

Individualised Education Programs, and the concepts of 'Mainstreaming' and 'Inclusion'. If the music education student is looking for a brief and practical introduction to teaching students with hearing loss, they would benefit greatly from the case study example given at the end of the chapter, which describes a project carried out by the author and a group of her undergraduate students. This section includes considerations of the importance of lesson planning, participant reflections, music education students' reflections, and the lesson plans for the sessions carried out during this project.

Chapters 6 and 7 address the vast topics of hearing aids, assistive listening devices (ALD), cochlear implants, and other sensory devices. As a general overview for interested parties, the chapter is ideal, although for parents of children with a hearing impairment, discussion with an audiologist will provide information which is individualised and perhaps more easily processed. Both chapters, although less focused on music education, raise important considerations regarding the experience of music and music lessons for children who have a hearing impairment and use a hearing aid, ALDs or a cochlear implant. In chapter 7, the case study of 'C' is particularly enlightening, and demonstrates the positive role that a cochlear implant may play in improving access to musical experiences. Whatever your attitude towards the place of cochlear implants in the lives of children and the wider Deaf community, technological advancements mean that considerations of the impact of these devices on musical experiences in the classroom is required. The section entitled *Deaf community and hearing parents: Different perspectives* offers insight into various reasons both for and against implanting children.

This book recognises both the joys and challenges of involving and engaging

children with hearing impairments in musical activities. The author remains positive and forward thinking throughout, but also realistic of the various limitations to reaching this goal. Perhaps most importantly, the author addresses the socially constructed limitations imposed on educational and social participation for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (a brief section on *Misconceptions* addresses some of these). In so doing, the book successfully challenges general assumptions about the abilities of children with a hearing impairment and their involvement in music, supporting the author's belief that 'The music classroom can be the great equalizer, the space where students who are deaf or hard of hearing engage in many musical experiences along with their hearing peers'.

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Taught by the Students: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Deep Engagement in Music Education by Ruth Gurgel. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. 161pp., paperback. £22.95. ISBN 978-1-4758-1339-5

Ruth Gurgel's *Taught by the Students* offers an interesting insight into teaching practices that might be used to foster deeper relationships with music students in the hope that this will lead to increased engagement. Grounded on the principles of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and the importance of student voice, this book focuses upon the approaches that one US music teacher, Ms. Beckman, takes in enthusing her students to participate in choir activities, offering thoughtful points for reflection and examples of practices that teachers might take forward

into their own classrooms. Although focused upon American schooling, the practices outlined in this book would be of great interest internationally and, interestingly, might offer innovative approaches for teachers in other disciplines.

The topics covered throughout the book are well thought out and have great relevance to the challenges teachers face around the world today. This is not exactly a 'how-to' guide, but the examples and cases explored in this book will undoubtedly be familiar to classroom teachers and provide food for thought. However, one cannot help but feel that Gurgel's decision to focus so closely on only eight pupils and one teacher restricts the broader applicability that one might have been able to explore with a larger dataset. That said, the level of detail and insight is fascinating, giving this book a distinctive character that brings the dynamics of one classroom to life in vivid detail.

In the first section of the book, Gurgel problematizes the supposed 'colourblindness' of some music teachers and the impact that this might have on the teaching approach that is taken. She argues that by adopting teaching approaches that account for the cultural backgrounds of the students in a class facilitates the formation of deep relationships that extend beyond the classroom to be built. This is certainly a most noble aim, and the evidence that she presents demonstrates its efficacy. She goes on to highlight the rich benefits that can be reaped from teachers considering themselves as part of a community of learning within, and beyond, the classroom. Part of this comes from pride in the profession, along with being honest with the children in the classroom and sharing personal experiences. Such sharing might be considered inappropriate in some contexts, but Gurgel is careful to suggest some boundaries for how this might work in practice. This also

highlights another of the key foci the book; the student perspective and its importance in understanding learning engagement needs.

Again, this is supplemented by carefully considered questions for reflection and is one of the most pleasing aspects of this book. Indeed, reflection is a central focus, encouraging readers to pause mid-chapter and think about the practice they have just read about and how it might be deployed in their own work. Gurgel also avoids 'blaming' teachers for the potential shortcomings in their preferred pedagogies, instead suggesting this as an approach that can be used where appropriate, showing due measure in the mixed effectiveness that some may experience when adopting a more culturally relevant pedagogy.

One criticism of this book is in the repertoire that it suggests and focuses upon. Despite espousing a belief that cultural diversity is always assumed in deference to 'white' normality, Gurgel's book focuses so heavily upon popular musics which might be lazily classified as 'non-white', particularly Hip-Hop and R&B, that it presents a fairly limited range of musical styles. Western classical music does feature towards the end of Part I, but not in the level of detail one might have hoped. Part of this might be due to the focus upon a single school, but one cannot help but feel that there might have been room to address other types of music to enhance the broader applicability of these arguments. However, Gurgel resists the temptation to assume that simply because students are performing music they know that this will lead to engagement by default.

Going one stage beyond this, however, is where Gurgel's work might have the most significant impact and relevance to a range of cultural and educational settings. In a discussion of student perceptions of performing John Lennon's *Imagine*, it becomes clear that exploring the

background context to this song in some detail led to a number of the students changing their perspectives and being more engaged in the activity. Thus, what Gurgel advocates here is something that all teachers aspire to: deep engagement. However, this recurrent theme is dealt with not merely as an idealist aspiration, but as a tangible result of considered pedagogical practices that teachers might take forward into their own work.

The same can also be said in the discussion of student engagement. One can take heart from the relative successes that the teacher experienced in this book, and Gurgel communicates these effectively, situating them within a broader context of practice and pedagogy. Indeed, the chapter on engaged musical behaviours was a particular highlight of the volume, as it strikes a balance between reflection upon practice and the inspirational impacts that it can have on young people involved in music making. These discussions offer teachers a good range of ways that these behaviours might be managed and developed in a range of contexts, including classroom environments outside of the United States.

It is also noteworthy that Gurgel examines these (dis)engagement behaviours in a non-binary fashion, instead highlighting the complex web of factors that can affect

the mood of a group or an individual student, and the ways in which teachers can work with and around these to facilitate progress and enjoyment. This became most clear through Gurgel's attempt to encourage teachers to allow their students to explain their own disengagement, both as a critical tool for self-awareness and as a way to establish deeper relationships with students. Consideration of such subtlety is to be applauded.

To conclude, Gurgel is not offering the miracle cure here. Instead she offers a set of tools that can prepare teachers in increasing engagement and enjoyment through music for students of all ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. It establishes a conversation between discourses in education, engagement theory and culturally relevant pedagogy that is practice-focused. Although many of the techniques and issues she discusses have greatest relevance to those working in the United States, it seems clear that there are significant points of overlap with other music classroom environments, including those in mainstream British schools.

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