary to advanced instruction. Stereotypically gendered musical instruments often contribute to difficulties experienced by females who desire to be conductors, composers, and performers of instruments that are considered “masculine.” Throughout history, religious affiliation has prescribed and proscribed particular musical roles for the various genders and has limited the means by which females, those who are differently gendered, and various minority populations can participate musically. In our own time, the provision of gender-restricted musical education in some Cathedral choirs in Church of England, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox Christian traditions and the proscription of mixed-gender music education by some strains of Islam narrow the opportunities for all children to receive musical education. Notwithstanding the contributions of composers such as Hildegard of Bingen (belatedly, a Doctor of the Church) in women’s religious communities, the Western classical tradition still traces a largely masculine history throughout the Middle Ages, when religious music education was in the ascendancy (e.g., Burkholder, Grout, & Palisca, 2010). Papal restrictions on the musical education of girls by men other than immediate family members long limited the opportunities for girls to become professional musicians, and castrati were preferred to women as singers in the Baroque Italian opera. In our own time, the long-standing discomfort and silence of the music education profession on matters concerning differently gendered people and the important barriers in their way was only lately broken at a conference entitled “Establishing Identity: GLBT Studies and Music Education” (2010). Despite the presence of many teachers and students involved in music education who are gender-identified in other ways than heterosexuality, open discussions of these sometimes vexed issues have come only recently to music education. Rather than being (p. 21) marginalized in the profession, as feminism too often has been (Gould, 2011), these and other frontiers of justice need to be at the core of the music education research enterprise and its policymaking practice.

The claims of procedural justice in music education require a careful and critical rethinking of the means and ends of music education. The various means of education, while well-intentioned, may in fact patronize, diminish, and dehumanize people. Carried out under the guise of other social ends, the procedures employed in the selection of musical repertoire, students for particular musical ensembles, instructional methods, and assessment methods may not be as procedurally transparent and even-handed as they need to

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be. I worry, particularly, about the appearance rather than the reality of democratic governance. Invoking allegiance to democratic principles without a corresponding spirit of inclusiveness, mutual respect, and civility can be an evil because it disguises a lack of democracy under the mantle of humane principles. Recent philosophical conversations concerning the operation of instrumental music education have focused on the evils that may be in evidence and the possible goods to which such ensembles may be put (e.g., Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Gould, 2005; Koza, 2005; Tan, 2012). This conversation is important in reminding music educators of the need to critically examine the methods and ends of instrumental music education as it is typically practiced. For me, the truth lies somewhere in the messy ground between the good that can be accomplished through the conduct of instrumental ensembles and the evil that may also lurk. The continuing challenge for instrumental music educators, as all music teachers, is to attempt to rescue the good while also avoiding the evil. It is incumbent on music teachers to decide for themselves where the truth lies in their particular situations. Glossing over the potential problems or viewing the possibilities with rose-tinted glasses are mistaken and simplistic positions. Instead, music education policymakers and teachers need to be comfortable with the problem of a two-edged sword that potentially benefits and harms the work of music education if procedural justice is to be served.

Retributive justice demands a response to evil-doing. It seeks punishment of the evil-doer as a curb on evil. In noting the vexed nature of this view of justice, I have suggested that vengeance is often counterproductive. Punishment may be defensible in some respects and indefensible in others (Jorgensen, 2003). It may be a deterrent to further evil, and it may also contribute to further evil. Music teachers need to weigh their actions in order to determine in their best light what should be the correct course of conduct in a particular situation. It is important for the young to learn the value of discipline and for those who are older to practice it. Still, my sense is that one's conduct needs to be humane and helpful to the student's subsequent growth insofar as possible. As a teacher, I confess to sometimes being at a loss as to what to do. My fallibility means that I do not understand all of the relevant aspects of the situation. I am cognizant of the fact that the aspects that I do not know may be the very ones that may make all of the difference in my interpretation of events. The times when one errs in retributive justice can stick like burrs. They are reminders of the wisdom of a restrained, thoughtful, and careful view of the situations in which one may be tempted to seek retribution as a means of (p. 22) justice. For this reason alone, it is imperative to prepare music teachers as critical and constructive thinkers and doers.

Restorative justice is likewise problematic because of the unintended consequences of actions and changes in the distribution of power. In seeking to restore or ensure justice for those who have been beyond it or on its margins, it is possible to act in ways that have unforeseen effects. This is particularly the case for policymaking that seeks action on behalf of groups and populations. Such actions may also remove advantages from one group in order to bequeath them to another, resulting in shifts in the distribution of power among people. Losing one's privileged status can be painful, just as altering power relations can place unexpected burdens on those who have not been privileged in the past.

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School desegregation during the Civil Rights movement in the United States was intended to help people of color but, instead, placed the greater part of the burden on them. It not only resulted in eventual school re-segregation, but it also impacted the wider society geographically in ways that still disadvantage people of color. Affirmative action measures in university and college admissions became equally vexed as white people resisted real and apparent efforts to privilege people of color. Efforts to restore or ensure justice for all people by privileging those who have been disempowered and treated as of lesser worth need to be thoughtfully and critically undertaken. Importantly, policymakers need to understand that policies are inevitably shortsighted and inadequate; they will need to be revisited critically from time to time and reformulated when change is necessary. Although these decisions are fraught, I see no other alternative than that music educators act hopefully and humanely to improve their situations where they can. When unexpected consequences undoubtedly occur, they require the humility and courage to make the changes deemed necessary according to their best understanding of the circumstances.

Poetic justice relies on the imaginative powers of music teachers and their students. In other writing, I have urged the importance of developing imaginative thought and practice in music education (Jorgensen, 2008). As Greene (1988, 1995) observes, thinking imaginatively is a communal as well as an individual activity. So important is the artistic community to this enterprise that without being present to and within it, one may not imagine how things might be different. Seeing beyond the literal, prosaic, and ordinary to the figurative, artistic, and extraordinary are qualities that need to be emphasized in music education. Simply meeting or even surpassing literal standards, notwithstanding their value, cannot suffice. Rather, music teachers and their students need to experience those consummatory moments that Dewey ([1934]1979) describes as intensely satisfying and gripping, when one is caught up in undergoing the arts while at the same time actively creating them. Such experiences have a quality of what Abraham Maslow (1943, 1968) terms “peak experiences” and “self-actualization,” or Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) describes as “flow,” “optimal experience,” and the sense of effortlessness and fluid and dynamic movement. Whether through literature, visual arts, music, drama, or other fine arts and crafts, as imagination grows, one is better able to imagine difference and divergence and embrace ambiguity. This reality may help to explain why Western philosophers since Plato (1993) have posited that the (p. 23) arts may constitute a means toward moral development. If those involved in music education possess this capacity, even though flawed and certainly not sufficient when taken alone, they may play a role in expressing justice and may be helping others to move toward it.

Construed instrumentally, music teachers may think of social justice as parasitic on other aims. Viewed in this way, social justice does not constitute an end in itself so much as a means to other ends. This notion fits well within the *raison d'être* that music teachers often see for themselves as musicians and educators. As with notions of procedural justice, such a view focuses especially on ensuring congruence between one's beliefs and practices and embodying and living one's convictions about justice in all of one's dealings with others. One not only ascribes to justice, but one loves to live its principles. Although one's primary objective is helping others to come to know music, and through these expe-

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periences, helping them to better understand themselves and their responsibilities to others around them, thinking about social justice instrumentally becomes the “hidden curriculum” of music education, the substrata of all that is done, said, and not done or said. In teacher education, students may come to understand that their work is not only and primarily with the students for whom they have responsibility, or on behalf of musical knowledge as a part of culture, but that the wider impact of their actions is felt throughout the wider society and beyond. As in education more generally, living justice in all of one’s life is far more important than mere assent to its principles. Practically speaking, this is problematic. For example, auditioning students for a jazz combo may seem to be a just way to select students for particular musical and educational experiences. Still, girls and women or those with little previous exposure to jazz may lack the confidence to improvise and can be disadvantaged by the audition process. On the other hand, creating opportunities for auditioned and open entry music ensembles may serve as a just means to accomplish high student morale and a range of educational experiences tailored to needs of a diverse student body.

Legal notions of social justice require music teachers to think of their work and the claims of the laws and regulations that guide their work as crucially important (Heimonen, 2002, 2006). For example, in the United States, the rights of children to know the music of their culture are delimited by a constitutional prohibition on the establishment of religion and legal interpretations of this prohibition. Even the performance of instrumental music with religious title but without religious text is subject to significant restriction in American state-supported schools (Perrine, 2013). The claims of social justice would suggest including and valuing minority religious perspectives in music education within the particular legal frameworks that obtain and seeking to change the laws in these countries where deemed necessary. Should these laws and regulations need to be altered in pursuit of justice, teachers require the skills to effectively forge better laws and regulations. The music profession is fortunate to have in its midst those with legal knowledge and skill. Still, it is tempting for music teachers to rely on others to do this work. Excusing one’s avoidance of such necessarily legal and political policymaking on the grounds that one is primarily an artist and musician cannot suffice. Rather, music teachers are duty-bound to learn how to navigate this territory (p. 24) successfully and to participate actively in the life of the profession in order to help create the kinds of laws and regulations that will best serve the interest of justice. Often, local school authorities and regional, national, and international bodies are reluctant to provide sufficient support for the arts in general education, and it is necessary to mount legal pressure on them to do what they should do or say they believe in doing. Thinking of justice in legal terms requires music teachers to be professionally committed to articulating and defending justice and helping to frame the policies that can best serve their particular situations.

Thinking of the divine role in justice inevitably requires reflecting critically on the role of the religions in music education. In other writing, and drawing on the work of Paul Tillich (1986) especially in regard to the visual arts, I have traced several types of religious experiences in music education, each of which is parasitic on particular theological notions (Jorgensen, 1993, 2011b). Contemporary secularized notions of music education largely

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bypass addressing the theological implications of justice. While music educators have recently explored aspects of spirituality and music education, the international and interdisciplinary conference entitled “Critical Perspectives on Music, Education, and Religion,” sponsored by the University of the Arts, Helsinki, Sibelius Academy Faculty of Music, in August 2014 was a welcome departure. Unpacking these issues as they apply particularly to justice in music education, undertaking research in these areas, and developing practical ways in which to address the religions and music education in the contemporary world lie ahead. This particular view of justice would insist on the importance of such initiatives for music education writ large.

The universal claims of natural law as they apply to music education have prompted music educators to espouse notions that everyone is musical and is entitled to participate actively in music education (Jorgensen, 2004). In recent decades, some philosophers of music education have been inclined to critique claims that music is a universal language and that its values are universal, preferring instead to emphasize the differing and specific practices that may be construed to be music (e.g., Elliott, 1995, 2013). Leonard Tan (2012) has argued, however, for a transnational approach to instrumental music education that grasps the commonalities in different musical traditions between East and West. I am attracted to this view because it explores the middle ground between the extremes of universalism, on the one hand, and extreme relativism, on the other. It suggests that while music teachers need to emphasize the particular and distinctive musics and musical practices, it is also important to mine some of the important commonalities and values that unite them. Recognizing the claims of justice as both universal in certain respects and relative in others puts music education thought and practice near the messy, sensual, and phenomenal world that it concerns while also pointing to widespread human aspirations to create with instruments, dance, song, visual arts, and drama, among a host of other ways, that have to do with the spiritual aspects of experience.

In sum, I have sketched four compelling reasons that music educators need to be concerned about social justice, or justice generally, have outlined various perspectives on or types of social justice as they might apply educationally, and have sketched some (p. 25) implications for music education thought and practice. It is evident that these differing types of, or perspectives on, social justice potentially enrich music education while also challenging its thought and practice. None suffices when taken alone. These ambiguities, tensions, and dissonances complicate and trouble taken-for-granted assumptions of music education. It remains to music education policymakers and those committed to its work to navigate this terrain in ways that make sense in their particular situations. Together, these theoretical and practical initiatives can help secure more just practices of music education.

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