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Ch. 15 - In Search of Music Education and Jorgensen's Neoclassicism

Deanne Bogdan

University of Toronto, deanne.bogdan@utoronto.ca

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Section III – Becoming Other Than

Chapter 15

In Search of Music Education and Jorgensen’s Neoclassicism

Deanne Bogdan

University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
deanne.bogdan@utoronto.ca

Abstract

In her landmark book, *In Search of Music Education* (University of Illinois Press, 1997), Estelle R. Jorgensen lays the groundwork for *the philosophy of music education*, of which she is today’s foremost proponent. Decidedly not a “how-to” manual, her book poses difficult questions undergirding a systematic reflection on, first, the nature of *education* (Chapter 1); the nature of *music* (Chapter 2), and the *dialectics and dialogics of music education* (Chapter 3), reconciling the tensions and ambiguities when music and education are combined as an autonomous yet porous discipline. Jorgensen cites John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Maxine Greene, Susanne Langer, Israel Scheffler, and Alfred North Whitehead as her philosophical mentors, but it is Aristotle who is foundational to her analytic method. My chapter offers a close reading of *In Search of Music Education* within the parameters of its Hellenistic roots, specifically Jorgensen’s penchant for taxonomical structures, her embrace of *Gaia* as the hypothesis of universal interconnectedness, and her version of the ancients’ conception of *mousikē technē*, that is, the practice of music as aligned with the humanities. The chapter elaborates salient interrelationships between tenets of Greek aesthetic/poetic/cultural theory and Jorgensen’s attention to such contemporary educational values as interdisciplinarity and education for the common good.

Introduction

In her landmark book, *In Search of*

Music Education, Estelle R. Jorgensen seeks to free the definition of music education from its narrow confines as just “music in

elementary and secondary schools.”¹ In three densely-packed chapters, the author lays the groundwork for *the philosophy of music education*, of which she is today’s most renowned proponent. Jorgensen’s Preface sets out her objectives: decidedly not a “how-to” teacher manual, the book poses some difficult questions undergirding a “systematic reflection”² on the nature of *education* (Chapter 1), the nature of *music* (Chapter 2), and the *dialectics of music education* (Chapter 3), the latter chapter purporting to reconcile the inherent tensions and ambiguities when music and education are combined as an autonomous yet porous discipline.

I see this early work as metonymic of and foundational to Jorgensen’s entire oeuvre in that it is here that she amalgamates two discrete areas of study, philosophy and music education, into an academic compendium that is both theoretically original and practically beneficial to music educators. My intention is to use *In Search of Music Education* as the basis for elaborating the evolution of Jorgensen’s philosophical thinking on music and education as her “world in a grain of sand,”³ so to speak. My method follows Jorgensen’s own preferred form of descriptive analysis; accordingly, I approach the volume chapter by chapter. But first, some observations about the book as a whole.

In Search of Music Education recasts thinking about music education within a broad philosophical perspective. Three integrally related essays reveal the scope

and depth of Jorgensen’s *philosophy of music education* as a distinct entity: the *discipline* of the theory and practice of music education. As such, the book is a beacon for music educators at a time when warring factions threaten to propel the field into a state of entropy. While Jorgensen does not promise simple harmony—indeed she consciously complicates the realm of music education—she provides a conceptual framework for pondering and potentially resolving current ideological clashes and methodological differences within music education both in itself and as it radiates outward to cognate disciplines within the arts, the humanities, and social sciences. My treatment of the relationship between Jorgensen’s thought in *In Search of Music Education* and Hellenistic classicism is as follows: Chapter 1, “In Search of Music Education” focuses on *kinds* of music education”; Chapter 2, “Spheres of Musical Validity,” on *values* in music education; and Chapter 3, “A Dialectical View of Music Education,” on *praxis* (pedagogy).

Although Jorgensen explicitly cites such modern educational thinkers as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Maxine Greene, Susanne Langer, Israel Scheffler, and Alfred North Whitehead as her philosophical mentors, her text is replete with ideas rooted in the Hellenistic tradition of Plato and Aristotle, most specifically, in Jorgensen’s penchant for creating thought structures as an integral part of her the schema. Other prominent elements of Greek classicism in *In Search of Music Education* are the embrace of *Gaia* as the hypothesis that “the whole transcends the

sum of its parts”⁴ and her contemporary application of the ancients’ conception of *mousikē technē* as the interdisciplinary practice of music aligned with the humanities and social sciences. Jorgensen’s philosophical method generally is Aristotelian in that it proceeds in definitional terms, the making of distinctions, and the movement from genus to species. Chapters 1 and 2 begin from first principles: that is, they investigate “the nature”⁵ of education (Chapter 1) and of music (Chapter 2) respectively.

Chapter 1 reveals Jorgensen’s architectural brilliance at taxonomies, which calls up Aristotle’s *Poetics* (or *On the Art of Poetry*). Aristotle’s foundational treatise on western aesthetic theory is often mistaken as a guide to writing a tragedy⁶ but is actually a theoretical construct for showing tragedy as a specific kind of *poetry* (here used interchangeably with *literature*). I follow T.S. Dorsch’s translation and edition of this work, which supports the view that the *Poetics* is derived from Aristotle’s philosophical realism, in particular his conception of tragedy as a “representation . . . of action and life”⁷ in terms of his **four causes: material cause, formal cause, efficient cause, and final cause.**⁸ My study is predicated on showing how Jorgensen’s definition of music education is a synoptic, socially-contextual entity constructed within a similar framework. I do not claim that the correspondences drawn between Jorgensen and Aristotle presume anything like a precise mapping on of her philosophy of music education to Aristotle’s metaphysics (or vice versa); rather, my

exploration highlights the classical features of her thought that make up her signal achievement of viewing music education as a discipline with a facticity that is at once non-idealistic and ethically and politically responsible.

Jorgensen and Aristotle’s Four Causes

Recall that Aristotle’s metaphysics posits (in contrast to Plato) that only particular objects have substantive reality. Bringing Plato’s forms “down from heaven to earth, so to speak,” Aristotle asserts that [f]orms are not *apart from* things but *inherent in* them; they are not transcendent, but immanent. . . . [F]orm and matter are not separate, but eternally together; . . . matter combines with the form to constitute individual things. . . . The world of sense, the phenomenal order . . . is the real world, form and matter in one, and the true object of science.⁹

This philosophy of empirical realism is elaborated in the *Physics*, where Aristotle states that “[k]nowledge is the object of our inquiry,” a knowledge to be gained by studying its **four causes**:

*a thing’s **material cause** as the **stuff** out of which it is made, “that out of which a thing comes to be and which persists . . . e.g. the bronze of the statue, the silver of a bowl, and the genera of which the bronze and the silver are species”;

*the **formal cause** as its **shape**, “the form or the archetype, i.e. the definition

of the essence and its genera . . . and the parts in the definition”;

*the **efficient cause** as the **means** through which a thing comes into being or the mode of its **process**, “the primary source of change or rest: e.g. . . . the father is cause of the child”;

* the **final cause** or **purpose** as the sense of end or that for the sake of which a thing is done, e.g. health is the cause of walking about. (“Why is he walking about?’ We say: ‘To be healthy.’)¹⁰ Taken together, all **four causes** conduce to the essence of a thing: the **what (material cause)**, **shape (formal cause)**, **how (efficient cause)**, and the **why or purpose (final cause)** of its existence.

In his *Poetics* Aristotle applies the **four causes** to his definition of tragedy. Dorsch’s edition of the *Poetics* dispels the misconception of Aristotle’s treatise as a manual for writing tragedies, specifically in the way Dorsch divides the various aspects of the arts and poetry into chapters and headings as related to the **four causes**. This edition, titled *On the Art of Poetry*, lays out the *Poetics* as a deductive synthesis of the tragic drama as it directly stems from Aristotle’s metaphysics, and shows how the **causes** are applied, through a system of division and subdivision, first, to distinguishing the imitative arts in general, then to literature, the imitative art consisting of “language” alone,¹¹ and finally, to the art of tragedy itself as a subset of poetry/literature. The arts of poetic imitation, though they have a common **final cause**, which is for each *to be itself*, can be discerned according to their other three

causes or “respects: either in using different media for the representation [their **material cause**], or in representing different things [their **formal cause**], or in representing them in entirely different ways” [their **efficient cause** or **manner** of representation.]¹² *On the Art of Poetry* defines tragedy as a linguistic *genre* — a thing—as one of the arts that can be analyzed logically “in the natural way” according to its “**constituent parts**,” that is, in terms of the **four causes**.¹³

Although the terrain is different, the above sheds light on Jorgensen’s analytic method in *In Search of Music Education*, a book whose author, like Aristotle, knows a priori what is being sought. In Aristotelian terms, the **final cause** of *In Search of Music Education*, as Jorgensen writes at the beginning, is always already present in every line—a “global view of music education” that purports to foster “international cooperation” and that regards music as a “world rather than just as a Western phenomenon.” Rather than following the analytic model of instrumental rationality, Jorgensen adopts “an alternative paradigm” of music education’s theory and practice as inclusive, holistic, contextual, and heterodox, one that invokes the Gaian hypothesis (as mentioned earlier)

that all things on planet earth comprise part of an interconnected dynamic system in delicate balance, where the whole transcends the sum of its parts. . . . [T]his hypothesis . . . [champions] the complementarity of the arts, the validity of nonscientific

ways of knowing, ... the importance of imagination and intuition . . . process as well as product, ... cooperation along with competition, and it suggests that feminine in addition to masculine ways of knowing enhance the richness of human society and personal wellbeing.¹⁴

In Search of Music Education constitutes a finely-calibrated blueprint of music education's properties and practices derived from the practical reality of people making and experiencing music as ways of being in the world. In this regard, Jorgensen's neoclassicism is both postmodern in its complex open-endedness and neo-liberal in its human-centeredness. Jorgensen's "search" for a trans-cultural definition of music education as a self-identifiable discipline, "complete in itself" (akin to Aristotle's conception of tragedy as a genre),¹⁵ but whose core commitment to a socially-committed mandate for music education creates a space in which all **four causes—matter, form, process, and purpose**—coalesce, not as a static entity but as a cohesive, dynamic organism, with overlapping foci often fraught with tensions and ambiguities.

Below I examine all three of Jorgensen's chapters in terms of Aristotle's **efficient cause** because it is **efficient cause** that particularly underscores Jorgensen's general emphasis on music education's **methods**, or the **manner** in which its various forms, its constituent parts, are undertaken. In place of an essentialist approach to her definition, Jorgensen employs an Aristotelian empirical method,

that is, a *description* of the thing itself through the exploration of historically evidence-based conceptions of music education within the context of how real people who make and experience music come to understand what music is. Here the **material cause** of music education and its **efficient cause** coalesce as the **means through which** it is accomplished. In Chapter 1 Jorgensen proceeds from genus to species by enumerating the **manner** in which these practices play out in the real world: "*schooling, training, education, socialization, and enculturation.*"¹⁶ As one division of the **efficient cause**, *training* is "**procedural knowledge**" or "the **methods or ways whereby** a person is taught or learns skills, know-how, or **procedural knowledge**, that is, **how** to do something in contrast to propositional knowledge by which one 'knows that' such-and-such is the case."¹⁷ This discussion of methods then subdivides into "*techniques, modi operandi, rules, canons, procedures, knacks, and even tricks of the trade.*"¹⁸

Jorgensen and John Dewey's Hellenistic Revisionism

My focus on **efficient cause** in Jorgensen's "search" is in keeping with John Dewey's recasting of Aristotle's **four causes** within the context of the rise of modern science. In his *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Dewey argues that Hellenistic philosophy was founded on a hierarchical, "feudal" conception of Being within a "closed universe" characterized by "fixity."¹⁹ Dewey's premise is that social context

substantively impacts philosophical determinations, including the doctrine of the **four causes**. Within an ideational schema in which matter is “obdurate”; and natural law, the ineluctable fulfillment of an invariant, prearranged, finite “hierarchy of Being,”²⁰ **efficient cause** becomes the poor cousin of the other causes. For Dewey, the properties of Hellenistic **efficient cause**, viz. “development, evolution . . . potentiality” cannot point to anything innovative; rather, they robotically follow “that principle in virtue of which the acorn becomes the oak.”²¹ Dewey’s revisionism posits that all this ended with Copernicus and Galileo. In this new, “open,” “infinitely variegated” world, the essence, so to speak, of **efficient cause** “is now a measure of ‘reality’ or energy of being.” Where heretofore we spoke of physical or metaphysical constancy in terms of its “*existence*,” we now speak of “something constant in *function* and operation. One is a form of independent being; the other is a formula of description and calculation of interdependent changes.”²² When the notion of infinite change becomes integral to natural law, the previous hierarchy of the **four causes** is dissolved and thus becomes its own **final cause**; and when **efficient cause** is the constant nature of change as becoming—or Becoming—Becoming becomes, as it were, the new Being. Such a set of conditions is an apt template for Jorgensen’s analytic method in her treatment of “growth” as an aspect of **efficient cause**.

Dewey’s idea that post-Copernican nature, “no longer the slave of metaphysical and theological purpose,” can be “subdued

to human purpose”²³ acts as a serendipitous link to Jorgensen’s interpreting Dewey’s metaphor of growth (which appears under the sub-division *eduction*, that is, “to draw out, elicit, or develop”),²⁴ not as the impersonal process of acorn-to-oak but the result of human intervention, typified by the image of the gardener as a tender of the child, the one who “arranges the conditions in which students, as plants, grow. The same is true . . . of teaching and learning.”²⁵ For Jorgensen, however, the richness of the forgoing image has its drawbacks and deficiencies, for it is too reliant upon what Israel Scheffler calls “vision or insight into meaning” and cannot account for the concepts of “principles” and “reasons.”²⁶ Here, Jorgensen’s Aristotelian formalism comes into play when she warns that the growth metaphor undervalues music as product. So—this “blueprint” of music education is less a map unerringly marking the way than a multi-angled perspective on the journey.

Within Jorgensen’s purview the **efficient cause** of music education both is and is not the whole story; each cause is a discrete aspect of the whole; yet, in the spirit of Gaia, the whole ultimately entails all the causes as more than the sum of its parts. Ironically, the **process** of Jorgensen’s specifying the particular iterations of **efficient cause**, in fact, simultaneously complicates it. Atomizing the description of music education, then, is in inverse relation to the textured denseness of Jorgensen’s rendering “obvious truths” problematical: the more educators are encouraged to

discern the partial value of each of music education's mechanisms and their implications and applications, the less likely that hopes for simple, "clean" resolutions to the many lacunae in the search for music education will be realized.

Throughout her text Jorgensen eschews superficial approaches to problem-solving, as evidenced her treatment of *enculturation*, another species of **efficient cause**. Along with *socialization*, *enculturation* seems promising in its capacity to widen the arena of music education beyond the individualistic biases of western art music in favor of the more inclusive one of world musics. Here, Jorgensen's Aristotelian making of fine discriminations, her "on the one hand," "on the other hand," serves her well. This leads to her ultimately distancing herself from Deweyan naturalism, when she asserts the limits of modeling "educational systems on those of the natural world"²⁷ and embraces the necessity of attending to the sociological dimension of music education. Further unsettling the matter, she summons formalistic concerns when she observes that *socialization* (subdivided into formal and informal modes), albeit a "dynamic, evolving process," cannot account for "music as music."²⁸

What may at first appear to be concentric circles of argument and counter-argument, within Jorgensen's larger view of music education's **final cause**—a comprehensive socially-responsible conception of the discipline in terms of the multifarious ways music is made and

experienced in the world—in fact become rich openings for extending the music educator's mandate. Scrupulous attention to a host of various skills and perspectives, which Jorgensen continually assesses and reassesses, propels her from the idealism of Greek *paideia* and its preoccupation with the cultivation of virtue (which she notes correctly cannot deal with societal repression)²⁹ to ever more multifaceted, integrated modes of musical experience, ranging from choral singing to rock music, all scrutinized according to their respective strengths deemed beneficial yet insufficient in themselves in coming to a univocal, holistic³⁰ definition of music education that might eventuate in what Northrop Frye would have called the "transfer of imaginative energy" from art to life.³¹ By the end of Chapter 1, the problem of "What is music?" is a thorny one, which, Jorgensen warns, will become even more vexatious as she tackles Chapter 2, "Spheres of Musical Validity."

Jorgensen and Plato's Poetics

Jorgensen continues the focus on **efficient cause** in her first section of Chapter 2, "How Spheres of Musical Validity Develop," through her exploration of the chief sources and sites of the **manner** in which people create and experience music. Headings such as "Family," "Religion," "Politics," "Commerce," and "The Music Profession" afford her the broadest possible range of addressing musics, from Canadian folk song to church music to MTV and "the activities of professional musicians."³² It is

here that we notice a palpable shift from the language of Aristotelian *product* to the Deweyan *process*. “The multiple perspectives on music education arising out of the various spheres of musical validity and their associated *developmental processes* suggest the prospect of dialectics between one sphere and another,”³³ along with their attendant tensions, overlaps, and contradictions. In the process of directly asking “What is music?,” Jorgensen acknowledges that she has created a veritable hornet’s nest of problems to be confronted by music educators.³⁴ The cause, I suggest, is that her inquiry into the *nature* of music entails the ethical, social, and political domain through her question, “What are the spheres of musical *validity*?” -- and its Gaianesque conception of musical *value* as not just associated with, but integral to, music itself.

While the autonomy of the artwork afforded by Aristotle’s *Poetics* – completeness in se -- provides a kind of metaphysical guarantee, a causal connection, almost, between aesthetic integrity and art’s value coordinates, on the one hand, and, on the other, what Martha Nussbaum sees as art’s necessary corollary: a liberal education, with “the humanities [as] the core of . . . public culture,”³⁵ Jorgensen’s inquiry into musical value eschews any such quasi-automatic equivalency. Though Jorgensen insists on the distinction between substance and style, she deliberately blurs that distinction through the application of her neo-Deweyan revisionist conflation of **material** and **efficient causes** by way of Charles Ives’s

notion that musical “**substance** is imaginatively grasped in the musical **content**” [**material cause**] and that “**manner**” [**efficient cause**] is indicated in its style. . . . **Substance and manner are inextricably intertwined.**”³⁶ The lynchpin of her argument about musical value in Chapter 2 is her observation that **style or manner** is *bound up with* “social expectations.”³⁷ Herein lies the rub regarding the relativistic relationship between music *qua* music and its social benefit or “validity”: we are now squarely into Plato territory and the problematic of “shared beliefs, opinions, and mores,” both “prescribed and proscribed,”³⁸ upon which the concept of validity is predicated. Once social **processes** are figured into Jorgensen’s search for a socially-committed definition of music education (“musical practice and political life are inextricable”³⁹), we are into the precarious contingency of Plato’s poetics.

Applying Platonic aesthetic/poetic values to the question of musical validity engages the substantive disparity between Plato’s and Aristotle’s metaphysics and how that difference grounds their aesthetics/poetics. In place of Aristotle’s realism -- his belief in the “thingness” of reality -- Plato’s commitment is to the Forms, in all their ghostly abstractness. For Aristotle, the art work (whose **final cause** is the perfection of its **formal cause**)⁴⁰ is its own worldview, with the imagination conceived as a legitimate epistemological tool. Plato, however, allows for no aesthetic “original.” That is, though poetry may aspire to the condition of truth, it can merely be a

“*rhetorical analogue*” or support document to it.⁴¹ I have written elsewhere that Plato’s poetics is informed by his entire philosophical system: metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, psychology, and philosophy of education. . . . His theory of knowledge illustrates how his view of the imagination figures in to his conception of what it means to live the moral life.⁴² Here, imagination is rendered as simple imaging, *eikasia* or illusion occupying the bottom rung in his parable of The Divided Line. Accordingly, the artwork as imitation has no “thingness” but is simply an imitation of an imitation, three removes from upper case Reality -- the Forms of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Much is lost—and deemed to be mistaken—in this transfer of imaginative energy from art to life.⁴³ Except for hymns and encomia to the gods, poetry and music must be cut and pasted, censored, and in some cases even banished from the education curriculum.⁴⁴

Jorgensen is aware of this when she cites Plato’s dictum that “when modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the State always change with them”;⁴⁵ yet the relative ontological stability of the individual work of art for Plato seems comparatively un-worrisome to her, perhaps because she is tacitly cognizant of a Deweyan form of Becoming as Being. Another perspective that might lessen the anxiety about musical/poetic/aesthetic values in Plato is offered by Werner Jaeger, who writes that music and poetry were already reigning supreme in the prevailing pedagogical paradigm of *paideia*, and that Plato’s self-appointed task was to temper

the popular performance of music *qua* music of the time, to tame its excesses, so to speak, since it had become split off from poetry (to which it was then deemed inferior), music having become a “demagogue” of “gushing emotion and exaggerated thrills.”⁴⁶ More to my point, perhaps, is that in terms of the value dimension of the musical work, the *de facto* object of Jorgensen’s investigation is not a monolithic definition of music per se but a contextually-oriented conception of *music education* as a hybrid that takes “music” and “education” as that Gaian compound, in which the two comprise more than the sum of its parts. The sum of its parts, however, raises more questions than it answers. It is in her Chapter 3, “A Dialectical View of Music Education,” that we see the author systematically working through possible resolutions of the anomalies she has thus far so unrelentingly delineated.

Jorgensen and Women Thinkers

Jorgensen claims to have created a kind of “collage of beliefs and practices,”⁴⁷ an apt image for a book that shuns facile answers. Her final chapter continues the theme of **efficient cause** in terms of the **means** of defining music education by pairing poles of interactive modes of conceiving music education as *praxis*, as implementing a multiplicity of methods as to how music education is actually carried out. Again, rather than presenting sets of directives, Jorgensen challenges readers to confront conflicting *modi operandi* by way of arguments and counter-arguments in

pursuit of an Aristotelian golden mean of compromise and balance. Under her *uber* organizational technique of divisions and subdivisions—Musical Form and Content, Great and Little Musical Traditions, Transmission and Transformation, Continuity and Interaction, Making and Receiving, Understanding and Pleasure, Philosophy and Practice—Jorgensen ultimately insists “there is no one high road to music education practice.”⁴⁸ Here, Jorgensen’s schematizing imagination produces an exemplar of her own brand of descriptive, interrogative analytics, in which she constellates contrasting sets of musical values and foci, incorporating a host of multidisciplinary thinkers, among them music educationists, philosophers, sociologists, composers, musicologists, philosophers of education, and critical pedagogues. Constantly alleging that any one musical value or claim to universal significance under consideration is freighted with limitations and contradictions, she presses on, implicitly exhorting music educators to emulate her own participation in the theoretically infinite paradigmatic image of the music practitioner as reflective theorist.

The underlying pattern in Chapter 3 is that of an anatomy of music education as a pulsating organism of historical data, sociological constructs, and pedagogical models, each with its own set of dialectical dualities (not dualisms) continually in flux as interpenetrating cones. This seems as much Deweyan as Hellenistic: curriculum is a process of dynamic experiential learning situations issuing from the interactive

relationship between student and teacher—and beyond—to the larger context of societal and cultural influences, as Jorgensen invites music educators to aspire to the integrity of its author by pursuing their own paths of uncompromising self-scrutiny in their own “search for music education.” Living within dissonance as consonance, then, becomes the overarching challenge for teachers whose professional lives embrace the eye of paradox: refusing to evade the ethical imperative to work for social change, not as idealizing romantics about music’s unconditional transformative powers but as realists practicing what I have called a *poetics of ordinary existence*,⁴⁹ with the life-enhancing properties that music generates in all human beings irrespective of, yet respecting, their situatedness.

In Search of Music Education is a compendium of all **four** of Aristotle’s **causes: material, efficient, formal, final**, in which the argument’s major **means of proceeding, its efficient cause**, invokes a Platonically-inflected, contextually-related, politically-attuned theory of music education for the common good in our increasingly technocratic, pluralistic world. Jorgensen’s neoclassical *dialectics* might even be regarded as a kind of Platonic Dialogue itself, in which readers imagine Socrates’ interlocutors putting (not pitting) this hypothesis with (not against) that one, each voice assessing and reassessing its perspective. We might call this a “*dialogics of dialectics*,” a form of Hellenistic *mousikē technē*, wherein music is aligned with

philosophy and an interdisciplinary array of the humanities and social sciences.⁵⁰

Mousikē technē is a species of liberal education. Babette Babich reminds us that “[f]or Homer, the art of the Muse . . . embraced the broadest range of the fine arts as eloquence and cultivation in general,” and *mousikē technē* was “the practice of music” that specifically “includes philosophy.”⁵¹ Babich espouses a “musical’ reading”⁵² of philosophical texts as a playful activity that must ever remain incomplete. Ongoing process may be less comforting than either theoretical resolution or practical certitude, yet it is just these liminal spaces between music and philosophy that can produce a polyphonic relational engagement of what we might call “embodied praxis”⁵³—where instructors resonate at a cellular level with instruments, texts, and scores, and their students, perpetually work through their self-education. For Babich,

[i]t is music that invites one to think by hearing what is said both in the words and between the lines in the style of expression, attending to the unsaid in what is said at the end of philosophy. . . . The ethical praxis of music in philosophy teaches the heart to listen, . . . by . . . teaching the soul to hearken to the many voices on that day of perfect beauty on which . . . nearly every art of song may be heard.⁵⁴

Philosophy and poetry/music also echo each other in feminist poet Adrienne Rich’s magnificent “Transcendental Etude”: “No one ever told us we had to study our lives . . . we’re forced to begin in the midst of /the hardest movement, the one already sounding as we are born. . . . And yet/it is this we were born to.”⁵⁵ If music and philosophy are forms of practical wisdom, it is through their incarnate interworking that we celebrate Aristotle’s legacy as “a more generous view of the ways in which we come to know ourselves.”⁵⁶ Similarly, it is through a fully engaged (inter)playing in and among multi-disciplines that make up what music educators do, why, and how they do it—the *praxis* of *mousikē technē*—especially in the gaps between resolve and indeterminacy—that they participate in what Jorgensen has called, simply, a “search.” *In Search of Music Education*, then, is an unfinished song with and without words, in which the counterpoint between musical Being and Becoming is “love [of] the questions themselves.”⁵⁷

The above phrase, attributed to poet Rainer Maria Rilke, enjoins students *not* to search for answers, but “to live” [the questions] now,” to “live [their] way into the answer”⁵⁸ by embracing existential uncertainty as a way of being. Jorgensen, again following Dewey, understands that “the quest for certainty” is really humankind’s psychological insecurity “in the midst of a

precarious and hazardous world.”⁵⁹ The core of her neoclassicism is the way her very first book models her identification with the *pre*-Aristotelian pedagogical genre of Socratic dialectic. In refusing *elenchus* or logical refutation, she epitomizes humanist educationists by performing *mousikē technē*,

with all of its attendant indeterminacy. This requires a turning inward that can reject the “certain knowledge” parlayed by the world of standardized “teacher accountability” in favor of “search” as the patient pilgrimage to self-knowledge.

Notes

1 Estelle R. Jorgensen, *In Search of Music Education* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 2.

2 *Ibid.*, xii.

3 See William Blake, “Auguries of Innocence,” *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake*, ed., David V. Erdman, commentary by Harold Bloom. Newly revised edition. (New York: Anchor Books [Penguin], 1965, 1982), 490 (490-493).

4 Jorgensen, 3.

5 *Ibid.*, xii.

6 The *Poetics* “is not a manual for the would-be playwright. Aristotle’s main intention was to describe and define what appeared to have been most effective in the practice of the best playwrights, and to make suggestions about what he regarded as the best procedure. The misconception, ... that he was laying down a set of rules for composition arose with the Renaissance critics.” T. S. Dorsch, Introduction, ed., *Aristotle, Horace, Longinus: Classical Literary Criticism* (trans. and with an Introduction, T.S. Dorsch), (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, Penguin Books, Ltd., 1965), 18.

7 Aristotle, *On the Art of Poetry*, in Dorsch, 39.

8 Throughout my chapter I accent in BOLD words pertaining to Aristotle’s four causes in order to clarify their respective causal interrelationships.

9 Frank Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, rev. ed., Ledger Wood (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1914 [1941], 96 (emphasis original).

10 Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, Vol. I, ed., Jonathan Barnes, Bollingen Series LXXI.2 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 331-332.

11 Aristotle, *On the Art of Poetry*,” in Dorsch, 33.

12 *Ibid.*, 31.

13 *Ibid* (emphasis added).

14 Jorgensen, 3.

15 Aristotle, *On the Art of Poetry*, 39.

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- 16 Jorgensen, 4 (emphasis original).
- 17 Ibid., 8 (emphasis added). Here Jorgensen cites Gilbert Ryle's distinction between procedural and propositional knowledge in his *The Concept of Mind* (New York: Harper and Row, 1949). See Jorgensen, note 20, 97.
- 18 Jorgensen, 8.
- 19 John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (enlarged edition with a new Introduction by the author, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1920), 59, 61.
- 20 Ibid., 59.
- 21 Ibid., 58.
- 22 Ibid., 61 (emphasis original).
- 23 Ibid., 71.
- 24 Jorgensen, 13.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Israel Scheffler, *Reason and Teaching* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973), 76, as cited by Jorgensen, 17.
- 27 Jorgensen, 17.
- 28 Ibid., 18-22.
- 29 Ibid., 23.
- 30 Ibid., 23-27
- 31 Northrop Frye, *The Educated Imagination* (Toronto, ON: Canadian Broadcasting Company Publications, 1963), 55.
- 32 Jorgensen, 45-65.
- 33 Ibid., 68 (emphasis added).
- 34 Ibid., 66.
- 35 Martha C. Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 104.
- 36 Jorgensen, 36 (emphasis added).
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid., 37-38.
- 39 Ibid., 52. See note 45.
- 40 See Dewey, 60.
- 41 Northrop Frye, *The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1971/73), 66 (emphasis original).

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- 42 Deanne Bogdan, *Re-educating the Imagination: Towards a Poetics, Politics, and Pedagogy of Literary Engagement* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1992), 7.
- 43 See Frye, *The Educated Imagination*, 55.
- 44 See Bogdan, 1-20.
- 45 Jorgensen, 52, citing Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (New York: Airmont, 1968), bk.4, par 424.
- 46 Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, trans. Gilbert Highet. Vol. II, *In Search of the Divine Centre* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943), 225. Cf. Bogdan's view that it was not the "abuse" or "excesses" of poetry and music that Plato was against but the sheer force of their intrinsic moving, persuasive, and teaching power. See Deanne Bogdan, "Sidney's Defence of Plato and the 'Lying' Greek Poets: The Argument from Hypothesis," *Classical and Modern Literature: A Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (Fall 1986): 43-54.
- 47 Jorgensen, 66.
- 48 Ibid., 91.
- 49 See Bogdan, *Re-educating the Imagination*, 261-268.
- 50 See Jorgensen, xii.
- 51 Babette E. Babich, "Mousikē Technē: The Philosophical Practice of Music in Plato, Nietzsche, and Heidegger," in Massimo Verdicchio and Robert Burch, eds., *Between Philosophy and Poetry: Writing, Rhythm, History* (New York, London: Continuum, 2002), 172, 171 [171-180]. See also Jorgensen, 101, citing Jaeger.
- 52 Babich, 176.
- 53 See Deanne Bogdan, "Musical Listening and Performance as Embodied Dialogism," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 3-22.
- 54 Babich, 180.
- 55 Adrienne Rich, "Transcendental Etude," in her *Dream of a Common Language, Poems 1974-1977* (New York & London: Norton, 1978), 72-77 (emphasis original).
- 56 Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 390.
- 57 Jorgensen, x.
- 58 Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Random House, 1984), 34-35 (emphasis original), as cited in Mordechai Gordon, "Living the Questions: Rilke's Challenge to our Quest for Certainty," *Educational Theory* 7, no. 1 (2007): 37 [37-52].
- 59 John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* [1929], in *John Dewey: The Later Works, 1929*, vol. 4, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale ILL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), 26, as cited in Gordon, 39.

About the Author

Deanne Bogdan is Professor Emerita, Department of Social Justice Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Her books, published by Heinemann, include *Beyond Communication: Reading Comprehension and Criticism* (1990); *Re-educating the Imagination: Towards a Poetics, Politics, and Pedagogy of Literary Engagement* (1992); and *Constructive Reading: Teaching Beyond Communication* (1993). Bogdan has published in *Educational Theory*, *Educational Studies*, *Journal of Education*, *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, *Journal of Moral Education*, *New Literary History*, and the *Philosophy of Music Education Review*. She is a Fellow of the Philosophy of Education Society and a Delegate to the General Assembly, Modern Language Association of America.

Project Links

This chapter comes from a book titled *The Road Goes Ever On: Estelle Jorgensen's Legacy in Music Education*. The philosophical essays contained within focus on themes that have intrigued Estelle Jorgensen whose forty years of scholarship have strongly influenced music education research and practice: the transformation of music education in public schools; feminist and LGBTQ voices; mentoring; the unfinished search for new ways of seeing, hearing, and doing; multiple and intersecting musical identities; the tension between tradition and change; and activist practice in music education.

The complete book can be found at the following link: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/jorgensen/>