

## **Acceptance Speech by Dr. Estelle Jorgensen 2021 NAFME Senior Researcher Award**

I would like to thank Deb Confredo for her generous introduction and the NAFME National Executive Board and the Society for Research in Music Education for the honor of the 2020 Senior Research award.

I want to especially thank John Kratus, Patricia Shehan Campbell, Peter Webster, Marie McCarthy, Clifford Madsen, and Randall Allsup for their nomination and support. Their groundbreaking contributions have significantly impacted music education. I am fortunate to have had both their friendship and a ringside seat to their moving and shaking the profession over the years. One needs the help of one's friends, and I am thankful for the many colleagues and friends in this country and beyond who have helped envision how things might be different.

Rather than dwell on the darkness of our present pandemic moment and its profound impact on our lives—aspects that I am in process of unraveling, and that my colleagues will doubtless address in a future issue of the *Philosophy of Music Education Review*—my purpose today is to take the long view in what I have entitled: “Reflections on a Scholar’s Life in Music Education.”

### **“How is a person to live a balanced, productive, and joyous life as a scholar of music education?”**

I address four values that are at the heart of scholarship in music education: scholarly publication, scholarly teaching, scholarly service, and scholarly change. Although these values represent what Donald Kennedy thinks of more broadly as academic duties, I consider them specifically as pertaining to scholarship and within the frame of one's life as a researcher in music education. Here, I sketch aspects of this quartet of scholarly values that emerge out of my reflection on decades devoted to scholarship.

#### **Scholarly Publication**

Randall Allsup and Cathy Benedict (2019) think of my published work as evidence of a journey, or in Tolkien vein, as a “road” that “goes ever on.” I love this metaphor of the quest, as a never-ending journey throughout life in which more and more questions beckon. The notion of scholarship as organic, based upon questions that may change along the way, means that its fruits are yet more questions that may be more important than the answers derived at the end of each investigation.

For me, the most important thing a scholar can find is a truly generative question about which one is passionate. Each question then leads to even more questions. There is never an end to these questions. I regret that too many music education researchers do not persist in scholarship but are drawn into editorial tasks, professional service, and administrative work that remove them from active scholarship. We need more researchers who remain active scholars over their entire working lives and beyond. Their examples of devotion to scholarship light the path for researchers who come after them as each generation shows the way for the next.

It takes time for a philosopher to find her voice. Rather than rush my dissertation, written to pass muster among a committee comprised entirely of men, into a published philosophy of music education critical of the status quo, I first set about discovering my own voice. For the better part of two decades, I published an array of articles on subjects in which I was interested. By my first book, *In Search of Music Education*, my ideas had matured. Rather than write a book that covered the whole of music education and that I would need to spend the rest of my life defending, I decided to tackle just one question at a time. The first was: What is meant by the term “music education”? This is a crucial albeit problematic definitional question upon which the edifice of music education rests. In subsequent books, I moved on to consider other questions, in turn. Throughout this process, I learned the wisdom of slowness, sustainability, patience, and allowing for the passage of time.

It is sometimes challenging for young scholars starting out to find a home for their articles. Many are under the pressure of external expectations and often in too much of a hurry to publish their work. Placing their articles is especially difficult for those whose scholarship is at the margins of established traditions exemplified in the profession’s research journals. Early on, the theoretical and philosophical essays I wished to publish did not “fit” neatly with established stylistic expectations and the interests and expertise of editorial boards and reviewers in leading empirically oriented music education journals.

I determined that if my own experience was on the mark and if philosophy is to flourish in music education research, a refereed journal devoted to philosophical scholarship and drawing on the expertise of professional philosophers was required. It was also necessary to establish and foster a philosophical community that this journal might support and whose scholarship it might disseminate. The development of philosophical inquiry in music education during the past three decades illustrates the importance of specialized research journals and communities in fostering scholarship in music education, especially in those areas beyond the expertise and interest of the profession’s established journals.

As scholars, we are bound to tell the truth as we come to know it. It is difficult to do this when one is young and inexperienced and when the critique one wishes to bring threatens those whose lives and careers are invested in certain ideas and ways of doing things. As a junior scholar, one’s vulnerability and dependence on more experienced and powerful others require one to be especially careful when speaking truth to power.

I came of age in the academy at a time of rampant educational positivism in which philosophy was often disparaged as “armchair speculation.” Although the conflict in my doctoral committee over whether I would be permitted to undertake a theoretical dissertation was resolved in favor of theory, I immediately faced a dilemma in my first research presentation in music education when I sought to offer a critique of positivism in the field’s scholarship of the time. I cast my critique in dialectical vein as a quarrel between positivism and phenomenology to make space for philosophy at the table of music education research.

It must have been difficult for those in my audience who had spent a lifetime following positivistic principles to hear the tenets on which their work relied roundly critiqued. Still, their support and encouragement of my commitment to philosophy, and fidelity to their tradition, speak to the importance of cultivating and practicing generosity and humanity in our scholarly conversations as we each seek truth in various ways.

## Scholarly Teaching

As researchers, we are heirs to scholarly traditions bequeathed to us by our teachers, and it is our academic responsibility to pass them on to our students in a better state than we found them. Over my working lifetime, I have seen a broadening and deepening array of traditions in music education research. From a comparatively few iconic representatives of these traditions have burgeoned a host of practitioners of approaches to music education research today. This development is a remarkable achievement for music education research over a period of three generations of researchers and is due largely to an emphasis on scholarly teaching and a practice of drawing from expertise outside the field.

The teaching of scholarship requires a mastery of the beliefs and practices that exponents employ. Music educators have typically focused on inculcating methodical approaches to their work even at the risk of reifying method. Still, method is useful in approaching subjects systematically and practically, and it is natural for this penchant for method to translate into the teaching of scholarship and the inculcation of scholarship in teaching. Over the past decades, I have seen an increasing sophistication in research methods employed in music educational scholarship and a growing integration of research into professionally oriented courses. Researchers now seem generally better read in the scholarship that informs their work than they were when I entered the profession, and young scholars are encouraged to publish early in their careers often before they complete their doctoral degrees.

Mentoring is one of the most effective forms of scholarly teaching. Distinct from other forms of education such as schooling, training, education, socialization, enculturation, and pedagogy, it applies principally to adult learning and serves a supportive or assistive role in providing guidance to those who are living their professional lives. After initial formative induction into scholarship, one has much to learn when confronting the challenges of navigating the lived life of a researcher. Here, it is helpful to turn to a mentor whose wisdom, experience, and expertise in having gone this way before can assist one in avoiding needless perils and selecting those approaches that are likely to lead to the greatest success.

When I began my life as a music education scholar, I did not have a woman mentor. Rather, Jane Roland Martin describes my experience as an immigrant and interloper in music education research. Today, issues relating to gender identity and roles, race, ethnicity, and musical experience confront young scholars as they seek mentors whose life experiences parallel their own. Although I like to think that the research community has become more diverse over my working lifetime, there is still a long way to go. Music education researchers need to represent the diversity of this nation and the world. Accomplishing this objective is a multi-generational task of mentoring a diverse rising cohort of music education researchers.

Exemplification constitutes a powerful form of scholarly teaching. As an exemplar of what it means to live one's life as a scholar, one teaches by what one does and who one is. What does this mean? For a philosopher, books are a means of sustenance and nutrition. Since I must work in broad uninterrupted blocks of time, I found, early on, that I was not productive in my university office. So began a lifetime of dividing my time throughout the week: one part focused on teaching and service at the university; the other centered on work at home in a dedicated study. My students and colleagues need to understand the importance of my being amongst my books and at work on presentations and publications. They need to grasp the draft upon draft in refining an argument, selecting examples, honing sources, and polishing written exposition to effectively convey meaning. If I am to teach scholarship, it is essential to submit my own work

for critical review. Although I still find this experience daunting and I am apprehensive about how each writing will be received, I seek to emulate the selfsame sense of humility, self-reflexivity, persistence, and restless drive to improve exemplified in other scholars who have gone before. The power of their example shines far brighter than their words.

### **Scholarly Service**

Reviewing the work of others constitutes an important means of scholarly service. The peer reviewing process is based on ethical commitments on the part of authors, reviewers, editors, and publishers of research journals and books. These expectations include the duty to ensure that all submissions are read by experts on the subject matter addressed by the author, the process is transparent, conflicts of interest in the assessment of submissions are avoided, and publishers forthrightly issue apologies or retractions should published work be discovered to be fraudulent or incorrect in material ways. The decision to review presumes that one is knowledgeable of this subject matter. Admitting one's limitations is a crucial ethical decision about whether one can do justice to the submission and should therefore review it. One's objective as a reviewer is to give the author an expert and truthful accounting of what one sees in this writing, identify strengths, contributions, mistakes, omissions, or other issues, and suggest ways in which an author may improve this work.

Since a review is a scholarly conversation between reviewer and author, disparaging remarks or ad hominem attacks have no place. Rather, there is a presumption of the academic duties of respect, honesty, and honor on the part of all those involved in the review process. Although it is sometimes necessary to report instances of plagiarism, double publication of the material, and other academic sins, hopefully, these instances are relatively rare and memorable because one does not expect to encounter them.

Editing scholarly journals, essay collections, books, and mediated publications is a challenging and important means of service. Since most music education researchers are essayists, much of the field's scholarship is published as peer reviewed journal articles, in essay collections, and more recently, mediated publications. Despite the selectivity of these compilations, music education research has generally benefitted from editors who have curated research studies. Editors shoulder the final responsibility for accepting submissions for publication after reviewers have completed their work.

Although my editorial purpose is to help authors produce the best work of which they are capable, I am also responsible to ensure the publication of exemplary philosophical scholarship. It is difficult to inform authors that their submissions have not been accepted for publication, but this task is unavoidable. Even in a digital world, not every author can meet publication expectations, and it is necessary to balance one's efforts to improve the quality of submissions with the need to ensure and improve the quality of published work one edits.

Organizing conferences, groups, networks, and other institutional arrangements that facilitate research dissemination, interchange, conversation, and development is a time-consuming yet necessary service to scholarship. Over the past three decades, philosophy of music education has transformed from one preeminent philosophical view into a plethora of different philosophical perspectives with different representatives. This transformation was made possible by the cooperation of philosophers around the world, the organization of national and international conferences, a tradition of mutually respectful discourse, and a journal dedicated to philosophical scholarship. Early on, philosophers rejected the idea of "one philosophy to rule

them all” in favor of developing their own approaches and differing audiences to which their work especially appealed. Despite disagreements along the way, philosophers found ways to keep the community together.

Healthy organizations thrive when communication is open and respectful. Veracity and accountability are important values in private and public speech. A cancel or “call-out” culture in today’s mediated communication ecosphere that Shoshana Zuboff thinks of as “the age of surveillance capitalism,” and fueled by what Sinan Aral calls the “hype machine,” threatens the comity, civility, and cohesiveness of music education (as all) research. It spreads misinformation, exacerbates segmentation, polices language, promotes exclusion, divisiveness, and sectarianism, and punishes and shames those who diverge from accepted speech or conduct.

Loretta Ross resists this cancel and call-out culture and asks: “What if, instead of calling people out, we called them in?” By calling in, rather than public recrimination, she thinks of private communication conducted with love, respect, and hope. As Ross puts it, if people ignore what you say and walk away, “the calling-in practice means you always keep a seat at the table for them if they come back.” As we build and sustain our scholarly organizations and in all our online and face-to-face communication, it is important to resist destructive and inhumane discourse and ensure that our words are truthful, measured, respectful, compassionate, and hopeful.

### **Scholarly Change**

Music education researchers are duty bound to improve the institution of music education research, cultivate the health, happiness, and productivity of its scholars, and contribute to the common good. In his “elegy” on a mendacious, exploitative, inhumane, and miseducative academy, Randall Allsup inveighs against a capitalistic system in need of transformation that has spawned “the eclipse of higher education.”

The present academic situation is stressful, undermines health and wellbeing, and is unsustainable. Over a working lifetime, I have found it difficult to reconcile heavy teaching and service obligations with the claims of scholarship while also achieving a balanced home and social life. It has been necessary to take every possible sabbatical and research leave and sometimes subvert institutional expectations to live a happy and productive life.

Faculty need regular leave for family reasons and re-creation, to undertake research, and retool their skills. It is imperative to foster scholarship that enhances the well-being and happiness of all engaged in it, reimagine and practice humane approaches that exemplify and forward values such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and benefit society at large.

Persistence, especially when accompanied by self-reflexivity, brings growth and change. Critiquing one’s work and never resting on one’s laurels gradually generate improvement as one sharpens one’s skills, broadens one’s outlook, and remains a lover of learning. Growth and change may not be evident as one goes along but they are apparent in retrospect. How does this growth occur?

For a philosopher, it begins by consciously critiquing one’s argument and writing, opening one’s work to editorial scrutiny, and letting one’s writing sit awhile ahead of presentation or submission for publication. It continues through the review process as one seeks to take the best of each reviewer’s insights, examine one’s errors of commission or omission, and regard each critique as an opportunity to do better the next time. It is sometimes necessary to persist despite reviews that may be negative, dismaying, and disheartening. The copyediting

process and review of galley proofs provide further opportunities for self-critique in response to editorial queries. After publication, one rejoices that this is the best one can do currently, moves on to the next project and welcomes criticism and alternative perspectives. One also persists, keeps one's eye on one's own questions, and resists becoming distracted by others' projects or dismayed by their criticisms.

There is no greater incentive to scholarly change than friendship in a research community. Over the past three decades, I have been privileged to participate in international symposia in the philosophy of music education that have attracted philosophers working around the world. These face-to-face meetings in North America and Europe have forged friendships among philosophers and fostered common and divergent understandings of our field. Since philosophers are often the architects and critics of music educational thought in their respective countries and language groups, all benefit from this exchange of views and sharpening and broadening of perspectives.

In mind's eye, at the 11<sup>th</sup> International Symposium for the Philosophy of Music Education held June 7-10, 2017, I see long trestle tables set out along the shoreline of Volos, Greece, from whence Jason set off in search of the golden fleece. Food, beverages, and conversations are shared on this glorious evening—all of it orchestrated and hosted by Panagiotis Kanellopoulos, our symposium site chair, and his colleagues. We have just heard them sing and play some wonderful Greek music, and now it is time to celebrate with conversation, food, drink, and dance. These kinds of convivial occasions and the animated conversations among friends live in memory and sustain our scholarship. They constitute moments to cultivate friendships, find courage to challenge the status quo, celebrate achievements, and dream of future possibilities.

### **In Sum**

Through practicing the values of scholarly publication, scholarly teaching, scholarly service, and scholarly change, it is possible to live balanced, productive, and joyous lives as scholars of music education. We may face challenges and there are sometimes dark times to be endured. Still, over the long haul, this is a wonderful way to be.

As researchers, we have the privilege of discovering ideas and practices that can improve the ways in which people come to know music and thereby help bring joy to others and enrich the communities in which we live and work. Above all, we have an opportunity to play, to do good, and to spend our lives in the company of others who delight in a search for wisdom and truth. We may live life joyfully and productively and leave music education better for our presence and contribution.