

Re-introducing Deweyan constructs to school music

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Abstract

The narrowing of the school curriculum in the USA, the UK and Australia to support subjects of perceived economic importance has seen a renewed interest in the educational philosophy of John Dewey (1859-1952), (Elliott, 2012; Englund; 2016, Woodford, 2012). An ever-increasing number of secondary school students, especially in the USA, are now unable to pursue their aspirations in disciplines that are not considered essential learning, for example music and art education (Burke, 2015; Hansen & James, 2016). Progressive educators contend that if a more civilized and democratic society is to develop, the principles of democratic education delineated by Dewey in the first half of the twentieth century need to be reestablished in schools (Hansen & James, 2016). Current educational rationales give students very little opportunity to contribute to civic and community activities (Englund, Queennerstedt & Wahlström, 2009). Dissatisfaction with school music education in the USA, the UK and Australia to develop inclusive music policies in the recent past has seen a renewed interest by music educators and teachers in the work of Dewey (Elliott 2012; Dillon, 2005; Green, 2002; Woodford, 2014).

Key words: Dewey, philosophy, school curriculum,

This paper sketches the significance of Dewey's philosophy of democratic education and the importance it has had on music education in the USA since the turn of the 20th century. Concerns with progressive education and the pressure by influential business people and politicians to establish an academic school curriculum in the late 1960s is then summarised. With the introduction of the academic curriculum, it became imperative for music educators to develop a new rationale for music education. Difficulties in establishing inclusive music programs in schools in the USA since the 1960s is then delineated. Finally, David Elliott's concept of a Deweyan style music curriculum, praxis music education is then reviewed. Included in the paper is a brief discussion of the introduction of progressive education in Australia and England.

After Dewey's death, politicians, influential business people and music educators in the USA disregarded his deliberations. During the 1990s, a new wave of music educators led by David Elliott in the USA are developing a curriculum for music education based on the work of Dewey, Howard

Gardner and Mihaly Csikszentmihály (McCarthy & Goble, 2005). In England, Lucy Green's (2002) formal-informal music policy has helped to establish democratic principles in classroom music. In Australia, Steve Dillon (2005) was an early pioneer in developing inclusive policies for school music education during the 1980s along with Vella (Scott & Vella, 2015).

Introduction

The introduction of neoliberal education rationales in schools in the USA, the UK and Australia since the 1990s has seen an ever-increasing number of schools discard subjects that are not considered to be of economic importance to their countries development, for example music and art education (Apple, 2003). The contraction of the school curriculum to just the teaching of the perceived 'essential' subjects, English, science, technology, engineering and mathematics is affecting the lives of many students who do not have the talent or aspirations for these subjects (Apple, 2003; Hansen & James, 2016; Noddings, 2008). Michael Apple (2003), discussing the effects

of this policy on education in the USA commented, "everything in schools must be connected to the project of making our nation economically strong and committed to a 'knowledge economy'" (p. 3). He went on to say that current ideas in education that "were once deemed fanciful, unworkable-or just plain extreme are now increasingly being seen as common-sense" (p. 6). Hakim Williams (2015) pointed out, "In this utilitarian conception of corporatized schooling, arts education has been rendered irrelevant" (p. 27). Hansen and James (2016) remarked that this policy "may be leading students to form individualistic, hardened habits that will ill-serve them once they are immersed in the unpredictable, unwieldy, often messy social realities of work, family and other responsibilities that all adults must face" (p. 96).

In an attempt to make the USA the top country in the world in education by 2020, the recently introduced Common Core State Standards Initiative (2014) concentrates on the teaching of English and mathematics (Burke, 2015). Joe Onosko (2011) explained,

the primary goal of federal education policy is to have students read, compute, and possess other workplace skills to better serve the nation's economy. In short, the needs, interests, and the talents of children have become roadkill in the nation's race to the top. (p. 8)

This curriculum is severely effecting the ability of music teachers in the USA to teach skills and knowledge to students (Burke, 2015). The UK and Australia are following similar policies for school music (Burke, 2015).

Discontent with the current political policies of governments to provide for all their citizens welfare is leading to discontent in many countries (Hansen & James, 2016). Progressive educators argue that if a more civilized society is to develop, Dewey's principles of democratic education need to be reintroduced to schools. Englund, Queennerstedt and Wahlström, (2009) comment, "Education as a citizenship right has become a crucial issue in the restructuring of Western democracies' school systems" (p. 133). Englund (2000) argued, "it is

the task of the schools to elevate every individual out of his or her *private life* to a *public* world, with the possibilities of making one's own choice among different ways to the good life" (p. 311). Amy Gutman (1993) pointed out that the aim "of democratic education is to create democratic citizens, people who are willing and able to govern their own lives and share in governing their society" (p. 1). She went on to say that, "Democratic schools are so-called not because they treat students as the intellectual or political equals of their teachers, but because they teach students self-governance" (p. 5). David Elliott (2012) added, "citizenship is a multidimensional concept. It includes personal, social, cultural, historical, embodied, ethical, and emotional dynamics and commitments that ebb and flow as a person's and a nation's circumstances change" (p. 23). The broadening of the curriculum in the 1980s to include multiculturalism, racial equality and inclusiveness policies has also helped to re-awaken interest in the work of Dewey. In music education, Elliott (2012) maintains that the time has come to reintroduce democratic principles to music education that had previously been part of the progressive music education movement during the early twentieth century.

A little over 20 years ago, Elliott published his influential book, *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education* (1995) in which he discussed the need for music education to broaden its philosophy away from the narrow constrictions of teaching Western art aesthetics to include sociological and inclusive education policies (Paul, 2000). The emphasis on performance-based music programs in USA schools for talented students however has meant that school music education has been slow to address democratic principles (Elliott, 2012). In England, and now Australia, Lucy Green (2002) has developed and promulgated a democratic and egalitarian classroom music program, *Musical Futures*. In Australia, Steve Dillon (2005) a pioneer in inclusive music education was also influenced by the philosophy of John Dewey, as is Richard Vella at Newcastle University (Scott & Vella, 2015). A hundred years ago, Dewey (1916) discussed

issues in education that still resonate in music education today.

Methodology

A narrative historical methodology has been employed to contextualise this paper. Carr (2001) commented, “The function of history is to promote a profounder understanding of both past and present through the interrelation between them” (p. 62). Tony Judt (Donnelly & Norton, 2011) argues, “history helps us to understand the ‘perennial complexity’ of our current dilemmas: social, political, moral, ethical, ideological and so on” (p. 8). Burns (2000) commented that historical enquiries give teachers a better understanding of how present day concepts and theories in education came about. Apple (2003) argued: in a time of radical social and educational change it is crucial to document the processes and effects of the various and sometimes contradictory elements of the forces of conservative modernization and of the ways in which they are mediated, compromised with, accepted, used in different ways by different groups for their own purposes (p. 5).

With rapid changes to education rationales today, it is important that music teachers understand how curriculum initiatives were developed and introduced to music education (Pitts, 1998, Southcott, 1997). Many music educators and classroom teachers are unaware of how practices in music education have evolved (Southcott, 1997). Without the knowledge of how past events and curriculum decisions were made, there is a loss of cultural memory that limits teachers contributing to discussions on school music education (Woodford, 2014). Data were gathered from primary and secondary sources that relate to the development of education in the USA, England and Australia.

John Dewey and the progressive education movement

John Dewey was a significant figure in the progressive education movement in the USA

until the intensifying of the Cold War with Russia and the subsequent radical changes introduced to education in the late 1950s (Englund, 2000; Mark, 1978; Woodford, 2014). He first outlined his principles of democratic education during the early period of the twentieth century (Hansen & James, 2016). The pioneers of progressive education were inspired by Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel during the 18th and 19th centuries (Darling, 1994). Dewey’s experiments at his laboratory school in Chicago were influential for the development of the movement (Darling, 1994).

The industrialisation of the USA during the 1870s required a different curriculum to that of rural schooling (Kliebard, 1988). Progressive educators argued that the amount of information and knowledge students were expected to learn was impeding the less academic student (Kliebard, 1988). Dewey believed that it was necessary to design and implement a curriculum that related to what students had experience of in life. He argued, No one would question that a child in a slum tenement has a different experience from that of a child in a cultured home; that the country lad has a different kind of experience from the city boy, or a boy on the seashore one different from the lad who is brought up on inland prairies. (Dewey, 1938, p. 40)

Unlike today’s education policy, Dewey made the case that schools need to develop the talents and skills of all students in subjects that are of interest to them. By allowing students to select courses of study that were appropriate for their talents and intellect, it was argued learning would be less complicated and students would be more involved with their schooling. A Grattan Institute report (2017) noted that today, up to 40 per cent of Australian students, especially in low socioeconomic regions are disengaged from their studies either through boredom, the work being too difficult or the curriculum being of little interest to them. In *Democracy and Education* Dewey (1916) wrote:

To find out what one is fitted to do and to secure an opportunity to do it is the key to happiness. Nothing is more tragic than failure to discover one’s true business in life, or to find that one has

drifted or been forced by circumstances into an uncongenial calling. (p. 308)

Dewey argued that all subjects in the curriculum were important (Dewey, 1938). For Dewey, there was no distinction or pecking order of subjects in the curriculum. Personal development and the social needs of students were more important than the successful completion of secondary school and entrance to university and a highly paid job (Noddings, 2008). Dewey (1916) argued, "We cannot establish a hierarchy of values among studies. It is futile to attempt to arrange them in an order, beginning with one having least worth and going on to that of maximum value" (p. 239).

Music education was an important subject in progressive education as it was seen to assist in the development of social and community awareness of students (Parker, McConathy, Birge & Miessner, 1982). Akin to Dewey, Elliott (2012) argues that music teachers "should aim to infuse school music with an 'ethic of care' – care for oneself and for the health of our social communities" (p. 22). As Elliott (2012) noted however, "Viewed in the context of today's social problems, how is music education making a significant difference" to a student's life? (p. 22).

Progressive education evolved into a number of different movements during the first half of the 20th century, social efficiency, child-centred, social reconstruction and finally, life adjustment after the Second World War (Kliebard, 1986). Defining progressive education proved to be difficult. Kliebard (1986) noted the vagueness of the term. Ravitch (1985) relates that it was more of an attitude, usually relating to, "active learning through experience rather than passive learning through systematic instruction" (p. 81). By the late 1950s, England had established a model of progressive classroom music education, with Australia following during the late 1960s-1970s (Burke, 2010).

Progressive music education

Progressive music education was established in the USA during the early 20th century (Geahigan,

1992). Werner (2000) noted that progressive music education:

moved from the predominance of choral religious music, to a policy that embraced education in music for every child to increase their appreciation of the art form through personal participation—whether that be singing, a music appreciation course, or in the 1920s and 1930s, the expansion of instrumental music instruction in the schools (p. 15).

Music educators and teachers argued that music could play an important role in educating all students to participate in their community activities to become good citizens and therefore to be of benefit to their country. Parker, McConathy, Birge and Miessner (1982) writing in 1916 argued that music was important "because of its powerful influence upon the very innermost recess of our subjective life, because of its wonderful stimulating effect upon our physical, mental, and spiritual natures, and because of its well-nigh universality of appeal" (p. 179). The authors went on to add, "By many of the advanced educators of the present day, music next to the 'three R's' is considered the most important subject in the public school curriculum". The child-centred movement of the 1920s introduced rhythmic activities, singing games, folk dancing, marches and the use of instruments into primary school music and in the secondary school, appreciation and music theory lessons (Geahigan, 1992). Until the demise of the progressive education movement in the late 1950s, school music was able to maintain an important position in education.

By the late 1950s however, music education was having difficulty in coping with the changing times and failed to develop an effective general classroom curriculum (Burmeister, 1991). Many of the activities introduced to music did not improve students' musical skills. Geahigan (1992) remarked, "Activities were introduced into the curriculum simply because they were enjoyed, whether or not they made any genuine contribution to children's capacities to produce, perform, or respond to art" (p. 6). Mark (1978) added that these activities, "produced excellent performances, but did little to

increase the musicality and musical appreciation of individual musicians” (p. 32). During the late 1950s, a small number of academic music educators began to argue for the development of skills based music program (Mark, 1999).

Radical education reform

By the late 1950s, progressive education in many secondary schools in the USA had developed a laissez-faire approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy (Ravitch, 1985). The Second World War highlighted the low literacy and numeracy standards of many soldiers (Kliebard, 1988). Ravitch (1985) argued by the 1950s, progressive education had “judged every subject by its everyday utility, substituting radio repair for physics, business English for the classics, and consumer arithmetic for algebra” (p. 82). Influential politicians, business people, and defense administrators began to demand a new curriculum (Goodlad, 1964). Comments such as, “schools are neglecting the fundamentals” had become common (Goodlad, 1976, p. 7). Learning how to learn was more important than learning (Barcan, 1996). Kliebard (1986) noted the difficulty that year 9 students faced in the senior school when they had not been taught basic literacy and numeracy skills in the earlier grades. Considerable advancements in technology since the 1900s had made it imperative for higher educational standards (Good, 1956). Labuta and Smith (1997) summarised the concern,

The speed with which American life and world situations changed following World War II led to a general agreement that educational changes were imperative. National security was of immediate concern as was preparing a new generation of scientists, engineers, and mathematicians to ensure that America did not fall behind in the nuclear arms race (p. 33).

Dewey (1938) was aware of the concerns with progressive education. In *Experience and Education* he argued, “It is not too much to say that an educational philosophy which professes to be based on the idea of freedom may become as dogmatic as

ever was the traditional education which is reacted against” (p. 22). He explained,

Sometimes teachers seem to be afraid even to make suggestions to the members of a group as to what they should do. I have heard of cases in which children are surrounded with objects and materials and then left entirely to themselves, the teacher being loath to suggest even what might be done with the materials lest freedom be infringed upon. (Dewey, 1938, p. 71)

The Schooling decade

John Goodlad (1976) described the period, 1957-1967 as the ‘Schooling Decade’. Compared to the ‘soft’ education curriculum of the progressive era, the late 1950s saw the established of ‘hard’ education in the form of an academic curriculum (Sirotnik, 1998). The launch of the USSR space satellite Sputnik in 1957 finally convinced politicians and influential business people of the need to introduce a more rigorous curriculum (Goodlad, 1976). Ravitch (1983) commented that, “Sputnik had happened not because of what the Russians had done but because what American schools had failed to do” (p. 229). Admiral Rickover, the director of the USA nuclear submarine program and Dr. J. Conant past President of Harvard University argued strongly for the introduction of a more advanced secondary school curriculum to support science and technology subjects (Mark, 1978). A more central view of curriculum control started to take place away from local school areas, even though the American Constitution did not allow this. It was argued that curriculum developers and teachers could no longer be trusted to design and develop an effective curriculum (Hoffer, 1979).

The 1958 National Defense Education Act approved funding for the development of new curriculum initiatives for mathematics, science and foreign languages (Kliebard, 1986). Curriculums were designed and developed by subject specialists in universities, not curriculum developers that had occurred during progressive education (Goodlad,

1976). By limiting funding and support to the designated subjects, music education received little support from school administrators (Mark, 1978). Unlike progressive education that had an overarching view of the entire school curriculum, schools now had to contend with a hierarchy of subjects with multiple curriculum models to choose from (Goodlad, 1976). The reforms were naïve and did not understand the way in which schools operated, resulting in schools becoming confused (Goodlad, 1976). It was easy for schools and teachers to state that they had introduced the proposed changes when in fact the change may have been in name only (Cuban, 1993).

Progressive education in England and Australia

Unlike the USA, England and Australia did not establish progress secondary education until after the Second World War (Burke, 2010). Until the early 1950s, senior state secondary education in England was limited to a small number of students intending to study at a university (Burke 2010). As a previous English colony, Australia had based its education system on that of England (Burke, 2010). Frustration with the academic curriculum and a strong campaign by socially motivated educators saw the establishment of new state progressive secondary schools in England and most Australia states during the late 1950s (Burke, 2010). Many of these secondary schools introduced a progressive child-centred USA curriculum model that the USA was quickly moving away from (Goodson, 1983). Through the work of John Paynter in England during the 1960s, a democratic form of music education was developed for classroom music and later on in Australia (Burke, 2010). Due to political disruptions in Victoria, progressive universal state secondary education was not established until the early 1970s (Burke, 2010). Serious economic downturns during the late 1970s however convinced politicians in England and Australia to reestablish a more traditional curriculum similar to what was occurring in the USA (Burke, 2010).

Music education in the schooling decade

By the 1950s, the number of students studying elective classroom music in the USA had dropped to low levels (Burmeister, 1991). There had been little change to the teaching of school music since the 1930s (Burmeister, 1991). Mark (1978) pointed out, "It gradually became obvious that music educators could not continue to offer a 1930s curriculum in a time of fast and radical social change" (p. 17). Keene (1982) concurred noting, "The argument that music could promote democratic living, health, profitable leisure, and improved human relations now seemed counterproductive and could only relegate the study of music to the curricular sidelines" (p. 357). Leonhard & House, (1959) stated, "Reliance on the extrinsic values of music has provided music education with a flimsy, unconvincing argument, because none of the claimed values are unique to music and the musical experience" (p. 112). Many music teachers were unprepared to teach an academic music curriculum that concentrated on skill development (Burmeister, 1991).

The introduction of the academic curriculum created a number of difficulties for music education (Mark, 1978). School music was no longer considered an important subject like it had in progressive education (Geahigan, 1992, Mark, 1978). By concentrating on academic subjects in the curriculum, disparities had developed in the Arts. Many school administrators considered that, "The arts were often thought of as educational frills that contributed little to the needs of children" (Mark, 1978 p. 15). Goodlad (1964) remarked, "Should this situation continue, it will result in an imbalance of the curriculum and disproportionate allocation of human and material resources" (p. 77).

Music education as aesthetic education

Aesthetic music education, often termed Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) became

the dominant rationale for music until Elliott outlined his philosophy of praxial music education in the early 1990s (Paul, 2000). In 1959, Leonhard and House (1959) outlined suggestions for the development of a philosophy for music education. They argued that, "The primary purpose of music education program is to develop the aesthetic potential, possessed by every human being, to its highest level" (p. 3). By having an all-embracing rationale for school music, it was argued that this would make music more acceptable to Boards of Education and demonstrate to the world that the USA was a world leader in Arts and music education as well as science and technology (McCarthy & Goble, 2002, Woodford, 2014). Reimer, (1991) a leading figure in MEAE explained that the aesthetic music movement was, "an attempt to win for the arts the support, money, school program time, staffing, and prestige which its advocates clearly desired but had had a notable lack of success achieving in American education" (p. 195). Reimer, (1972) defined aesthetic education as, "the development of sensitivity to the aesthetic qualities of things" (p. 29). MEAE was shaped by the political and military responses to the Cold War and the escalation of anti-communist political forces in the USA (Woodford, 2014). It ignored the social and cultural influences that had been the mainstay in school music during the progressive era. Woodford (2014) argued, "Anti-communist hysteria, patriotic fervor, and a political doctrine of national military, economic, and cultural necessity dictated that music and music education too had to be reconceived in quasi-scientific terms" (p. 27).

Problems quickly arose with MEAE in schools. Little research or its likely effect on students was undertaken (Woodford, 2012). Woodford (2015) noted that at the time he was studying with David Elliott during the late 1970s, Elliott was teaching Reimer's concept to his students. Woodford (2015) commented, "My classmate and I struggled to understand the intricacies of Reimer's philosophy and particularly the ideas about feeling and form" (p. 143). Although the aesthetic and intrinsic values

of music may appeal to musicians, few politicians and educational administrators who were important for funding music education in schools could understand the concept (Jorgensen, 1994). Jorgensen (1994) wrote, "many musician educators were hard pressed to explain to skeptics what they meant by 'aesthetic education'". She went on to say, "many musicians had a sneaking suspicion that the notion of aesthetic education, often associated (at least in the philosophical literature) with the experience of listening to music, constituted too narrow a view" (p. 22). Aesthetic music education was considered important in higher education institutions but less so in schools (Phillips, 1993). Regelski (2005) commented, "There is, then, a mounting realization in philosophical circles that conventional aesthetic theory, in its claim to be the best or only philosophy of music, is increasingly irrelevant to the actual practices and pleasures of music" (p. 226). MEAE ignored the work of the musicologists, Alan Merriam, Pete Seeger, and John Blacking as well as the support of the folk revival movement and the racial equality movement in the USA (McCarthy & Goble, 2002).

Woodford (2014) argues that music educators and teachers tend to accept the political and social dynamics of the time without querying assumptions. He put forward the notion that MEAE aligned itself with right wing politicians who believed in 'Government *for* but not *by* people' making education "a form of social control rather than liberation" (p. 28). By music teachers being compliant to government policy, in the end, MEAE "led to an almost religious reverence for great composers, performers, and pedagogues and their works and thereby to a fear of professional controversy and debate that rendered teachers relatively impervious to change" (Woodford, 2014, p. 28). Similar to the concerns of progressive music education, MEAE was unable to adapt to the changing educational times of the 1970s-1980s (Elliott, 1994). McCarthy and Goble (2002) argued, "Unquestionably, the adoption of an aesthetic basis for music education resulted in a singular and

cohesive philosophy for the profession, but it could be argued that its focus was narrow and would ultimately not accommodate shifting social and cultural values" (p. 21).

Reintroducing progressive education

Rationales and movements in education are cyclical (Cuban, 1993). By the late 1960s, dissatisfaction with the academic school curriculum was growing, as many disadvantaged students had not benefitted from the education decade (Goodlad, 1976). Social and racial disquiet in the rural and inner city areas of the USA had become a major problem (Goodlad, 1976). Similar to the 1950s, schools were once more asked to address these issues (Ravitch, 1983). The passing of the 1965 *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* gave the Federal Government more responsibility for education by introducing large-scale social reforms that included grants towards developing programs for music education.

During the early 1970s, many schools introduced the English model of open learning (Cuban, 1993). Primary and junior high school teachers established learning centres in their classroom, giving students the opportunity to select their own resources and materials for small group activities (Burke, 2010). Cuban (1993) remarked, "The themes of social reform, child-centered pedagogy, curriculum change, and self-liberation that had marked the progressive movement decades earlier reappeared in the late 1960s" (p. 152). Unfortunately, open learning was very time consuming, as the learning centres needed constant updating. It was also difficult to monitor students' progress (Cuban, 1993). For a short period of time, music education received support and funding from the United States Office of Education as well as the Ford Foundation (Mark, 1978).

By the middle of the 1970s, the cost of the Vietnam War, and a serious economic downturn reinforced politician's demands for further

education reforms (Ravitch, 1983). Again, there appeared to be little improvement in literacy and numeracy standards in disadvantaged schools (Ravitch, 1983). Oldenquist (1983) argued that the main problem was the emphasis on student self-esteem, self-interest, and the rights of the individual over the economic welfare of the country. There was a renewed passion for orderliness in the classroom, dress codes, discipline rules, homework assignments, and letter grades on report cards (Cuban, 1993). Similar difficulties were also occurring in England and Australia (Burke, 2010). During the 1980s-1990s, further reforms were introduced (Burke, 2010). Ravitch (1983) remarked:

The long heralded 'revolution in the schools' prophesied only a few years earlier, had not come to pass; teaching machines, team teaching, nongraded classrooms, and even the curriculum reforms supported by the National Science Foundation had not brought about the dramatic improvement that was anticipated (p. 237).

Once more, music education was again unable to adjust to changing economic circumstances (McCarthy & Goble, 2005). McCarthy and Goble (2005) argued that MEAE, "laid the foundations for a philosophy whose parameters and assumptions were unable to accommodate the shifting social and cultural realities on the horizon (p. 24). Dismayed with MEAE and the dismantling of music education in the USA, Elliott (1994) began to advocate for the introduction of democratic principles in music education.

Praxis music education

David Elliott (1995) had been a student of Reimer and a supporter of MEAE until the late 1980s. He began to realise that, "after studying and teaching the traditional philosophy of music education as aesthetic education for many years, I have become more and more convinced of its logical and practical flaws" (Elliott, 1995, p. vii). Instead of the limited aesthetic view of music education, Elliott (1994) argued, "Without some form of intentional human activity, there can be neither musical sounds nor works of musical sounds". He became convinced

that school music in the USA lagged far behind other subjects in the curriculum in regards to social awareness policies. Elliott (2007) commented, "We can learn to conceive of music more broadly and socially by thinking in terms of social communities or practices. Our musical-social communities are, in turn, embedded in larger, continuously changing societies, cultures, personal interactions, and political patterns" (p. 85). In line with the democracy in education movement, Elliott (2007) and Woodford (2014) believe that music teachers need to express their concerns and emotions they may have regarding world events to students. Elliott (2007) advocates that music teachers, "need to enable our students to develop musical replies to the social/moral/political dilemmas of today and tomorrow by creating musical (or hybrid musical/bodily/visual) expressions of social problems" (p. 87).

In 1995, Elliott published *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education*. Gruhn (2005) affirmed that Elliott's new philosophy:

opens a window into a new philosophy of music education that is no longer limited to practicing executives skills, or memorizing rules of music theory, or collecting verbal knowledge about musical concepts and structures. Instead, his message is to stop the traditional separation of action from reflection and to reconcile doing and thinking, body and mind (p. 110)

Elliott was inspired by Dewey, Gardner, Csikszentmihály as well as the British music educators (McCarthy & Goble, 2002). The influence of Dewey is evident in Elliott's statement, "musical works play an important role in establishing, defining, delineating, and preserving a sense of community and self-identity within social groups" (Elliott, 2005, p. 10). Gardner's concept of multiple intelligences can be seen in Elliott's (2005) statement, "All humans are born with the "hardwiring" (that is, in our brain mechanisms) to learn how to make and listen to music at a competent level" (p. 10). Csikszentmihályi's concept of flow was also an important aspect of praxis music education (Elliott, 2007, p. 9).

Praxis is a Greek word meaning 'action'. Elliott's concept of praxis music education is based on how people use music in their society. It is centred on developing a high level of musicianship in students that includes performing, listening, improvising, and composing, in a way that is important to the lives of students (Elliott, 2005). In a rapidly changing media environment, Elliott's approach to music education offers students the ability to explore music in a way or ways that appeals to them (McCarthy, 2000). Unlike MEAE, praxis music education supports the teaching of a wide range of musical styles (McCarthy & Goble, 2002).

A number of issues have arisen with Elliott's emphasis on performance-based studies in praxis music (Koopman, 2005). It was always going to be difficult in the USA to develop a philosophy for music education that did not fully support performance-based studies. Burmeister (1991) commented, "Performance was, is, and probably always will be the compelling motivation for school music activity" (p. 197). For many music teachers and students, general music education in the USA denotes a form of music education for the less able student (Burmeister, 1991). Charles Leonhard, (1999) an influential person in the development of MEAE, later on in his life argued that performance-based music programs were unsatisfactory for the majority of music students who did not intend on having a career in music. He stated that school music "is no longer for all children; it is for those students who choose to specialize and perform" (p. 41). Elliott (1995) concurred pointing out, the "association between music and talent causes parents, administrators, and the general public to assume, wrongly, that music is inaccessible, unachievable, and, therefore, an inappropriate or unnecessary subject for the majority of school children" (p. 235).

By Elliott concentrating on performance skills in praxis music, it made other aspects less important (Koopman, 2005). Koopman argued, in advanced societies, most people are not performers but are listeners. The compartmentalised nature of school

music education also makes it difficult to introduce the sociological aspects of music education that Elliott suggests (Burmeister, 1991). For praxis music education to be established in schools in the USA, Elliott's proposal would require a complete overhaul of music teacher education courses, making it highly unlikely given the current financial crisis in education and support for subjects of economic importance (Woodford, 2014).

As Elliott (2012) has noted, praxis music education is an ongoing development that will take time for it to mature to its full potential in today's rapidly changing education environment. Praxial music education however offers music education a viable way of including music in the school curriculum for all students as was the case up to the 1960s with progressive music education. Marie McCarthy (2000,) noted,

more than a half century later, a social philosophy emerges that is in some respects quite different to what could have emerged in the 1930s, being influenced by cognitive science, post-structuralism, multiculturalism on the one hand, and in other respects inspired by early-century Deweyan educational principles and imagination (p. 9).

Conclusion

Current world events and economic uncertainty has created an urgent need for a model of education that is constructed on the principles of John Dewey (Hansen & James, 2016). Neoliberal education today is leading increasing numbers of young people to query their place in society that offers them little chance of advancement or fulfilment in areas like the music that they are passionate about (Hansen & James, 2016). A hundred years ago, Dewey faced similar problems with the industrialisation of the USA. For the first half of the twentieth century, all school subjects shared a common goal and purpose in building democratic values to help their society and country. With the ever increasing demand for higher standards, today disadvantaged students are left floundering in an ineffective 1960s education

policy that concentrates on literacy and numeracy. Similar to the 1960s in the USA, politicians and business people not curriculum developers or school principals (Burke, 2015) have instigated educational rationales for example, the common core curriculum in the USA (2014). In Australia, this policy is leading to ever increasing numbers of secondary school students being disconnected from their learning (Grattan, 2017).

Many of today's issues in school music education, particularly in the USA can be traced back to the dismantling of progressive education and the introduction of MEAE during the 1960s (McCarthy & Goble, 2005). MEAE failed to offer music students a democratic and inclusive music curriculum until David Elliott released his praxis music education program in the 1990s. As Elliott (2012) discussed, developing an effective rationale for music education that caters for a diversity of interests and capabilities in a modern neoliberal society has been difficult to achieve. Unrealistic education demands from governments and industry for increased spending on science, technology, engineering and mathematics has meant that music and art education are vulnerable to cost cutting and downsizing.

By Australia establishing conservative USA education rationales in the 1990s, Australia is also facing an increase in social disharmony that the USA is encountering. Similar to the USA, right wing conservative Australian politicians are also demanding further reform to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. As a nation that supports egalitarianism and the notion of a 'fair go' for all citizens in education, health and welfare, the time has come in Australia to design and develop a school curriculum that is grounded on the principles of Dewey giving students interested in studying art and music the opportunity to do so.

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