

# CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN CANADIAN MUSIC EDUCATION

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**FOREWORD:** *Questioning Traditional Teaching & Learning in Canadian Music Education*

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## **PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Carol Beynon and Kari Veblen, The University of Western Ontario

**Chapter 1:** *The Roots of Canadian Music Education: Expanding our Understanding*

Elizabeth Hanley, University of Victoria

In this chapter, Betty Hanley considers *the* roots of Canadian music education, ultimately deciding not to attempt to identify them. She explains that, while the endeavour is worthwhile, it is too important to be addressed quickly. Consequently Hanley shows there are multiple ways to conceptualise the roots of Canadian music education. She asserts that history is neither monolithic nor stable, but always responding to current events. Using a number of lenses—events and people, social and cultural thoughts, political issues, and educational thought—Hanley identifies themes to raise important questions.

**Chapter 2:** *Cross-country Check-up: A Survey of Music Education in Canada's Schools*  
Benjamin Bolden, University of Victoria

In this chapter, Bolden summarizes music education across this vast country in one chapter, a seemingly impossible task, yet still one worth attempting to undertake. Music education colleagues from across the country facilitated the writing of this summary chapter by providing written accounts of various aspects of school music education in their provinces and territories. These music educators submitted reports describing music teaching and learning issues, activities, and concerns in their respective regions. Although they were disparate accounts of music education, a number of consistent themes arose, which resulted in the formulation of six guiding questions that provide a general sense of the issues surrounding music education in Canadian schools in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

These are:

1. What music education curriculum is mandated in Canada's schools?
2. What factors inhibit students from experiencing music education in schools?
3. Who teaches music in Canadian schools?
4. How are music teachers trained?
5. How are music teacher supported?
6. What music education initiatives and activities can we celebrate?

**Chapter 3: *Canadian Music in Education: “Sounds Like Canada”***  
Patricia Martin Shand, University of Toronto

In 1961, the Canadian Music Centre began the first project to raise the content of Canadian-composed music as instructional material in Canadian music classes. This chapter outlines several key projects that promote the use Canadian resources, including the John Adaskin Project (JAP). It also explores how successful these programs have been in raising the level of Canadian content in the country’s classrooms. By gathering information from schools across Canada, the authors were able to ascertain that not only are Canadian music and materials close to meeting the 25% of total content mark established by the JAP, but that school teachers are consciously choosing Canadian resources because of the perceived benefits to both the students and the wider artistic community. The author notes, however, that there is still much work to be done if Canadian content is to be seamlessly and effectively integrated into all levels of Canadian music education.

**Chapter 4:** *Manitoba's Success Story: What Constitutes Successful Music Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*

Wayne Bowman, Brandon University

What constitutes success in music education depends on one's understanding of the needs the profession exists to serve; and those needs are not things to which we typically devote a great deal of critical thought. The value of music and the success of musical education depend on the ends they serve: the life-wide and life-long differences they make; the ways they enrich and transform people's lives; the human needs they discernibly serve long after students have left school. What constitutes a quality program or successful instruction cannot be gauged solely or even primarily by criteria internal to school music instruction, as if music education somehow reaches its culmination or expires upon graduation, as if our instructional obligation to students is met in the skills and knowledge we transmit. While Alberta music educators have achieved noteworthy success, we have not asked whether or how our efforts serve the emerging and changing needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century Canadian society. In this chapter, I will comment briefly on the current state of Manitoba music education as illustrated in its elementary general music and school band programs. I single out Manitoba's elementary programs and instrumental music programs to explore issues, challenges, and concerns that apply inclusively to all of school music's disciplinary specialties—and, I suspect, to music education well beyond Manitoba's provincial boundaries.

**Chapter 5: *Traditional Indigenous Knowledge: An Ethnographic Study of Its Application in the Teaching and Learning of Traditional Inuit Drum Dances in Arviat, Nunavut***  
Mary Piercey, Memorial University of Newfoundland

This chapter offers a fascinating portrait of music education in Canada's newest territory, Nunavut. Following recommendations from Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Quitaqliq High School in Arviat hired the author to facilitate *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit*, or traditional indigenous knowledge in music making. Piercey's chapter focuses on the particularity of one teenager's musical experiences for the purposes of exploring her specific struggle with traditional methods of learning music. By building a picture of her specific musical teaching and learning situation from discussions, recollections, disagreements, and musical actions, the effects of resettlement and colonization on educational approaches are made more tangible. More specifically, her stories—and Piercey's own observations—illuminate themes about music transmission and function, relationships with elders, cultural erosion, and community cohesion that are currently topics of discussion and concern in Nunavut.

**Chapter 6:** *Looking Back at Choral Music Education in Canada: A Narrative Perspective*

Carol Beynon, The University of Western Ontario

This chapter explores the implications of Canada's commonwealth/colonized history on school vocal music education. As she progresses from elementary student in rural Ontario in the 1950s, through University, to high school music teacher, to her current position as a Faculty of Education teacher of music education and choral conductor of an elite boy's and men's choir, the author's personal experiences lead the reader on a journey following the changing social status of vocal music in both the school system and among the general public. Ultimately, vocal music programs in Canada are faltering, and music educators must address questions regarding the value of choral music programs, and whether or not choral music would be better sustained in the community rather than in the country's schools.

**Chapter 7: *Re-Membering Bands in North America: Paradoxes and Potentialities***  
Elizabeth Gould, University of Toronto

With this chapter, Gould explores ways in which gender signifies as sites of desire in Canadian and U.S. university and school bands. Remembering bands through their history in Canada and the U.S., as well as her own positive and valued school and community band experiences, Gould examines how they may be re-membered, which is to say, how those participating in bands can be constituted in unexpected and even transgressive ways. A performative construct, gender also implicates sexuality. Gould argues that spaces of and for difference are opened which hold potentialities for significations of gender and sexuality in bands that are decidedly not heterosexual and masculine, and potentially inclusive of all groups. Further, she maintains that it is the unique paradoxical positioning of bands relative to society that creates ruptures in heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity, thus enabling her theoretical construct of *hyper-masculinity*. Beginning with a brief overview of bands in Canada and the U.S. in the context of women's participation, Gould then describes the role of bands in nation-building efforts of both countries. Finally, she addresses paradoxes and potentialities of bands that both destabilize and enable alternative and even dissident subjectivities.

**Chapter 8:** *Community Music Making: Challenging the Stereotypes of Conventional Music Education*

Kari Veblen, The University of Western Ontario

This chapter offers one perspective on lessons that Community Music (CM) offers when considering music education in Canada. Community Music is defined here as music making and education in many contexts, both formal and informal which may exist side by side or interact in a variety of ways. The author suggests that music education is undergoing a transformation as all forms and all interactions of formal/informal/intentional and incidental music making become more recognized and valued. Specific examples of CM projects, programs and schools from every province and territory (most accessible through internet) illustrate the richness and diversity found in Canada.

**Chapter 9:** *Still Wary After All These Years: Popular Music and the School Music Curriculum*

June Countryman, University of Prince Edward Island

Despite the first strong endorsement at the seminal 1967 Tanglewood Symposium to include popular music in the curriculum, many music educators are still hesitant to include this genre of music in their classrooms. This chapter explores four possible reasons for this hesitancy: teacher preparation, identity, performance-based programs, and professional isolation. By overcoming these challenges, music educators can include a genre of music within their classrooms that allows students to find musical meaning and participate critically in a “living tradition” encountered in their everyday lives.

**Chapter 10:** *E-Teaching and Learning in Music Education: A Case Study from Newfoundland and Labrador*

Andrea Rose, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Alex Hickey, Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association

Andrew Mercer, Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation, NL Department of Education

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a descriptive overview of new and emerging technologies in music education currently being used in e-teaching and learning contexts in Newfoundland and Labrador. Because the application of e-teaching and learning in music is still in its nascent stages and remains relatively unstudied in the literature, the purpose of the chapter is to provide a foundational description of current developments. Topics include: historical contexts for the current initiatives in web-based teaching and learning in the music, ongoing developments in e-teaching and learning, emerging questions for research, and potential roles of community partnerships and collaborations.

**Chapter 11:** *Focusing on Critical Practice and Insights in Music Teacher Education Curriculum*

Betty Anne Younker, University of Michigan

The profession of music education encompasses multiple aspects including educating students (1) in school-based settings, (2) in undergraduate programs who will go on to teach in school-based settings, and (3) in graduate programs who currently teach in school-based settings. This chapter is about critical thinking and reflective practice, definitions and characteristics of each, relationships between the two, and applications to students' development as thinking musicians throughout their undergraduate experience, all of which can inform the profession about structure and process of curriculum. With an aim to transform curriculum through the lens of critical thinking and reflective practice, the chapter closes with suggestions for curricular renewal, in terms of structures and process, for undergraduate curriculums in North American schools of music.

**Chapter 12: *Marching to the World Beats: Globalization in the Context of Canadian Music Education***

Carol Beynon, Kari Veblen, The University of Western Ontario

David Elliott, New York University

In this chapter, the authors use two theoretical concepts to begin a discussion and frame the impact of globalization on Canadian music education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—one based in economic theory and the other in sociological cultural theory. Pulitzer Prize winner Friedman’s provocative and controversial book, *The World is Flat: A History of the Twenty-first Century* (2006), is one of the leading academic and professional interpretations of the impact of globalization on our 21<sup>st</sup> century world and frames globalization in economic contexts. Because music is a critical component of culture, the second framework used is Rochon’s seminal work on cultural theory as outlined in his book, *Culture Moves: Ideas, Activism and Changing Values* (1998). The following questions are the foundation of this chapter:

1. What does the term globalization mean in relation to Canadian music education?
2. What will the future hold for music education in Canada in context of the global village?

**Chapter 13:** *Epistemological Spinning: What Do We Really Know about Music Education in Canada?*

Carol Beynon, Kari Veblen & Anne Kinsella, The University of Western Ontario

This chapter addresses how the other authors in this book have comprehensively considered Canadian music education over the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century from several perspectives. In this concluding chapter, the authors explore the ways in which the chapters, in total, are more than the sum of their parts and how they may contribute to a holistic study of music education in Canada and elsewhere. They reflect on one philosopher/artist's depiction of epistemology in order to (1) illustrate the personal nature of epistemological beliefs about music education and (2) provoke readers' personal examination of their own beliefs. To conclude the chapter, the authors layer a methodological framework of critical ethnography over the preceding chapters to analyze and synthesize the rich data and to allow an epistemological model to grow out of the analysis.