Research in the Sociology of Music Education: some introductory concepts

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ABSTRACT   *This article presents some key sociological concepts, and examines how such concepts can operate within the sociology of music, focusing on two main areas. One area concerns the organisation of musical activities—the production, distribution and reception of music by a variety of social groups; the other area involves the social construction of musical meaning—what music means, how it takes on its meanings and how those meanings are reproduced, contested and changed. The article then moves on to examine ways in which the issues, principles and procedures identified can inform research in the sociology of music education. Some illustrative examples of existing research are given, and some further topics inviting sociological methodology are suggested.*

Introduction

Recent global changes in communications and demography, affording unprecedented diversity in the range of music which is produced and consumed in any one place, are going hand in hand with increasing interest by music education researchers in sociological methods, as well as related areas such as ethnomusicology. In this article I aim to present some fundamental sociological concepts, suggest ways in which these concepts can be helpful in thinking about music in general terms, and then focus on some of the possible applications of sociology with reference to music education. Finally, I will briefly indicate the potential breadth of future research in this area. The discussion is by no means intended to represent a definitive method, but rather, it concentrates on some particular ways in which sociology can be illuminating in the study of music education. My perspective and examples focus on the situation in England, and will therefore differ in detail from those in other countries. However, as all countries in the world are socially organised in some way or other, the principles and methods suggested would be pertinent to many other countries. In fact, international comparative research could be very illuminating.

The Social Organisation of Musical Practice

Here, I will examine two concepts—groups and practices. For each one, I will very briefly attempt to explain its meaning and significance in general sociological terms,[1] then relate it to the sociology of music.

Groups

One area that interests sociologists of many kinds is the organisation of society in terms of groups. Three of the most well-researched groups are those of social class, ethnicity, and gender, and these will be my main focus; but other groups abound, including those of age, religion, nationality, subculture and many more. In some ways, at a macro-level, we can understand society as being made up of different groups such as these. At the same time, each individual is always a member of several groups at a time. Membership is neither simple nor permanent. For example, a person may move from one social class to another, a person may have mixed ethnicity, but may identify more with one ethnic group than another; a person may be androgynous or transsexual. Nonetheless, in all such cases it is impossible for anyone to altogether avoid standing in some relation to the social groups of class, ethnicity and gender, as well as others.

In the sociology of music, we observe that different social groups relate to music in different ways.[2] As examples I will take the three areas already mentioned, of social class, ethnicity and gender. In the case of social class, more middle class people tend to go to classical concerts or learn to play classical instruments than working class people. In the case of ethnicity, the majority of reggae musicians in Britain during the 1970s and 1980s were Afro-Caribbean; in London at the beginning of the 1990s many young South Asian people were listening to music which was a fusion of Asian and Euro-American pop; those who attend the opera are overwhelmingly white. In the case of gender, throughout the history of Western classical music, the vast majority of composers have been men; in some societies, women commonly play certain instruments such as the piano, but rarely play others such as the drums; some types of popular music are enjoyed predominantly by young girls, others by boys. In similar ways other social groups, such as religion, age, nationality or subculture, have a correlation with different types of music.

Practices

The other area that interests sociologists is the practical ways in which people go about surviving together, or go about reproducing the conventions of their society through history. It is helpful to conceive of these practices in a threefold way, as production, distribution and consumption. First, production includes the production of commodities, of utilities, and of cultural objects amongst other things. In the case of music, sociological questions about production include: how is music composed, improvised, or performed; what other productive activities does music entail, such as sound engineering; is music produced by individuals working in isolation, by groups, by professionals, amateurs, adults, children, or other categories; where is it produced—in a solitary room, a recording studio, the streets, or the neighbours' garage? Second, questions about distribution are concerned with the ways in which commodities and other objects are sent around the society. Who sends them, and who has access to them. In the case of music, this includes asking: how does music get from the musician to the audience

(through live performances, records, cassettes, CDs, videos, radio or TV)? How is music passed on from generation to generation (by notation, copying, printing, computer processing, or aural methods)? Who passes it on (family, friends, musicians or schoolteachers)? Third, the area of consumption, often called reception where cultural commodities are concerned, calls for enquiry into how commodities are used and who uses them in what situations. In the case of music, questions are asked such as: do people listen to music, dance to it, use it for background, or study it; do they use it for work or leisure; do they buy it as scores or recordings; do they hear it live, or do they make it themselves; do they use it in concert halls, in their homes, in dancehalls, at raves or in classrooms and lecture theatres; and who uses what music in these different types of situations?

The sociology of music, then, is interested in social groups and their relations to musical production, distribution and reception. I will refer to this area as 'the social organisation of musical practice'.

The Social Construction of Musical Meaning

Sociology is not only about which social groups produce, distribute and consume commodities, cultural objects and other things; it also asks what those things mean to us. In so doing, it must also enquire into how people come to agree or to disagree about these meanings, how we reproduce old meanings, and produce new ones. Similarly, the sociology of music enquires into the meanings of the music which social groups produce, distribute and consume; what those meanings are, and how they are constructed, maintained and contested. A fundamental aspect of the sociology of music is a commitment to look at both the social organisation of musical practice, and the social construction of musical meaning. Otherwise, the sociology of music will miss some of the most important and interesting characteristics of the very thing it purports to study.

A great deal of work has been done over many centuries on the subject of musical meaning, and this is not the place to review this work in its own right.[3] The aim here is to discuss some aspects of musical meaning with specific reference to sociological questions within the field of the sociology of music education. In order to pursue this aim, I will first present a brief résumé of my understanding of musical meaning, deriving from my previous work in the sociology of music education.[4]

I wish to outline a theoretical distinction between two aspects of musical meaning. The first aspect operates in terms of the interrelationships of musical materials, or, to put it simply, in terms of the sounds of music. In order for a musical experience to occur, musical materials must be organised in such a way as to have relationships, and these relationships must be perceived in the mind of the listener. For example, the musical materials might give rise to the listener's sense of whole and part, opening and close, repetition, similarity and difference, or any other pertinent functional relationships. These relationships will normally accrue within any particular piece of music, but they will also arise from the listener's previous experience of a number of pieces of music that together make up a style, sub-style or genre. The organisation of the musical materials acts to construct what I will call 'inherent musical meanings'. These are 'inherent', in the sense that they are encapsulated within the musical materials, and they are 'meanings', in the sense that they are perceived to have relationships.

To put it another way: inherent meaning arises when, for example, one 'bit' of musical material leads us to expect another 'bit', or one bit reminds us of another bit that occurred earlier on, or one bit contrasts with another bit. Then we can say that one bit

refers to another bit, or one bit has significance in terms of another bit, or in loose terms, one bit *means* another bit. Inherent meanings are neither natural, essential nor ahistorical; on the contrary, they are artificial, historical and learnt. Listeners' responses to and understanding of them are dependent on the listeners' competence and subject-position in relation to the style of the music. The listener must have some previous experience of listening to this kind of music, and must be familiar, or competent with the style of the music, in order to conceive some inherent meanings. If the listener is not familiar, or competent with the style, few meanings will be conceived.

For example, a student in a class on 20th century music was played the opening of 'Mondestruncken' from Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. She declared that she was unfamiliar with this type of music, that she did not like it, and that it sounded chaotic and random to her. She had failed to notice that the melodic fragment at the beginning is repeated and varied numerous times throughout the piece: therefore the music could not be chaotic or random. If she had been more familiar with this kind of music, she would have stood more chance of noticing this organisation, or in other words, of conceiving some inherent meanings.

A piece of music whose materials are highly meaningful or very rewarding to one individual might be relatively meaningless or lacking in interest to another. There are thus multiple possible inherent meanings arising from any one piece of music. To summarise, whereas the materials of music physically inhere, the inherent meanings of music arise from the conventional interrelationships of musical materials, in so far as these interrelationships are perceived as such in the mind of a listener.

Whilst this aspect of musical meaning is necessary for musical experience, it is only ever partial, and can in reality never occur on its own. We have become accustomed to the idea that the social or cultural images of performers make an important contribution to their commercial survival. It would be surprising, for example, to see a 1960s record cover of Beethoven piano sonatas showing the pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy wearing nothing but a pair of Bermuda shorts; and a 1960s record of the Beach Boys would seem incongruous if they were dressed in suits and ties. But the manipulation of performers' images is not a mere marketing strategy. Clothes, hairstyle or posturing on the sleeves of recordings are all details of a broader aspect of any music: its mediation as a cultural artefact within a social and historical context. Not only the context in which the music is produced and distributed, but also the context of its reception affects our understanding of it. These contexts are not merely extra-musical appendages; they also, to varying degrees, form a part of the music's meaning during the listening experience. Without some understanding of music as a social construction, we would ultimately be unable to recognise any particular collection of sounds as music at all. When we listen to music, we cannot separate our experience of its inherent meanings entirely from a greater or lesser awareness of the social context that accompanies its production, distribution or reception. I will therefore suggest a second aspect of music meaning, qualitatively distinct from the first, which I will call 'delineated meaning'. By this expression I wish to convey the idea that music metaphorically sketches, or delineates, a plethora of contextualising, symbolic factors.

It is not possible to hear music without some delineation or other. We do not always have to be conscious of delineation, but it is always going on in our minds, as an integral element of our listening experience. In everyday life, it comes to us in various unnoticeable ways. For example, a piece of music might cause us to think about what the players were wearing, about who listens to this music, about what we were doing last time we heard it, if we have ever heard it before. In a live concert, we might in some
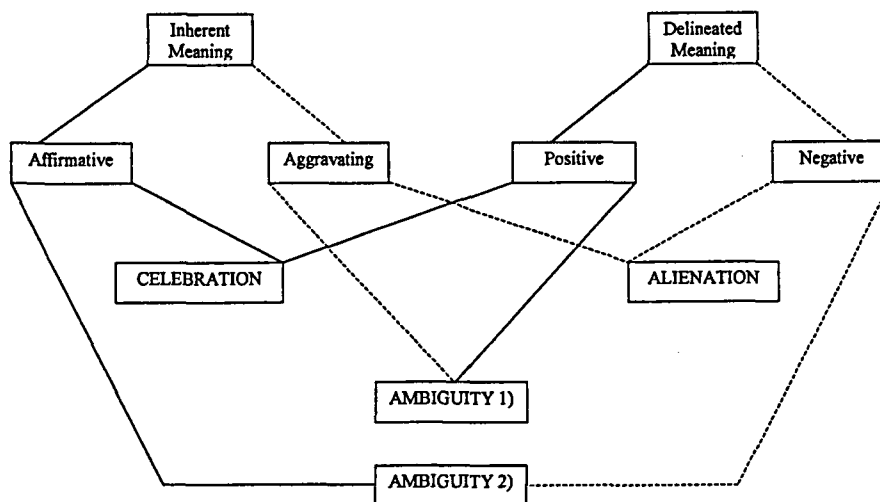
FIG. 1. Adapted from Green (1988, p. 138, 1997, pp. 134, 251).

way identify with, or recoil from, the subcultural values which we believe the audience holds in common. Some of these thoughts and beliefs will be so closely connected to the music, and so readily accepted by all members of the society, that we can say the music has come to mean, or delineate them at a conventional level. Other delineations result totally from individual identity. As with inherent meaning, listeners construct the delineated meanings of music according to their subject-position in relation to the music's style.

In simple terms, the difference between the concepts of inherent and delineated meaning is as follows: with inherent meaning, both the musical 'sign' and the object being referred to, are made up of musical materials; with delineated meaning, the 'sign' is made up of musical materials, but the object being referred to is made up of non-musical elements.

Central to the conception of music as including both inherent and delineated meaning is an insistence on the irrevocable interface between the two types of meaning, such that neither can exist without the other impinging its own presence. This is not to imply that both types of meaning always co-exist to the same degree, or that we are always *conscious* of both, or even either, of them. On the contrary, it is the very ability of each kind of meaning to become obscured that has caused a great deal of discussion and disagreement about music. The point of distinguishing between the two types of meaning is that, although they cannot exist without each other, each operates very differently in the way that it affects the formation of social groups around music, and the way that it impinges upon musical experience.

Holistic Musical Experience

I now wish to consider how these two aspects of musical meaning co-exist in musical experience.

At the top of the chart in Figure 1 are the two types of musical meaning, both of which must be in operation, as I have suggested, during any musical experience. It is helpful to understand our responses to each aspect of musical meaning in terms of polar

extremes. These are expressed as extremes for the purposes of analysis: in practice of course everyone will experience a variety of subtle shades in their responses. First, I will consider inherent meaning. At one extreme, we can have a highly affirmative response (joined to 'inherent meaning' on the chart by a solid line). This will occur when we are very familiar with the style or the particular piece, we feel we understand its nuances, and we are carried along securely or pleasurably in its ebb and flow. At the other extreme, there is what I call 'aggravation' (joined on the chart by a dotted line). Like the Schoenberg student above, we do not understand the music, we are unfamiliar with its style, we cannot make any sense of it, we cannot respond to its internal similarities, differences, continuity or changes. Second, I will consider delineated meaning. At one extreme we have a positive response (solid line) when we feel the music in some way expresses our feelings, supports our position in society, when we identify with the music because it delineates our social class, our clothing, our political values, or whatever. At the other extreme we have a negative response (dotted line) when we feel the music delineates social or political values of which we disapprove, or social groups from which we are excluded.

The quality of the experience of music's inherent and delineated meanings can sometimes correspond. 'Celebration' (joined up by two solid lines) is experienced when affirmation by inherent meanings is accompanied by positive inclinations towards delineations. In contrast, 'alienation' (two dotted lines) is experienced when aggravation by inherent meanings is accompanied by negativity towards delineations. But sometimes the two aspects of musical meaning are in contradiction with each other, and this will engender an experience of what I call 'ambiguity'. There are two types of ambiguity deriving from these categories. In 'ambiguity 1', the experience of inherent meaning is aggravating, but that of delineated meaning is positive. For example, we can think of a person who is totally unfamiliar with the inherent meanings of Mozart, has never played or sung Mozart, who dislikes the music and hears it as frilly and superficial: this person is aggravated by the inherent meanings. But at the same time, she can nonetheless love the delineations in terms of the operatic plots, the social event of going out to the opera with friends, and so on: this indicates a positive inclination towards delineations. In 'ambiguity 2', it is the other way around: experience of inherent meaning is affirmative, but that of delineated meaning is negative. In such a case we can think of the Mozart opera-goer who is totally familiar with the inherent meanings, being a pianist and singer who has performed Mozart for many years: thus she is affirmed by the music's inherent meanings. But, simultaneously, she is critical of the operatic plots, she dislikes going to the opera because she thinks the rest of the audience is 'stuffy', and is forced to go to the opera to keep up family appearances: this person is negative towards the delineations.

Not only do our responses to inherent and delineated meanings sometimes conflict, but the one is able to overpower and influence the other. On one hand, if we are already negative to music's delineations, we are unlikely to be affirmed by its inherent meanings; and in some cases unlikely ever to get ourselves in a position to become sufficiently familiar with its inherent meanings for affirmation to take place. For example, if a listener is convinced that women cannot compose, then the delineation that a particular symphony was composed by a woman might prevent that listener from being affirmed by the inherent meanings. There is evidence to indicate that this has been the case many times in history, and it is one reason why some women have composed using male pseudonyms. On the other hand, if we are unfamiliar with the style of the music, and therefore aggravated by its inherent meanings, we are predisposed to being negative about its delineations. For example, my grandmother used to say 'all pop music sounds

the same' (that refers to its inherent meaning), 'and I can't *understand* why anyone should want to watch those scruffy long-haired boys mouthing it into a microphone' (that indicates antipathy to its delineations). In short, attitudes towards one aspect of musical meaning can overpower and influence our attitudes towards the other. It is in this area, concerning the interaction between inherent and delineated meanings, that some of the most challenging issues for music education arise.

The Sociology of Music Education: practice, meaning and musical experience

One of the questions that seems most compelling in the sociology of music concerns how the social organisation of musical practice and the social construction of musical meaning are reproduced over history. One of the areas that seems very provocative in the sociology of music education involves asking what role the school plays in that reproduction. I wish to approach this area through two pathways.

First, if we look at the social organisation of musical practices in schools, we see a number of patterns. As mentioned at the beginning, the following description pertains to English schools, which will differ in detail from schools in other countries. However, the *fact* of musical patterning and its capacity to be discerned in schools is likely to pertain to most countries. The patterns emerge in terms of pupils' groups including social class, ethnicity and gender, as well as nationality, age, religion, subculture and other categories. Children from these different groups tend to be involved in different musical practices. For example, in terms of social class: middle class children are much more likely than working class children, to play orchestral instruments in schools; working class children are much less likely to take music options at school, and to go on to study music at university or conservatoire; even though children from all classes enjoy listening to popular music, middle class children are more likely to respond positively to the delineations of classical music in the classroom, and they are also more likely to be familiar with, and therefore affirmed by, classical music's inherent meanings. Regarding ethnicity: very few Asian or Black pupils take the British 18 + music exam (A level), and even fewer go on to study music in higher education; South Asian children in parts of London listen to quite a lot of Asian popular music, whereas children in all-white, rural schools may never have heard any of it. With relation to gender: girls are much more keen on singing in choirs, and playing classical music on keyboards, guitars and orchestral instruments than boys; boys are much more interested in the realms of technology and popular music; girls show signs of lacking confidence in composition, whereas boys appear to excel at it. Religion, age, subculture and other social factors are also discernible as significant influences in pupils' relationships to music in school.

Second, I suggested earlier that the sociology of music should look not only at the social organisation of musical practices, but also, vitally, at the social construction of musical meaning. It is helpful when coming to understand the different musical practices of different groups of pupils in schools, to address the pupils' as well as the teachers' concepts of what the music means. This will help to reveal some reasons *why* pupils from different groups engage in certain musical practices, why they avoid others, and *how they respond* to music in the classroom. It will also contribute to increasing the self-understanding of teachers: our values, our aims, and our unspoken assumptions and expectations not only in relation to our pupils' but also in relation to our own musical abilities and interests. Finally, it may help us to understand why teachers can find it very hard to make any changes to the musical tastes and practices of many pupils.

If we re-visit the chart of musical experience above, we can categorise the probability that in classrooms, some pupils will be celebrated by the music which the teacher presents to them, whereas other pupils will be alienated, and for others, musical experience will be ambiguous. The reasons for pupils' experiences being celebratory, alienated or ambiguous are not just to do with innate musical ability, but are also the result of the pupils' social background and membership of a variety of different social groups. Familiarity with inherent meaning and attitude towards delineated meanings will partly derive from the listening habits, the values and the cultural norms of their class, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, subculture and so on. If pupils are aggravated by music's inherent meanings, the teacher's task would seem to be simple: make them more familiar, teach them something about the music's inherent meanings, and slowly they will begin to understand it—perhaps even to like it. But how difficult it can be to do this, if the pupils are also already negative to the delineations of the music!

I will give one example of what I mean here, drawn from my recent research on gender (Green, 1997). As I have already indicated, it is mainly girls who sing and play classical music in schools. But not only that, for in interviewing pupils, I have found that classical music takes on delineated meanings that correspond with its practices—that is to say, classical music in schools to a large extent *delineates femininity*, and more radically, effeminacy. By the same token, popular music, and practices such as playing the drums and electric guitar, *delineate* masculinity, and beyond that, *machismo*. Thus for girls and boys, the delineations of different types of music in various situations can be problematic. As teachers we may wish to 'remove the problem' and encourage all pupils to enjoy music as a whole: for example, giving additional opportunities for girls to play the electric guitar, encouraging more boys to join the choir. But for many pupils themselves, there may be a very different agenda. Girls do not necessarily *wish* to 'act like boys' and may not feel comfortable engaging in musical activities that consciously or unconsciously are generally regarded as masculine within their peer group, just as many boys do not wish to engage in activities which are seen as 'feminine'. Teachers' sensitivity to and respect for the depth and highly personal nature of pupils' responses can only be beneficial in dealing with such situations.

Past research has shown that for many years a number of music teachers in England have been wary of 'intruding' on children's culture, particularly in relation to popular music (see, for example, Green, 1988; Vulliamy, 1977a,b). However, not all teachers have experienced such doubts, and recently, partly as a result of major changes brought about by the GCSE syllabus (introduced in 1986) and the National Curriculum (from 1992), more and more teachers are incorporating popular music, even current charts music, into their lessons. (Concrete evidence of what appears to be a sea-change here has been made available to me very recently by some questionnaire research that I am currently engaged in.) The benefits of such a change, involving the breaking down of barriers between teachers and pupils, are by no means under question here. But what I would like to suggest is that sociological concepts and methods of research can, again, help to reveal certain aspects of the complexities involved. The example above, of girls' and boys' wishes, suggests that pupils' constructions of delineations can make it very difficult for teachers to change or challenge pre-existing musical practices. The next example illustrates what a hard task it can be to really 'reach' some of the musical delineations that circulate in children's culture independently of the school.

This example, taken from recent research for an MA dissertation (Alden, 1998), focuses on ethnicity. Alden interviewed children in a mixed-race, inner city London primary school in which about 70% of pupils spoke English as a second language. He

was familiar with the school and had been a teacher there previously. He asked the pupils about their musical tastes and the kinds of music they listened to at home. When the pupils were talking to him in large, mixed-race groups, a picture emerged of a listenership that was almost entirely committed to charts music such as that broadcast on the BBC television programme *Top of the Pops* or BBC Radio One. But when he interviewed Asian children in single-ethnicity groups, Alden was presented with a very different picture. He states ' ... although they were familiar with "pop" music and sometimes listened to *Top of the Pops* they were all very clear that Hindi film music was the substance of their experience at home and they stated that this was their preferred music' (p. 84). They also told him they enjoyed listening to local radio stations broadcasting Hindi popular music.

Having discovered this side of these pupils' tastes and practices, Alden then conducted another, large group mixed-race interview. He asked pupils to work together at devising a curriculum and resources that they would like to have for music in their school. Their suggestions included only mainstream popular forms and instruments associated with such music, as well as some of the classroom percussion instruments they were already familiar with. During discussion afterwards, the Asian pupils in the group were silent. 'I pointed out that pupils in the school listened to a much wider range of music than that which had been suggested and asked if this range should be included. Even with such a clear lead, there was no voice strong enough to say "yes"' (p. 88). On asking the pupils separately why they did not speak up, Alden found they attributed the cause explicitly to peer pressure (p. 85).

In a school such as this which had an anti-racist policy and a multicultural curriculum, in which Alden observed lessons and curriculum materials involving music from around the world, including the rehearsal of a Hindi song for assembly on the very morning of the interviews, the home listening habits of some pupils nevertheless appeared to be something about which they were, to all intents and purposes, ashamed, embarrassed and secretive.

The power of musical delineations is such that it can override even the best of intentions on the part of teachers: pupils have their own delineations, their own desires and their own agendas in relation to music, and these can be reinforced by the school, or they can remain in a cultural sphere which is separate from the school. Musical delineations are not just heard, but they are adopted as symbols of social identity. Whether you play music, sing it, or listen to it, compose it, study it or teach it, music can be taken on and worn rather like a piece of clothing, to indicate something about your class, ethnicity, gender, your sexuality, religion, subculture, political values and so on. It can be worn by pupils as a public expression within the school, which may reveal or may indeed conceal part of the pupils' private identity or, alternatively, musical 'clothing' may be worn only in the privacy of the home or other situations beyond the school. Particularly in the case of children and adolescents who are searching for identity as new adults in a changing society, music can offer a powerful cultural symbol, which aids in their adoption and presentation of a 'self'.

It is music's delineations that offer this symbolisation, but it is in the musical experience as an undifferentiated whole, in which delineated and inherent meanings come together as one unified apperception, that the deepest power of music resides. When we play, compose or listen to music, we do not normally analyse our experience, or declare: 'Oh, yes, that's a delineation, and that's an inherent meaning'. On the contrary, the two appear as one. Therefore delineations appear to arise, not from the social context of musical production, distribution and reception, but mysteriously, from

within the music itself. Delineations thus come to us with the impact of apparent, immediate truth. It is then in musical experience itself—in the apparent unquestionability of how things are and of who we are—that the music classroom's most powerful and most deep-rooted reproductive mechanisms lie. These mechanisms arise not only from what is in the curriculum, nor only from the way it is included, but also from what is not included.

When as teachers, we require our students to engage in musical activities, we are often requiring them to engage in music whose delineations may correspond or may conflict with their self-images, their social backgrounds, their public or private identities, values and desires. This correspondence or conflict must go beyond the delineations, to affect each student's musical experiences as a whole. Therefore, when we think we are measuring and enhancing students' musical ability with relation to inherent meaning, it may be worth enquiring whether musical ability can be adequately represented in such terms. Teachers can only benefit from being aware of the complex web of musical meanings with which we all negotiate, and of the intrinsic relationships between students' social groups, their musical practices, and their overall musical experiences. In this way, we are less likely to label students 'unmusical' without first considering the deep influence of social factors on the surface appearance of their musicality; and we are more likely to respond sensitively to students' genuine convictions about what music means, what it is worth and what it is to 'be musical'.

Some Implications for Further Research

Sociological methods and concepts within the field of music education represent a goldmine for research, which could be done by teachers whilst they are in-service as well as by academics and professional researchers. Even though, as I mentioned at the beginning of this article, a growing amount of such research is already being done, there is still much that is left open. Interviewing not only pupils but teachers about their musical tastes, observing them in their interactions with music, connecting such work, for example, to their lives at home, their possession of musical instruments or recordings, their involvement in community music events, their parents' musical practices and tastes, all these areas are wide open for investigation. And this is before we throw social class, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, nationality, subculture and other factors such as intra- and international geographical and historical differences into the balance.

For example, to take just one of the areas I have mentioned as an axis, and revolve some of the others around it: we know that pupils are musically differentiated by gender in several ways. But is this the same for middle *class* girls and boys as it is for working class girls and boys? Is it the same for different *ethnic* groups? At what *age* does it become manifest? At what age is it most extreme? Is involvement in a *subculture* a factor; for example, does subcultural involvement increase or decrease the likelihood of girls playing drums and boys playing violins? What effects do *parental tastes* and listening habits have upon girls and boys? There are issues of locality and international- ity to be considered too: for example, are girls and boys in urban areas likely to be more or less differentiated that those in rural settings? Do similar situations persist in different countries? Once such a process of revolving various sociological factors around one central factor is started, it becomes clear how very many questions and conjectures there are yet to be explored.

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NOTES

[1] The sociological literature is obviously enormous. For anyone new to the field, an excellent introductory text is by Anthony Giddens (1994).
[2] Regarding the sociology of music, I strongly recommend Peter Martin (1995).
[3] For standard background texts relating to the 20th century, see Langer (1955) and Meyer (1956); for recent helpful discussions (mainly with reference to popular music) see Middleton (1990), Walser (1993), Moore (1993) and Brackett (1996); and for a helpful sociological critique, Martin (1995).
[4] The discussion of musical meaning below derives mainly from Green (1988, 1997). For early, seminal work in the sociology of music education, see Vulliamy (1997a,b).

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