

## THE EUREKA MOMENT: EMBRACING THE NEW PARADIGM OF MUSICAL SOUNDS THROUGH ALTERNATIVE PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM IN THE MUSIC CLASSROOM

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**Abstract:** Within seconds of opening the package to a brand new MP3 player, my 8-year-old son installed the batteries, connected his headphones and starting searching for songs. He soon realized that there was no music and said: "Dad, the store ripped us off, they sold us an MP3 player with no music on it." This was a Eureka moment for me when I truly realized that a major paradigm shift in music listening had transpired -- a new digital paradigm where musical sounds are expected to be ubiquitous and gratis. This principal aim of this article, therefore, is threefold: (a) to highlight the new paradigm of musical sounds rooted in the new age of digital music, (b) to contend that the new paradigm requires alternative approaches to pedagogy in the music classroom embedded in the principles of holistic and democratic education, and (c) to encourage music teachers to adopt alternative curriculum methods entrenched in the new paradigm. Prior to addressing these issues, however, a contextual and theoretical framework that explores the relationship between sound and music is provided.

### Introduction: Contextual and Theoretical Framework of Sound and Music

The boundary between sound and music has been debated amongst musicians, composers, and music scholars for many decades. Let us first examine John Cage's definition of music: "Music is sounds, sounds around us whether we're in or out of concert halls -- see Thoreau" (as cited in Schafer, 1986, p.96). Cage's reference was to *Walden*, a book written by Henry David Thoreau in 1854, which details Thoreau's two-year experience of relative isolation in a log cabin he built near Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. Thoreau discovered that nature provided him with continuous musical entertainment, such as the sound of birds, crickets, and the rustling of leaves in the wind. Contrary to Cage, however, is Clifton (1983) who argued that sound--including sound found in nature--is not music. Bowman (1998) summed up Clifton's argument by stating that "sounds are the materials that bear music then, but music is not reducible to them" (p. 268). In other words, all music is sound, but not all sound is music. The rhetorical question therefore is, where does the boundary lie? According to Bowman (1998), there is no scholarly consensus as to where this boundary lies: "The distinction between music and noise is always a socio-cultural achievement, and rarely is there consensus over where the border between the two should be drawn"(p.245). Bowman, however, obviously sided with

Clifton and not Cage. He argued that the sounds themselves are not musical, but rather how people produce and employ such sounds:

Music has one irreducible "given": sound. However, the difference between sounds that are musical and sounds that are not can never be determined by attending to the sounds themselves. It is what people do by making and using sound that musical universals should be sought. (p. 245)

Moreover, much of Bowman's philosophy regarding this matter comes from musicologist Jean-Jacques Nattiez (1990) who argued that music is culturally defined. It is one's culture and personal experience that determine whether or not a sound is musical. Bowman (1998, p. 152) himself stated: "What counts as music or noise cannot be determined without recourse to its cultural situation, the doings that bring it into being and the web of interpretants that make it meaningful." (p. 152)

Bowman's philosophy can be animated through an analysis of film soundtracks, particularly what directors refer to as sound effects. Some sound effects are simply sounds based on the cultural background and experience of most film patrons in Western culture. For instance, many cowboy films often use the sound of a rattlesnake to manifest a perilous predicament. The sound of a rattlesnake on its own is, in my opinion, clearly not music. The sound of a rattlesnake on top of an existing musical sequence, however, may appear more musical, since the rattling sound is somewhat percussive and rhythmical in nature. This scenario is particularly significant for aboriginal inhabitants of the American Southwest, such as the Hopi Indians who often use snake rattles in their own folk music, such as the accompaniment for a rain dance.

Other sound effects, however, are abstract forms of music. For example, if someone falls down a set of stairs, a descending piano line is often used to emphasize the downward motion, particularly if the scene is comical in nature. This piano line is not particularly melodious and therefore is really considered a "sound effect." Yet, the very fact that a piano was used (along with specific musical notes and a distinctive rhythmical pattern) suggests that the piano line is not just a sound effect, but also a form of music. This is a very old idea that stems from the word-painting model first used during the Renaissance era. For example, if the libretto of an opera describes a person ascending to heaven, the accompanying music would also be ascending in melody. Likewise, if the libretto describes being cast into the inferno of hell, the music capitulates through a descending melodic motif. Music, therefore, is very illustrative, which in essence links both senses of sound and sight. Piano players of the silent film era are prime examples of this illustrative component. Ironically, this fundamental component of film scoring, which I call "see with your ears and hear with your eyes," is considered somewhat second rate by modern film composers, known in the industry as "mickeymousing" (Kelleghan, 1996).

In sum, I would like to end this section by echoing the work of Fiske (1993), who argued that humans possess a cognitive mechanism that categorizes nonverbal sounds into "music-intended" and "non-music intended." Fiske referred to this as the "listener-realized tonal-rhythmic order," which is contrived from the listener's social and cultural experiences (p. 63).

### **Musical Experiences: The New Paradigm**

In the mid-eighteenth century pastoral setting of *Walden*, Thoreau argued that music was ubiquitous in the sounds of nature. A century and a half later, most of the world's population live in cities (Knickerbocker, 2007), and I argue that humans are experiencing music through a multitude of ubiquitous digital sounds via cell phones, computers, internet applications, vehicles, television, radio, shopping malls, and even elevators. The most prominent exposure to digital sound, however, is the personal MP3 player. In sum, I contend that music teachers must accept the reality that students of all ages are experiencing music in a vastly different manner than just a generation ago. Live music is basically non-existent in the daily lives of youth because access to recorded music is at its highest point in the annals of human history. Recorded music in digital form therefore, makes up the vast majority of musical experiences for the non-musician general public. In early 2009, Toshiba released a 240 Gigabyte Hard Drive compatible with MP3 devices, which can hold up to 70 thousand songs in the palm of one's hand (Staff, 2010). When I think back to my undergraduate days that would have been approximately seven thousand vinyl albums or a cost of 70 to 105 thousand dollars at ten to 15 dollars per album. Even if I had the money to purchase all of these albums, I would not have had the storage space, or the ability to select one song and play it within seconds. Today, access to music through online file sharing programs is facile and gratuitous in many countries around the world such as Canada, for example, whose federal Supreme Court ruled on June 30, 2004 "that internet service providers are not responsible for paying royalties on music downloaded by users" (CBC News, 2006). Even when it is illegal (such as in the United States), tens of millions of users download music every day, as there is no way to effectively police such a large number of users in a virtual setting. Khan (2009), for example, states that 70 per cent of 15 to 24 year-olds said they don't feel guilty for illegally downloading music, and on average, 43 per cent of the music they owned had not been paid for. This is similar to a study by the University of Hertfordshire where the average MP3 player in the U.K. was deemed to have 48 percent of illegally downloaded tracks (Sabbagh, 2008). Even more staggering is the report issued by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), which indicates that 95 percent of all music downloaded is illegal (Santo, 2009).

How times have indeed changed within one generation. Such a change can be exemplified via my Eureka moment with my 8-year-old son and his MP3 player. The commercial success of MP3

players can be seen in a variety of settings, including people using them in airplanes, public transit, at the workplace, during leisure activities, and even in school cafeterias, hallways, and classrooms. Apart from Thoreau's revelation in *Walden*, live music in the concert hall or village square was virtually the only method of musical experience for the non-musician, general public just over a century ago. The bottom line is that music is expected to be everywhere today, and it is deemed by the new generation to be a free commodity. Moreover, we are consuming music at unprecedented levels, to the point where access to music is almost considered a democratic right, particularly by Western youth who have not experienced a world where remuneration for music is expected. In a digital world, remuneration for something you cannot really feel or touch like a compact disc, cassette tape, or vinyl album, is a hard concept to overcome.

Remakes (2009) discusses the free and ubiquitous nature of music in the new age of the MP3.

Sometimes, I feel the rise of MP3 made music too easy to obtain. Instead of taking time to appreciate good work, we now devour as much as we possibly can. My music collection feels increasingly impersonal, to the point that I have albums I've forgot I downloaded. Sometimes I'll listen to an album I like just once, and never touch it again. Why? Because at any given time, I have about 10-20 other new albums I'm wanting to check out. There's just not enough time to give every album the same attention, and when you try to really get into a handful of albums, you miss out on 100 other new releases (p. 01).

This is similar to Attali's (1985) paradoxical notion that we are silenced or deafened by music because of its ubiquity. Attali argues that this deafening is really a political maneuver to control and manage the masses:

Music is used and produced in the ritual in an attempt to make people *forget* the general violence; in another, it is employed to make people *believe* in the harmony of the world, that there is order in exchange and legitimacy in commercial power; and finally, there is one in which it serves to *silence*, by mass-producing a deafening, syncretic kind of music, and censoring all other human noises. (p. 19)

Moreover, Orłowski (2008) reports that governments prefer the aural fixation the masses have with recorded music since live music (in both large and small venues) incites rebellion and violence and is a threat to the prevention of terrorism. In fact, the U.K. government is taking this threat so seriously that it has recently passed legislation that allows them to cancel a live music event: "A dozen London boroughs have implemented a 'risk assessment' policy for live music that permits the police to ban any live music if they fail to receive personal details from the performers 14 days in advance"

(Orlowski 2008, p.1). This is a real world example of Attali's notion of silencing or deafening the masses for political maneuvering.

Ubiquitous musical experiences in our currently "wired world" are also commonplace in an ancillary context. Lendino (2009), for example, reported that ring tone sales in the US were 550 million dollars in 2008 with Billboard.com keeping a weekly top ten on ringtone downloads in the USA. In a study by Belinkie (1999), 66 percent of college students polled could hum the melody to Super Mario Bros., even though many of them had not played the game for years. In fact, video game soundtrack composition is so serious and respectable that the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) in the USA decided to let interactive games compete in the annual Grammy awards in 2000 (Pidkameny, 2002). Moreover, the astounding success of musical video games such as Guitar Hero, Rock Band, and Wii Music are changing the landscape of musical experiences to a fun and even educational encounter where music itself is the object of the game (Cross, 2009; Downton et al, 2009). On January 22, 2009, The National Association for Music Education in the USA (aka MENC) announced a partnership with Nintendo Corporation to bring Wii Music into American music classrooms (Business Wire, 2009). Moreover, a study by Vitale (2010a) revealed that many pre-service teaching candidates are willing to embrace musical video games in the music classroom as a serious pedagogical tool. In sum, the new paradigm of ubiquitous and gratis music in the digital age is coming at us from a variety of different angles and mediums. I contend that the new paradigm requires alternate pedagogy and curriculum in the public school music classroom.

### **Alternative Pedagogy**

If current musical experiences are rooted in the free and ubiquitous availability of musical sounds, then music education naturally has to follow suit and strive to become more flexible and democratic. For starters, there needs to be more of a mindset or a commitment by the teacher to move away from traditional approaches to teaching. For example, the transmissive, uni-directional approach to teaching (Thomas & McRobbie, 2010; Miller, 1993) still continues to dominate many of the music classrooms that I have observed in the last couple of years, especially in the secondary school instrumental/vocal classroom. In this model of teaching, the teacher is the conductor, s/he instructs from the front of the classroom, and tries to arrange and establish order to produce the most controlled and fluent musical sounds. This technique is imbued with Western music principles that have been around for centuries where the student is considered an empty vessel waiting to be filled with knowledge (Gaetane, 2010). Woodford (2005) eloquently states: "Music classrooms and rehearsal rooms are all too often drab and joyless places in which drill prevails over inquiry and in which students' heads are stuffed with facts." (p. 85) Moreover, the student loses his/her voice in the process,

making traditional forms of music education undemocratic and socially unjust. Bowman (2005) articulates:

Too often, teaching and learning resemble training (or even indoctrination) more than education. The do-it-this-way mode of instruction, in which modeling rightly figures centrally, can, if not carefully monitored, foster critical compliance and nurture dependence rather than the independence and empowerment that are hallmarks of true education. (p. 142)

Alternative methods, rather, approach the process of teaching in a more constructivist and holistic manner. The teacher is not the conductor, but rather an equal performer who performs side-by-side with his/her students. In this setting, the teacher's principal goal is to create a democratic learning environment that stimulates personal growth and social change (Dewey, 1933 and Freire, 1998). Jordan (1999) adeptly states that the ". . . teacher is connected to each member of the community in a direct, one-on-one, eyeball-to-eyeball, soul-to-soul union. Both are equal." (p. 76). This is very similar to native drum circles, for example, where there is no leader and true performance democracy (sometimes referred to as drumocracy) is achieved. In 1991, during testimony before the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging, Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart (2009) stated:

Typically, people gather to drum in drum "circles" with others from the surrounding community. The drum circle offers equality because there is no head or tail. It includes people of all ages. The main objective is to share rhythm and get in tune with each other and themselves -- to form a group consciousness to entrain and resonate. By entrainment, I mean that a new voice, a collective voice, emerges from the group as they drum together.

This democratic approach to teaching music -- where the boundaries of teacher and student are re-drawn and almost eliminated -- is an alternative method that has worked well for me in the past. It requires a confident teacher who is willing to take risks (Christoph and Nystrand 2001, Zamel 2001) and experiment with different pedagogical approaches that move away from traditional Western methods. Ironically, two great products of Western music also realized the limitations and complacency of employing traditional matters. Composer Gustav Mahler (2009) has said: "Tradition is really just complacency and slackness." Arturo Toscanini (2009) echoes a similar sentiment: "Tradition is the last bad performance." In the spirit of Mahler and Toscanini, I also believe that public school music educators that only teach the method and matter of decades gone by are not only complacent and slack, they are also engaging in a bad pedagogical performance. Tradition has a place in our pedagogy and curriculum, but it should not permeate the very foundations of public school



music education, especially in the new digital age of musical ubiquity. Since music education has become far removed from popular culture, scholars in the field have been calling for a complete reformulation of the discipline. Kratus (2005), for example, argues:

Music education has become isolated from the prevailing culture . . . I contend that the long-term problems of music education will not be fixed through improved advocacy of the status quo . . . the product [music education] needs to be reformulated, and this reformulation will almost certainly not come in the form of a new national curriculum or national standards.

Democratic education in the music classroom is also about embracing students' attitude towards music and giving them a voice – the new paradigm. This means respecting the types of musical sounds they listen to, and providing opportunities for students to meaningfully engage in their selected music through listening, analysis, and even performing, if possible. Green (2008, p. 185) asks us to listen to “young people’s voices” and, as music educators, to take “their values and their culture seriously.” Music educators have to be very open-minded about the types of music their students listen to, as the boundary between noise and music is often separated by one generation – the teacher and the student.

Most music educators in public schools across the Western World have few limitations placed upon them when it comes to pedagogic delivery. Despite this wonderful autonomy, teachers tend to teach the same way that they were taught, and this is a dangerous trap that many educators fall into. Specifically, music teachers need to stop placing so much emphasis on reproducing their own music education experiences. What worked in the past doesn't necessarily work in the present. This brings to life the old adage: “If we always do what we always did, we will always get what we always got.” Public school music teachers need to be free, uninhibited, and boundless in their pedagogy, and most importantly, not afraid to make mistakes. Differentiation of instruction plays a significant role in this process. The mantra of differentiation is to “teach all of our students some of the time”, rather than “teach some of our students all of the time” (Tomlinson and McTighe 2006 and Kaplan, Rogers, and Webster 2008). Teaching all of our students some of the time requires a flexible and adaptable music teacher that is not afraid to try different methods of instruction, many of which are rooted in holistic principles. These holistic approaches to teaching not only give our students a voice in the learning process, they also provide an opportunity for the teacher to learn and discover new knowledge and wisdom through communicative learning. According to Mezirow (2000), communicative learning is “what others mean when they communicate with you. This often involves feeling, intentions, values, and moral issues.” For efficacious pedagogy to transpire, it is critical for music teachers to engage in communicative learning with their students. Both teacher and student need to be active participants in

the learning process in order for true transformation to take place. True transformation, therefore, is indicative of authentic learning experiences.

### **Alternative Curriculum**

Alternative curriculum is often ostracized in most public schools, as centralized governments tend to establish general curriculum guidelines and benchmarks. This is why very traditional approaches to curriculum seem to be the norm in the majority of music classrooms that I have observed in the past couple of years in both North America and Western Europe. This is in part due to the mass culture of music publishers who produce thousands of method and technique books, rhythm studies, and band/orchestral/vocal music that address the same curriculum I was exposed to as a high school student in the 1980s! A lot has changed in the last 20-30 years to say the least! I argue, however, that general music curriculum guidelines are open to interpretation and provide many diverse and dynamic opportunities to break away from traditional curriculum. Addressing the musical reality of current public school students -- the new digital paradigm for instance -- not only breaks away from traditional curriculum, but also wins their trust and builds an amicable relationship, a principal tenet of holistic education. This new reality might be imbued in rap, hip-hop, heavy metal, or country to name a few genres. Yet, these genres can be the vehicles to teach a variety of musical elements (the fixed curriculum), such as melody, rhythm, and texture, not to mention that these elements are themselves changing. The concept of melody in a Rap song, for example, is very different from a Puccini opera.

Appealing to the needs of students based on current musical trends and developments (Vitale 2007, 2008) can help bolster music enrollment at the secondary and post-secondary levels (where taking music is usually an option in most schools) and create a dynamic music curriculum that moves away from traditional approaches. Moving away from tradition on some level is critical for growth and sustainability in music education. Mezirow (2000) eloquently summarizes this notion:

If we are unable to understand, we often turn to tradition, thoughtlessly seize explanations by authority figures, or resort to various psychological mechanisms, such as projection and rationalization, to create imaginary meanings (p. 3)

Moreover, many music teachers put too many restrictions and limits on their students. It is important that public school music educators open doors rather than close doors. At the end of the day, it is critical that students have favourable encounters with musical study -- this is the only way to ensure further musical study. Wiggins (2001, p. 114) has stated: "It is important that the experiences



they [students] encounter both establish a basis for further study and invite and intrigue them to be motivated to pursue further study.” Ultimately, music is an art form, and putting restrictions on art contravenes the very definition of the word. Thus, the self-taught musician -- the one that does not know how to read notes but can play his/her instrument -- is often overlooked and even maligned in the music education arena. I know this type of student very well because I was one of them. I learned how to perform on a number of musical instruments by ear, and it was not until I considered studying music at the university level during my senior years of high school that I was obliged to learn “notes on a page.” I would like to quote a scene from the film *Mr. Holland’s Opus* (Nolin, Cort, & Herek 1996) to further elucidate on this matter. In this scene, student Gertrude Lang comes into the music classroom to notify Mr. Holland that she is returning her clarinet and quitting music class because she is frustrated at her inability to play.

Mr. Holland: "Is it any fun" [playing the clarinet]?

Gertrude Lang: [pause] "I wanted it to be."

Mr. Holland: [pause -- slaps his thigh] "You know what we have been doing wrong Miss Lang? We've been playing the notes on the page."

Gertrude Lang: "Well, what else is there to play?"

Mr. Holland: "Well, there's a lot more to music than notes on a page."

Mr. Holland goes on to play a recording of “*Louie Louie*” for Gertrude – a popular song at the time by The Kingsmen – indicating that the band knew nothing about the theoretical constructs of music, but still created something beautiful and fun. In true Hollywood fashion, Mr. Holland gets Gertrude to play from her heart, not the notes on the page, and sure enough -- Gertrude is successful. Perhaps the best “real world” example of this phenomenon is that of The Beatles. Despite being considered as long-haired freaks in their day by the social elite, The Beatles were indeed a fun and beautiful band, captivating an entire generation of youth in the 1960s. In fact, none of the Fab Four knew how to read music (Roberts, 2002). Lack of formal music education, however, did not stop them from being perhaps the best songwriters of the twentieth century and the most influential entity not only in music, but also, in all of pop culture. John Lennon stated: “None of us were technical musicians. None of us could read music. None of us can write it. But as pure musicians, as inspired humans to make noise, we’re as good as anyone.” (Roberts, 2002 p. 22) I find it very interesting that Lennon refers to their music as making “noise”, which always reminds me of my uncle Phillip who (to this very day) refers to the early music of The Beatles as nothing but noise. Once again, the difference between perceived noise and music is imbued in the life experience of the listener and often separated

only by a generation. Even the Vatican officially apologized to The Beatles on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the band's breakup in April, 2010 in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the official newspaper of the Vatican. "Their beautiful melodies, which changed forever pop music and still give us emotions, live on like precious jewels" (Black, 2010, p. 01). This is a far cry from the Vatican's response to The Beatles back in the 1960s, which referred to them as Satanic. In fact, the overall success of The Beatles can be summarized by the over eight thousand books that have been written about them; and as reported by the March 03, 2009 edition of *The Huffington Post*, Liverpool Hope University even offers a graduate degree on the Fab Four. Very impressive indeed for a for a few guys that could not read notes on a page and started out by playing music that was fun, and even to a certain extent, considered noise.

Most current secondary school music students would have a difficult time identifying the names of all four Beatles. But, they certainly know the names of current popular bands and artists such as Coldplay and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Music educators should open a doorway in their classroom for some of these bands and artists and embrace them as part of the curriculum. In fact, it has been my experience that students will be more willing to adopt traditional music curriculum once they have been given a voice and shown genuine and sincere respect for their music.

Musicologists over the last century have branched off into two distinct areas, namely; the Formalists and the Expressionists. The former is rooted in traditional approaches to pedagogy and curriculum, that is, the more one knows about the elements of music -- rhythm, melody, harmony, tone, etc. -- the more enjoyment and appreciation one will have when listening to music (Copland, 1993). The fundamental tenet of the Expressionists, however, is that one's formal musical training (or lack thereof) is not commensurate with the level of enjoyment or appreciation one receives when listening to music (Bartel, 2002). In over a decade of teaching high school music in Toronto, Canada, students take music (an optional subject) because they enjoy music and like the teacher – the "fun factor" that Mr. Holland refers to. Students today enjoy music not because they dissect and scrutinize the elements of music, but because they have a spiritual, emotional, and psychological connection to it. This is especially true during adolescent years where music listening is not only at its peak (Larson, 1995), but is often the most preferred activity. The addiction to music is so great that a large majority of teenagers would rather give up sex for a week rather than their iPods (Khan, 2009).

The formalist and expressionist philosophies in music have been the focal point of much debate in music education research, particularly the latter. Green (2001) offers much in the way of the self-taught musician in the classroom specifically distinguishing between peer-directed learning and group learning. This is similar to the study by Soderman and Folkestad (2004), which shows that the creative

process of making lyrics and composing music in the hip-hop genre are peer-directed and collective in character. Rodriguez (2004) and Green (2008) offer examples and strategies for the teacher's role in such a self-taught and peer-directed classroom environment. A study by Vitale (2010b) has revealed that the vast majority of secondary school, non-music teachers polled had more respect for self-taught musicians than those that were formally trained. Rather ironic considering the academic training and perspective of the participants in this study.

The influence and role of media in the self-taught/informal learning model (expressionist philosophy) cannot be underestimated, particularly since a major source of musical experiences in most Westernized countries are perpetuated by the media. For example, the highest rated television series in the USA for the last few years has been American Idol. Love it or hate it, this is the reality of many vocal music students at the secondary school level in North America. Vocal music teachers can choose to ignore and even malign American Idol, or they can embrace it and make it a part of their pedagogy and curriculum keeping them "in tune" with current trends in the musical arena of our youth. I was teaching a few sections of vocal music at the secondary school level during the first three seasons of American Idol and I was totally awestruck at the level of interest my vocal students had over this TV show. In fact, this attention spilled over into the entire school at large. I had students who had never taken a vocal music course at high school flocking to my room. They were asking questions about signing up for vocal music next semester/year, or just asking if they could sing in the choir. Even if the motivation behind such hysteria was created by a pop culture phenomenon such as American Idol, getting students into the music room -- an optional program -- is the *raison d'être* for every music teacher. Many years later, American Idol is still going strong, still just as powerful and inspiring as in the first few seasons. Somehow, I do not think this is a fad, but rather a manifestation of the new paradigm of music education that is coming our way. Evidence of this is the many spin-off shows such as America's Got Talent or Britain's Got Talent. Who can forget the worldwide hysteria created by Susan Boyle on Britain's Got Talent in the spring of 2009? Susan Boyle became a household name in many countries across the planet, dominating every radio station, television show, and discussion in schools and the workplace. In fact, the astonishing video clip of Susan Boyle generated 100 million hits in the first nine days alone (Van Buskirk, 2009). At the end of the day, a great singing voice truly resonates with the general public! Even vocal music scholars are starting to take note of these popular approaches to singing. Wiggington (2010) argues:

Somewhere outside the classical paradigm of perfect posture, pure vowels, and forward placement exists a vast universe of musicmaking singers. These artists pour their souls into each note, their voices shaking you, moving you to your very core. These singers have never heard of the

zygomatic arch or the ligament vocalis; they have never even considered raising their soft palates. . . Many of them have never had a voice lesson in their lives-and see no reason to. (p. 1)

## Conclusion

If exposure to musical sounds has vastly changed in the last decade, then common sense tells us that music educators must make changes to the way they teach (pedagogy) and what they teach (curriculum). I am not suggesting, however, that all musical pedagogies and curriculum that have worked for generations be eliminated. My aim, rather, is to challenge music teachers to keep up with changes in our society as far as musical experiences are concerned. After all, curriculum is merely a reflection of society (Ross 2000; Hewitt 2006), and current music curriculum should mirror current musical experiences on some level. In sum, change in society equates to change in the methods of our teaching and the matter of what we teach. I urge all music teachers to start making changes -- even if they are subtle -- with regards to pedagogy and curriculum. Music educators need to be in charge of their own destiny and face the new wave of digital musical experiences among them. Remember, music teachers are by and large digital immigrants -- they remember and were schooled in the old paradigm. Current students, however, are digital natives -- they don't know the old paradigm (Prensky, 2001). Even as far back as 2001 (an eon away in the technological world), Marc Prensky stated:

Today's students -- K through college -- represent the first generations to grow up with this new technology. They have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. Today's average college grads have spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not to mention 20,000 hours watching TV). Computer games, email, the Internet, cell phones and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives.

Most importantly, however, is that Prensky (2001, p. 01) makes the argument that technological ubiquity has created students to "think and process information fundamentally differently" and even posits that "our students' brains have physically changed." Such changes necessitate a different approach to pedagogy and curriculum, which is basically the argument of this paper from a music education perspective.

If you have made it this far, some of you reading this article may be of the opinion that now -- more than any other point in the history of music education -- is the time to maintain and sustain traditional approaches to pedagogy and curriculum in the music classroom. I would like to respond by saying that the transition from one musical era to another throughout the annals of music history did

not happen overnight, but rather over a transition period that lasted many years. I believe that we are currently in one of those transition periods within the realm of music and Music Education and none of us have the power to stop or delay the new paradigm. When the current generation of digital immigrants are gone, the new paradigm will be deeply entrenched in music education models. Ultimately, pedagogy and especially curriculum are shaped by culture, not the other way around. Music teachers must learn to go with the flow of this new wave of musical sounds and culture. Yes, we can learn from our past, and to a certain extent, even study our past. The success of our public school music programs, however, lies in the present and in the future. Embrace it, face it, and welcome it – the new paradigm of public school music education is here!

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