

The past in the present: revitalising history in music education

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The author presents an exploration of recent thinking in historiography as a basis for revitalising history in music education. An overview of developments in history and historical research in music education is followed by an examination of metaphors that illuminate the historical process and reflect a postmodern approach to 'doing history'. The author then focuses on two issues that have been central to debate in historiography – history and narrative, and history and memory. She concludes with recommendations for revitalising history and historical research in music education, presented from three perspectives – dispositions towards history in the profession, the content of historical research, and methodological implications of the 'new' history.

The editors' decision to devote an issue of this journal to broadening perspectives in music education is indeed a laudable one. Linking that goal to an interdisciplinary exploration of music teaching and learning intensifies the value of the outcome. Including the discipline of history in such exploration reinstates its foundational role within the field of music education. History is a hybrid discipline and the making of history in music education is an interdisciplinary activity. Furay & Slevouris (1988: 234) write:

History, clearly, is something of an intellectual chameleon. In its attempt to establish solid 'truths' (or at least viable hypotheses) about humans and their world, history shares a good deal with the sciences; as a discipline concerned primarily with women and men as social beings, it shares much with the social sciences; and as a discipline that so often emphasizes telling a story about the past in a literate and engaging fashion, it aspires to the status of an art.

The primary goal of this paper is to broaden perspectives by exploring recent thinking in historiography, and to identify how such thinking can contribute to revitalising history in music education. More specifically, I will provide an overview of how historical research has developed in music education; identify and describe metaphors that I have found useful in articulating the nature of the historical process; present two primary related concepts that have been part of mainstream debate in history in the last four decades; and conclude with recommendations for revitalising history in contemporary music education. Although my primary point of reference is the United States, and to a lesser degree the United Kingdom, my intention is to develop perspectives that will be useful to music educators worldwide.

One of the challenges of doing history in our field is that music educators typically come to historical research with little or no formal training as historians, rather with a

conviction of its value, an interest in the profession's past and a motivation to remember and represent it to themselves and to others, and an informal and intuitive knowledge of the historical process. Additional challenges include having to address an audience ranging from practitioners to educational researchers and historians, and the need to be conversant with such diverse fields as sociology, cultural studies and postmodernist thought, and be capable of using qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (Donato & Lazerson, 2000: 4).

Furthermore, with regard for history low within the profession, a historian may feel under pressure to make historical study relevant in contemporary terms, rather than study the past for its own sake. Concerning this tension, Donato & Lazerson (2000: 4) write: 'In choosing one end of the spectrum, we risk neglect and rejection by the other, and are often seen either as antiquarians irrelevant to the burning educational issues of our times or as "presentists" with little appreciation of the uniqueness of the past.' One could argue that locating oneself at either end of the spectrum is neither necessary nor possible, since the present is an integral part of the study of the past, and inseparable from an understanding of the contemporary world, 'a world that supplies history with its questions and its *raison d'être*' (Furet, 1984: 21–3).

Reflections on the development of historical research in music education

As the field of music education developed in higher education in the twentieth century, the subject of history came to be recognised as a valid form of research, at least in the United Kingdom and the United States (Birge, 1928; Britton, 1958; Heller & Wilson, 1982; Keene, 1982; Leonhard & House, 1959; Mark & Gary, 1992; Rainbow, 1967, 1989, 1990; Simpson, 1976; Sunderman, 1971; Tellstrom, 1971). Its promotion generally was dependent on the interest of individuals rather than on an overall commitment to history by the profession. I refer in particular to the early leadership of Allen Britton in the US (see McCarthy & Wilson, 2001) and Bernarr Rainbow in the UK (see Cox, 2002b).

A dedicated group of music education scholars continued to produce historical research and to develop its profile within the profession in the latter decades of the twentieth century. As Curator of the Historical Center of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), established at the University of Maryland in 1965, Bruce Wilson developed an archive of music education materials which expanded beyond the original collection and is now an invaluable repository for the study of music in Western education (or education systems influenced by the West, e.g. Japan) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The contributions of George Heller, founding editor of the *Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education* (1980–), were significant in providing a forum for historical research and in promoting its study in the United States. The History Special Research Interest Group (HSRIG) within the MENC, founded in 1978, provided yet another forum for the dissemination of research and for discussion of the status and role of historical study in music education.

The path taken by historical study in the United Kingdom was different to that of the United States. Lacking forums similar to the HSRIG or the *Bulletin*, scholars of music education history tended to identify with their counterparts in the history of education,

an interdisciplinary connection that is underdeveloped in the United States. The roots of historical study in the US were grounded in musicology rather than education, and professional activity continued to reside there as the subdiscipline developed. These different pathways attest to the interdisciplinary nature of historical study in music education, drawing from and contributing to the literature in musicology and education respectively in these national settings.

Intellectual developments in the last two to three decades have projected the study of history onto a much broader canvas that embraces greater disciplinary diversity – in its scope and content, its paradigms and methodologies. A distinction between ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ history is necessary at this point. ‘Traditional’ history, associated with the modern period, is characterised by a narrative account of some development or change, description of important individuals and events, and a ‘facts and acts’ approach that focuses primarily on the grand political narrative and that of institutions and large-scale developments. It is perceived as distant and objective, and of no value to educators in our time. The ‘new’ history, associated with postmodernism, is multivocal and multiperspectival, it draws on multiple methodologies, and it is self-critical. It is a living, breathing, dynamic process with emphasis on the life experiences of ordinary people in various social, economic, and cultural contexts.

Due to its expansive interdisciplinary scope, the ‘new’ history shares many of the same postmodern intellectual roots and paradigms as sociology, philosophy, psychology, and theories of literacy and orality. Consequently, the intellectual distance between scholars in music education history who embrace this approach and those in related disciplines decreases immeasurably. The language of critical theory, of feminism, of cultural studies, to name but a few interdisciplinary connections, is communal, although the source of inquiry remains different.

The implications of the ‘new’ history movement and its attendant concepts and methodologies are myriad and can have transforming effects on the status and role of historical study within the discipline. About a decade ago, Reimer (1992) addressed this reality when he asked the profession: ‘Where are the ongoing, probing discussions about how the history of music education might be accomplished in ways reflecting recent scholarship about history as an endeavor?’ (p. 33). In response to his question, Humphreys (1998) observed that such discourse has not taken place, and he urged music educators ‘to join the debate over the philosophy of history’ (p. 90). As I review music education literature of the last decade it is clear that this debate is now underway, evident in the issue of the *Philosophy of Music Education Review* (Jorgensen, 1998) devoted to the philosophy of history and contemporary thinking in history, and Cox’s chapter on ‘Transforming research in music education history’ (2002b). (See also Humphreys, 1996/1997; McCarthy, 1999a; Pitts, 1998.) Recent efforts to reflect on the development and character of historical research in music education have served to acknowledge the legacy of scholars such as Edward Bailey Birge, Allen Britton, Charles Gary, James Keene, Michael Mark, Bernarr Rainbow, and Theodore Tellstrom. They have also exposed lacunae in the literature, especially studies that address the history of music education in relation to minority groups, women, non-Western countries, and the lives of teachers in the classroom.

The gradual expansion of horizons is evident not only in the interdisciplinary reach and initial critical dialogue within historical research in music education but also in

increasing dialogue between music education historians internationally. For example, the editorial board of the *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* is international in representation. In addition, the corpus of comparative music education history literature is enriched as case studies of music education history from various countries are disseminated (Cox, 1993, 2002a; Pitts, 2000; Green & Vogan, 1991; Gruhn, 1993; McCarthy, 1999b). Such studies will likely motivate other case studies and further dialogue on the relationship of music education, past and present and across cultures. Insights on the role of music education in a particular country are gained simply by examining what is deemed worthy of study and research. For example, the emphasis on music curriculum history in the United Kingdom reflects a similar emphasis in its national music education system. By contrast, minimal attention has been paid to such study in the United States, where issues of a national curriculum have traditionally not been a concern to music educators.

In spite of significant efforts to advance thinking in music education history and historiography, the subject remains at the margins, perceived as a serious scholarly endeavour on the one hand but also as a dispensable or optional foundation of music education programmes. Unlike the study of psychology, whose role is clear to the practitioner and teacher educator alike, the study of music education history, beyond a small cadre of scholars, is at best tolerated, at worst ignored in the context of music teacher education and classroom practice. To change such perceptions will demand continuous self-reflection and expansion of intellectual horizons and strategies, leading to a contemporary rationale that clearly elucidates the values, delights, and moral responsibilities of doing history in music education. The present exploration challenges the music educator to put aside preconceived notions about history and its role in music education, and to look for possibility and promise in contemporary thinking on the subject.

Doing history, and its illumination through metaphor

I use the phrase 'doing history' to bring into the foreground three aspects of the process that access its vitality and humanity. First is the intimate role of the researcher in the reconstruction of the past. American historian Ken Burns (1992) views the historian as 'a sharer or spectator of the action he describes', while Southgate (2000) states that since 'it is now widely accepted that all history is inevitably "ideological", in the sense of being written from some standpoint and with some agenda', there is 'a need for greater "transparency" about the motivations of historians' (p. 15). Nora (1989) observes that the new type of historian 'is ready to confess the intimate relation he maintains to his subject. Better still, he is ready to proclaim it, make of it not the obstacle but the means of his understanding' (p. 18).

Second is a view of writing history as a complex, politically driven, and culturally circumscribed task demanding a highly developed imagination. This view emphasises the need to bring multiple sources and perspectives to bear on the construction of the narrative. It implies an artist at work, creating a fabric whose texture is woven from multiple strands of varying form and design. A third aspect that is resonant of history as action is the ongoing and open nature of the historical process, with each study demonstrating an interaction between closures and openings, between questions brought to a conclusion

and those discovered for further study, questions that resist closure or indeed those not yet disclosed.

Like other forms of qualitative research, doing history is a messy, unpredictable, and emotionally engaging activity whose meanings emerge as the researcher interacts with the persons, materials, or media being studied. Another common feature is that the researcher is typically an outsider to the culture under study. In such a case, the task for ethnographers and historians alike is to uncover the conceptual structures that inform subjects' actions and to construct a system of analysis and a vocabulary to interpret those actions (Weinstein, 1990: 29).

Unlike other qualitative methods in which the researcher is interacting with living people or institutions, the exceedingly challenging task of the historian is to recreate in the mind's eye windows into the lived experiences of persons, institutions, or times that are no longer present. The researcher depends on what has been committed to memory in the form of written documents and other media, or in the case of a biography of a deceased person, or persons who knew the subject of study. The act of remembering comes to centre stage in all work that asks questions about times gone by. Thus one can view all qualitative studies that delve into the past and make it live in the present as doing history.

As one labours in a field of inquiry over an extended period of time, some habits of mind settle into place. One of my responses to engaging in the historical process has been the creation of metaphors to explain what I do and what I see as being central to historical study. Of particular interest is the multisensory and concrete nature of these metaphors, each lending insight into the various dimensions of accessing, imagining, representing, interpreting, and evaluating times and life experiences now passed. In this paper, description of such metaphors serves as a transition to the presentation of selected formal concepts from the discipline of history that will be discussed subsequently.

One set of metaphors centres around ways of seeing, a dominant sense – literally and figuratively – for reconstructing the past. Conceptualising history as a window, a mirror, a photograph, or an image, helps the researcher create a lens with which to imagine the past. What we see, how we assign meaning to what we see, and what we choose to re-present, are determined by our cultural, moral, ethical, political and educational mentality. The historian is no exception. To illustrate this point, I draw on Cox's (1999) interpretation of the work of music education historians Simpson and Rainbow as 'celebratory accounts of a rose-tinted past' (p. 451), analogous to the image of looking at something through rose-tinted glasses. Burns (1992) reminds us that history 'holds up a precise and sometimes difficult mirror'. Historians in music education have generally avoided the study of topics that focus on the painful or difficult dimensions of music education – for example, the ills of competition, lack of recognition and participation of minority groups in mainstream practices and institutions, or tensions between the music industry and the practices of music teaching and learning.

A second set of metaphors relies on spatial properties, perhaps creating the psychological space within which connections can be made and historical understanding located. History as a map, a canvas, or a jigsaw puzzle, are recurring images that I have drawn on when engaging in historical scholarship. These metaphors are two-dimensional, tangible, and linear. They either create parameters in the case of a canvas, provide a guide to lead one over unfamiliar territory in the case of a map, or provide the pieces of a picture

which fit together to create a canvas or map. The metaphor of a map speaks to the more factual aspects of the survey, laying out the chronology and highlighting significant dates, individuals, events, or institutions. Drawing on the image of a canvas implies that there is an artist at work, someone who is landscaping a picture of the past which is full of colour, nuance, texture, perspective, and motion.

Viewing the historical process in part as a jigsaw puzzle came to me early on, born out of the painstaking effort it takes to make sense out of the many and varied sources and pieces of evidence available for interpretation. In contrast to a jigsaw puzzle, the manner in which the pieces interlock is not predetermined, thus highlighting the individualised nature of the outcome. The historian connects the pieces and makes sense of the interrelationships among them. The binding of the pieces together gets at the heart of the historical process, the storyteller's ability to capture the *zeitgeist* or spirit of the time, an elusive yet profound presence that is transmitted in the telling of the story. This ability to connect the pieces and in the process to connect the past with the present, the reader or listener with the historical matter, is imbued with emotion. Burns (1992) describes it when he says: 'These emotional connections become a kind of glue which makes the most complex of past events stick in our minds but also in our hearts.' In our historical excavations, he continues, we must be 'more the emotional archeologist than clinical scientist, exposing to modern air not just the dry facts of life before us but the moving undercurrent of real human affections and feelings'.

Creating memorable connections between the past and the present that take on a life of their own in the present is a primary goal of the historian. Based on a review of contemporary literature in historiography and the philosophy of history, I have chosen two related concepts that have dominated debate in history in the past four decades – history and narrative, and history and memory. They both engage the topic of connecting the past to the present through historical research, the creation of a story through the construction of memories.

History and narrative

In an elemental sense, narrative is a mode of explanation, an account of human action (Roberts, 2001: 1). At a deeper level, it is a literary form that tries to find meaning in 'an overwhelmingly crowded and disordered chronological reality' (Cronan, 2001: 411). In the context of history, then, narrative is the vehicle for the creation and representation of historical knowledge and historical explanation (Munslow, 2000: 169). In the 1960s this foundational concept of history was revisited and scholars began to examine the implications of history as a narrative mode of reconstructing the past.

The 'new' history pioneered by the French *Annales* scholars criticised the grand political narrative, which had been the backbone of traditional, modern history. They wanted to broaden the canvas, incorporating economic, social, and cultural history into their repertoire of interests (Hutton, 2000: 3). Similarly, they wanted to convey to the reader 'the emotions, beliefs, and mental universe of our ancestors' (Furet, 1984: 16). This view also focused on narrative as an exercise of power. In other words, what the historian chooses to tell inevitably sanctions some voices while silencing others. Consequently historians can never achieve neutral objectivity in writing stories because they are moral agents and

political actors as they judge the consequences of human actions (Cronan, 2001: 411, 427). Historical narrative, then, came to be viewed as a politically motivated and biased activity that endorsed the values of dominant groups.

The traditional notion of narrative as story was also re-envisioned and cast in terms of identity formation. This development was in keeping with the general interest in identity across disciplines in the latter half of the twentieth century, from psychology to philosophy, theology to cultural studies. In her study of narrative and urban life, Finnegan (1998) concludes that the self is essentially constructed by or through narrative (p. 4). Individuals and groups make up stories to explain who they are and how they wish to represent themselves. When narratives are represented as oral history, Errante (2000) claims that in that context, 'identity is practiced', mediated by the nature and context of remembering (p. 17). The historian, then, functions as the mediator between the life as it was led by the narratee and how that life is told as oral history.

Debate on the changing view of narrative and the waning of the idea of a grand narrative brought to the surface questions of the ordering of historical time. Hutton (2000) explains the changing ways in which historians have understood historical time and the meaning of time in historical narrative. In narratives in the old regime the past was privileged, in keeping with a tradition-bound culture. The modern regime, by contrast, privileged the future, as would be expected of a culture that prized initiative and innovation. Both the past and the future were seen as predictable. The contemporary regime privileges the present as the primary reference in time. Such an approach has no need for a grand narrative since the future is rendered problematic and the past becomes unpredictable (pp. 6–7). Similar ideas about historical time are found in the work of Francis Fukuyama, who used Kant's aphorism 'the end of history' to describe the culmination of a particular way of ordering time (Hutton, 2000: 6).

Not all philosophers of history agree with the relative nature and lateral perspective of this approach to contemporary history making. Cronan (2001) argues that 'the past is not infinitely malleable'. He asserts the virtues of narrative as 'our best and most compelling tool for searching out meaning in a conflicted and contradictory world' (p. 430). Narrative, he claims, is 'among our most powerful ways of encountering the world, judging our actions within it, and learning to care about its many meanings' (p. 431). It helps keep us morally engaged with the world by showing us how to care about it and its origins in ways we had not done before.

In sum, the revised view of history as narrative expanded the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline. It highlighted the importance of studying the lives of ordinary people and their mentalities; it exposed the political nature of doing history to include the role of the historian or narrator; it opened up the possibilities of multiple narratives; it confirmed the intricate relationship between narrative and identity formation; and it stirred up debate on the ordering of historical time. The latter debate was waged even more intensely when the issue of memory and history came to the fore in historical discourse in the 1980s.

History and memory

Several scholars use the history/memory problem as a crossroads for assessing modern and postmodern thinking about a number of current historiographical issues (Hutton, 1993:

xx; Thelen, 1989: B1). The issue emerged in the 1980s out of the history/narrative debate and a growing sense of discontinuity with the past and its traditions. Instead of memory being enshrined in human beings, it was now necessary to embody memory in certain sites so that a sense of historical continuity could persist (Nora, 1989: 7). This represents the difference between modern and postmodern conceptions of memory and history.

In the modern period, during which conventional conceptions of history were formed, collective memory, construed as 'the living imagination of the historical actors of the past', was perceived to be the subject matter of historical understanding. The task of historians was to evoke memory and recreate in the present the past as it had originally been imagined. The relationship between memory and history was fluid and uncomplicated (Hutton, 2000: 2). Historians in the postmodern period are more suspicious of the distortions of memory and are watchful of the transference of their own memories onto the histories they write (ibid.). As a result of this awareness, the word memory 'directs the attention of historians away from an exclusive concern with the past toward a concern with the past–present relationship' (Kamann, 1991: 35). Thelen (1989) summarises the changing view of memory succinctly:

Instead of visualizing memory as a full-blown representation of an objective reality that people retrieve from some storehouse in their minds, memory becomes an active new construction of a story from isolated associations, recognitions, and recollections. Instead of being driven by a concern with how accurately the memory depicts an earlier occurrence, the new approach emphasizes the needs in the present that lead a person to construct the recollection in a particular way. People, in this view, fix their audiences very clearly in mind as they decide which elements to recollect, how to organize and interpret those elements, and how to make the memory public. (B1)

The former fluid relationship between memory and history was no longer acceptable and clear distinctions were made between them. The change of thinking about the past–present relationship was manifest in several ways. Nora (1989) observes that perhaps the most tangible sign of the split between history and memory has been the emergence of a history of history, or 'the reflexive turning of history upon itself' (p. 11). Another was how and where memory of the past was located. Nora theorises that since there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory, as there were in the past (e.g. peasant culture), *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, have been constructed deliberately to preserve and re-present the past. *Lieux de mémoire* are fundamentally remains that make their appearance by virtue of the deritualisation of our world, a world deeply absorbed in its own transformation and renewal, one that inherently values the new over the ancient (Nora, 1989: 7). Museums, archives, anniversaries, and similar repositories, Nora argues, are 'the boundary stones of another age, illusions of eternity' (p. 12). Modern memory is, above all, archival.

Hutton (1993) also discusses sites or places of memory as 'accounts about the past rendered in script, . . . static simulacra that could nonetheless inspire the particular recollections that we have come to call history' (p. xxii). He illustrates that changing technologies of communication are 'dissolving the once close relationship between specific places and particular memories' (p. xxii). The idea of disengaging memories from their fixed places was accomplished by Nora in his study of French national identity, beginning in

the late 1970s. In the study, he made the present the primary reference in examining the grand narrative of modern French history. He broke the grand narrative up into particular narratives, each only loosely connected, if at all, to others. In evaluating the study, Hutton (2000) concludes: 'In surveying the past from the present vantage point, the historian looks out upon realms of memory, each of which may be drawn into the present at will. History becomes an art of locating these memories' (p. 4). The question then arises, what implications might this way of conceiving history and memory have on our collective identity as a profession?

It has already been established that history is fundamental in defining national, group, and personal identity. Kamann (1991) argues that societies 'reconstruct their pasts rather than faithfully record them, and that they do so with the needs of contemporary culture clearly in mind – manipulating the past in order to mold the present' (p. 3). To access the reconstructive process of doing history, Kamann proposes a social psychoanalysis that seeks 'a deeper reading of the word and the world . . . to trace the interrelationships among history, ideology, and the nature of specific societies' (p. 33). The need for social psychoanalysis is not limited to groups examined by historians. It also applies to the historiographical agent as a historical subject. This individual needs to 'view his or her discipline as a historically constructed entity with methodologies and definitions molded by the assumptions of the prevailing ideology' (*ibid.*).

In sum, the revised view of the relationship between history and memory focuses on the political nature of remembering. It questions the objectivity of memory; identifies the changing ways in which memories are accessed, represented, and stored; describes the impact of changing technologies and modes of communication on how memories are located; emphasises the central role of the historian in stimulating memories and choosing among them; addresses the construction of collective memory and its roots in various ideological systems; and introduces the notion of disengaging memories from time to make them relevant to today's world.

The insights gained from the debate on history and narrative and history and memory can open up the ways history is conceived, valued, and studied in the context of music education. As we read or create history we are aware of the assumptions and world views that underlie its construction. In addition to identifying significant leaders, events, and movements that advanced thinking, we also study the lives of all teachers to gain insights into their professional lives. We study the profession from multiple perspectives, from mainstream groups to those who were marginalised, each providing a further way of looking at a particular phenomenon. Finally, although music education is the central focus of study within our discipline, we need to acknowledge that its meanings are constructed within particular sociocultural, political, and economic contexts. The music education historian, therefore, needs to be at once focused on a specific music education context and at the same time acknowledge the holistic nature of music transmission – its embeddedness in value systems and political structures.

Neglect of history

Scholarship on the history/narrative and history/memory issues repeatedly highlights the political nature of doing history. The power of history, in this view, lies in accessing the

inner reaches and deeper meanings of storytelling and the art of memory which underlies it. At the same time that this view is advanced, historians and educators alike lament the neglect of and disregard for history in our time. A sampling from the passionate pleas of thoughtful scholars on this topic is aimed at stirring music educators to revisit the nature and value of history for our profession internationally.

Ken Burns (1992) says that the past, our common heritage, holds 'special messages' to direct our way. He asks us to listen, observing that too often as a culture we have ignored the 'joyful noise' of history, becoming in the process 'blissfully ignorant of the power those lost lives and stories have over this moment, and indeed, our unknown future'. Furthermore, a neglect of history, he warns, speaks to 'the deepest kind of inattention; forgetting becomes a tear or a gap in who we are collectively, as people, as a nation'. He admonishes us to take more responsibility for our memories, since there is a profound connection between remembering and freedom and human attachment. 'Forgetting is slavery', he concludes, 'and the worst kind of human detachment'. History, on the other hand, through its 'mystic chords of memory', connects each one of us to the other, here and in time.

Focusing similarly on the power of history and the moral responsibility of historians, educational historian Kincheloe (1990) claims that when the past is forgotten, its power over the present is hidden from view. 'We are victimized by an amnesia which makes "what is" seem as if "it had to be"' (p. 35). Contrary to what antiquarians might argue, historians will, in his opinion, 'be judged by the contributions they make in putting their knowledge of the past to work in the attempt to understand the present and to shape the future' (p. 35).

Addressing the status of history in American education, Davis (1992) concludes that we lack a common memory of educational practice. This lack of a robust professional memory, he argues, 'does not simply cripple us as individual educational practitioners. This situation absolutely imperils our already tenuous claim to professional status' (p. 379). Burns, Kincheloe, and Davis bring to the surface numerous and convincing reasons why history is more vital than ever to individual and collective well-being in our time. The final section of this paper revisits the nature and role of history in contemporary music education, integrating ideas from the historical and conceptual expositions above to broaden perspectives and ultimately stimulate dialogue in the future.

From a useful to a usable past: revitalising history in music education

If the underlying purpose of this exploration was to broaden perspectives in music education by drawing on ideas from the discipline of history, what then can we gain from such an exploration to assist in revitalising history within music education? How might these ideas be already reflected in developments in historical research? Ultimately, what can we hope to gain from ongoing interchange with disciplines or fields of study related to historical research in music education? I will approach these questions from the perspective of disposition, content, and methodology in doing history.

By disposition I mean the degree to which the profession is disposed to history and includes it as a valid way of knowing and contributing to professional development. Scholars such as Burns, Kincheloe, and Davis describe a world without a historical sensibility as one that is failing in its moral responsibility to bring forward the joyful noises

as well as the painful memories and untold stories of its community, be that one of an institution, a community, or a nation.

Developing such a disposition demands more widespread professional commitment to and participation in the tasks of advocating and doing history. It requires the boundaries between foundational subjects such as history, sociology and philosophy to be blurred so that each can revitalise the other and deepen understanding of the music education process, diachronically and synchronically. It presupposes ongoing critical reflection by the profession at large regarding whose stories are being told and to what end. It allows for a variety of rationales for doing history, which in the aggregate will develop a sense of continuity with the past. It acknowledges the political dimensions of historical narrative, using them to convey the power and relevance of music in education and in the culture at large. It welcomes multiple interpretations from varied vantage points, at all times honouring the dignity of those re-presented. It affirms that history is freedom, that it engenders consciousness in oppressed groups which can lead to 'a panoply of possible futures' (Kincheloe, 1990: 36). Finally, it advances the notion that historical understanding benefits all music educators, not simply the small group of historical researchers already convinced of its value to the profession. The challenge of developing this disposition is not the charge of a small group of scholars, although such a group plays a key role in the process; it is the responsibility of leaders in professional organisations, in music teacher education programmes, and in the research community.

A research agenda that reflects this disposition will include ongoing critical self-reflection, both as individual scholars and as a professional community. This process is underway, evident in publications and forums in the last decade. An evaluation of what has been remembered and commemorated and how that has happened can provide insights into the construction of the discipline. For example, a meta-study of the sesquicentennial celebrations of the MENC in 1988 marking 150 years of music in American public schools can shed light on how the profession honours its past and what it chooses to highlight as important or exemplary.

The canvas of local, national, and international history in music education is ripe for exploration and expansion. Based on debates in history and educational history in recent decades, it is clear that the profession has multiple stories to tell: those of minority groups, of women, of music teachers in their classrooms, and of school music as it relates to music in communities, from local to international. To develop multiple vantage points of particular issues in recent time periods, it would be valuable to survey the perspectives of teachers who were practising at the time. Thus a better balance will be achieved between 'top down' and 'bottom up' history. It is important to capture the memories of current and retired teachers through oral history, thus documenting practice for future researchers. Above all, as Burns (1992) points out, we must not avoid recalling and interpreting the memories that are painful or contentious. They too belong to the collage of history that represents who we have become in our time.

The ways of doing history are obviously influenced when one assumes the disposition described above and engages in the 'new' history. Many of the methodological implications are true across all forms of qualitative research. The historian is asked to declare his or her motivation in relation to a study and to describe the process used to construct the story. Much emphasis is placed on a deep and emotionally engaged reading and interpretation

of 'text'. In historical research this can be any primary source material, from actual text to photographs, transcripts, and artefacts from the past. It is important to uncover the conceptual frameworks by which people were informed and motivated to action. The historian must be aware of the role of memory in the construction of her story, whether it is the living memory of those narrating their stories, or those who documented their impressions in literate forms. In a related way, the historian should seek to understand the past on its own grounds, according to the criteria of its time (Kamann, 1991: 34). If he chooses to assume a greater social purpose and compare historical events to the present, then it must be done in a way that uses historical understanding to gain insight into how today's issues have roots in the past, and not in a critical vein which places blame on ancestors for their actions.

Whether the historian takes an attitude of history for history's sake or one that starts with a current issue and looks to the wellsprings of history for guidance and direction, the vitality is born in the rigour of the research, the ability of the historian to move the reader into the lives of the historical actors and engage them emotionally in those lives or times, the authenticity of the narrative, and the power of the 'mystic chords of memory' to engender questions, wonderings, and a sense of awe in the mind of the reader. I conclude with a quotation from Ken Burns, a historian who inspired me greatly in the process of preparing this article. He says (1992): 'The present is simply the developing past, the past the undeveloped present. The historian strives to show the present to itself by revealing its origin from the past. How present the past is, how rich our lives are.'

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