

# MUSIC EDUCATION NEEDS MUSICOLOGY

*Frank D'Andrea*

IN FIVE YEARS' TIME, THE SCHOOL MUSIC CURRICULUM AND THE TRAINING OF music educators will be far different from what they are today, if the present vigorous rate of change is maintained throughout the nation. While it is hoped that theorists, composers, and performers will contribute to the establishment of school music programs that are educationally and esthetically valid, a major force in this transformation will be musicologists working closely with music educators. This is already clearly evident in the imaginative proposals presented elsewhere in this issue by Professors Palisca and Ringer.

Music education has a threefold need for musicology. First, education in the arts, particularly in music, is not firmly assured in the schools; it forms part of general education for only a small percentage of our youth. Music educators have borne almost alone the responsibility of advocating a greater role for music. By the very nature of their credentials, musicologists could add weight to the argument, as scholars from other fields have done for their disciplines. Second, those who have instituted improvements in music education during the last six or seven years need the assistance of musicologists, especially in regard to the organization of subject matter and the selection of music literature. Third, since teacher education can no longer be the exclusive domain of professional educators, nor the production of new musical knowledge the sole concern of musicologists, both must join in the task of preparing comprehensively trained music educators. Let us briefly examine each of these needs.

The "California situation" is the most recent example of the continuous struggle to maintain a respected and vital place for music in the school curriculum. The status of music in California has been far from encouraging. In January 1961, the California Music Educator News reported that "progressive deterioration in curriculum opportunities in arts education fields had been coincidental with the growth of population." From 1950 to 1960, general enrollment in the Los Angeles high schools increased 25 percent, but enrollment in music classes slipped from 26 percent of the student population to 14. Thirty-two high schools in other large districts throughout the state reported that music teachers increased in numbers from 61 to 65 during the same period, despite a 50 percent increase in student enrollment. Supported by a resolution of the MENC, the vigorous efforts of the California Music Educators Association have now resulted in affirmative action by the State Board of Education (*Music Educators Journal*, September-October 1965:51-55; September 1966:34).

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FRANK D'ANDREA recently succeeded Harry R. Wilson as chairman of the department of Music and Music Education, Teachers College, Columbia University. He is currently a member of the board of the Music Educators National Conference.

The difficulty of providing adequate musical opportunities in school, so apparent in California, reflects the national condition. A monograph prepared by the National Education Association reports that about half of all students in grades seven to nine were enrolled in music between the years 1956 and 1962 (*Music and Art in Public Schools*. Washington, D.C.: August 1963). In grades ten to twelve the percentage is smaller, the difference depending on the size of the school: the larger the school, the smaller the percentage. The median percentage of 1962 high school graduates who had taken a year of music was 24 percent in large schools, 34 in medium, and 57 in small. Only 16 percent of large schools required all students to take music, but this figure is higher than among smaller schools. It is interesting to note the kinds of music courses and activities offered, for example, by medium-sized schools in grades ten to twelve: 78 percent offer band; 72 percent, chorus; 27 percent, orchestra; and only 23 percent, a general music course.

An improved program of musical studies would no doubt increase the enrollment in music courses. However, musicologists, together with performers, composers, and theorists, must meet with music educators to answer a more deep-seated need. That is to state to educators and to society at large the reasons why the arts should be a part of the liberal education of all high school students. When these reasons are accepted, the current anxiety over enrollment and curriculum balance will diminish.

How is music education improving itself? During the past six years there have been major changes in the philosophy of music education, in curriculum design, and in instructional practice. The current concern of musicologists in educational improvement is itself part of a larger movement that has occupied music educators throughout the school system and in their state and national associations. The nature of the change can perhaps best be illustrated by contrasting the objectives of music education stated in the November 1952 and March 1959 numbers of the *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals*. In 1952 the objectives were: to find a richer life through music; to develop wholesome ideals of conduct, good work habits, social aspects of life; to contribute to health, citizenship, home life, and recreation; to discover talent and provide vocational training. The 1959 Bulletin cites the following objectives: to disseminate the cultural aspects of music as an art; to understand other peoples through their music; to develop musical knowledge, appreciation, and skill; to use music as a means of recreation, release, and developing social relationships; to provide a musically-enriched program for the gifted child. The objectives of music education have unquestionably progressed from being essentially non-musical to stressing the value and integrity of music as a fine art and an academic discipline.

Several important publications have helped shape this transition. One of these, *Basic Concepts in Music Education* (Chicago 1958) re-orientes our view of the philosophical foundations necessary for such a change and reminds us of the cultural and esthetic conditions which must pertain. In another, *Music for the Academically Talented Student in the Secondary School* (William C. Hartshorn. NEA-MENC 1960), music education as never before faces up to the obligation to develop studies based on the literature of music, which would provide more students (particularly the academically talented, whether or not they have aptitude for performance) with challenging instruction and experiences.

Here is a challenge for the musicology student who plans to teach, and for the musicology professor who wishes to devise new courses for the intellectually gifted. Though directors of band, orchestra, and chorus may have the requisite training, their principal interests lie elsewhere. The academically talented student needs a teacher who is widely read, who enjoys working with ideas, who can stimulate inquiry, and who is imaginative in developing 'honors' study. Musicologists are needed in the training of such music educators.

To meet the need for better and more rigorous instruction throughout secondary education, the National Association of Secondary School Principals has formulated position papers in five major educational areas. The latest, *The Arts in the Comprehensive Secondary School* (1962), is an important definition of the purpose of the arts and the scope and structure of their curricula. Two of the recommendations relevant to the role of musicology deal with music courses and performing groups.

Now that music is recognized as an important discipline with a significant program of course offerings, it is necessary to construct a secondary program designed to produce increased understanding of the conceptual and affective levels of music literature through the systematic presentation over a four- to six-year span of a continuous body of knowledge encompassing the historical and stylistic aspects of music. Such a series of courses in which music is approached (in Professor Ringer's phrase) as a "system of thought" would be taught most appropriately, I believe, by someone thoroughly grounded in music history. What an aid to music education it would be if every qualified musicology department would organize and initiate a series of courses in its neighboring secondary schools! There is another, and similar, need for intelligently conceived courses that present an integrated approach to the arts. The number of secondary schools experimenting with integrated programs in the humanities and arts is growing steadily, and such courses might also be appropriate at the elementary level. The guidance of musicologists is needed in regard to the content and texts for these courses.

As we well know, performance constitutes the major activity of secondary school music, and music educators have only begun to augment the usual band, orchestra, and chorus curricula with an organized approach to music structure, history, and literature. A high technical level of performance has been achieved and the music played is diverse and of high quality, but the traditional routine of rehearsing a large choral or instrumental group five days a week minimizes serious consideration of the music itself. There would be more opportunity for this if, through more flexible scheduling, smaller instrumental and vocal ensembles appropriate for music from the Renaissance and Baroque periods were formed. Schools that seem to have little difficulty in purchasing expensive sousaphones, contrabass clarinets, and baritone saxophones, should also be able to obtain earlier instruments, such as harpsichords, clavichords, recorders, and viols. Musicologists can readily see how they might contribute to developments in this direction.

One last publication, *Music in General Education* (MENC 1965), will suffice to demonstrate that music educators are endeavoring to develop a program that is better structured and more specifically musical. This book will, I believe, have far-reaching influence as a guide to those who are expanding the

scope of musical instruction. To rectify the deficiencies of a performance-oriented curriculum in which a large majority of high school students have no formal contact with music, and in which students active in performance groups frequently lack musical understanding, *Music in General Education* makes suggestions with regard to course content, sequence of presentation, musical experiences, and the approach to musical literature. Instead of prescribing a set curriculum, it defines eleven essential "outcomes" of music education, together with the content and learning experiences appropriate to each. These will assist the imaginative teacher to design a music curriculum for courses in the humanities and allied arts; to construct four- to six-year curricula in band, orchestra, and choir which emphasize history, structure, and style, as well as performance technique; to prepare appropriate commentary, analysis, and demonstration for educational concerts using performance groups; and to assemble a library of essential music books, records, and films. But imaginative though the teacher may be, he will need considerable help from the musicologist in attaining each of these objectives; projects in music literature for high schools, such as the one described by Professor Palisca, should be initiated throughout the land.

Let us now consider teacher education, particularly at those points where musicology and music education might reinforce each other. Music teachers are educated at a wide variety of institutions—liberal arts colleges, conservatories, teachers colleges, and university schools of music—all of which should be engaged in analyzing their effectiveness and searching for improvement. Similarly, all phases of music instruction are involved in the evaluation and revision of music education. No area of music instruction can escape the responsibility of ensuring that it is adequately preparing prospective teachers.

The effectiveness with which a teacher presents music as an art and discipline depends on the breadth and depth of his liberal arts background. School music classes and rehearsals which involve historical inquiry, stylistic comparison, and esthetic criticism require an intellect and sensitivity which the technical and pedagogical study of music alone cannot fully develop. The kind of graduate needed to teach tomorrow's music students is one who has experienced the richness and variety of courses in the humanities and integrated arts, or a seminar in the history of ideas; whose intellect has been challenged to analyze, synthesize, and articulate; and whose mind has been well-nurtured in fields outside music. Before too long high school students will have intellectual fare which surpasses that now presented in college. Instead of musical production and performance being paramount, the high school music curriculum will have the kind of liberal arts courses which now characterize undergraduate study. We must therefore assure for teachers the education which produces the "liberally educated man."

Just as we must ensure that high school music study will have a more truly musical content, so we must achieve deeper musical insights from college music instruction. The entire range of theoretic, historical, compositional, applied, and pedagogical studies must be directed towards specifically musical understanding. It has always been something of a mystery to me why a teacher, after four to six years of study in the history, literature, and craft of music, thinks of his job primarily in terms of conducting and confines himself to

developing instrumental or vocal technique and performance. Rarely does he think of presenting structure and context as the substance of musical study.

The Contemporary Music Project report, *Comprehensive Musicianship*, is a step toward a solution. Finer auditory and analytical skills, and familiarity with a greater range of music literature will enable teachers to achieve this objective. A revised college program that introduces musical systems other than triadic tonality, contrapuntal and instrumental procedures other than four-part chorale harmonizations, and compositional skills for achieving greater insight into historical styles and problems of performance will substantially improve the teaching of school music. The ability of the school teacher to present the theory and craft of music depends largely on what he learns from his college instructor and how he is taught.

In the emerging school music program history and literature are no less important than the understanding of music structure; they should closely complement each other as the fundamental content of every musical experience in high school. And yet it is my impression that in undergraduate programs, history and literature receive proportionally the least amount of time, and that they are too frequently the most poorly taught of all areas. Students entering graduate school seem best prepared in performance and least in music history and literature. A course in history and literature is usually given only one year, divorced from theoretic studies, and taught at the level of an "introduction to literature." We have specialists in theory, counterpoint, applied music, conducting, even elementary methods, but any one of these may "double" in music history on the strength of one, sometimes two, years of history studies. It is rare to find music history being taught by a specialist. But if a course in music history and literature is to be an important part of the program, whoever teaches it should have: a thorough preparation in music history and analysis; experience in playing and singing parallel literature; a course that relates music to other arts and humanities; a course in the pedagogy of music history (team-taught by a musicologist and a music educator) and instruction in audio-visual techniques of demonstration; access to an adequate library, early instruments, and school teaching materials.

Since knowledge of the history and structure of music is essential to the education of the musician, the subsequent musical and professional training of the teacher should utilize and develop these specifically musical studies. Activities and instruction in performance, methods courses, and student teaching experience should all be based upon and apply the understanding of music learned in the foundation courses. For example, the analysis and explanation of a madrigal or a fugue should be just as relevant to *conducting* and methods courses as to courses in history and analysis. Only in this way will the quality of teacher education and, ultimately, of school music be improved.

At the outset, I supposed that in the next few years the arts will be given increased attention in the educational program. Music educators will need every professional assistance, particularly the musicological, to define the goals, provide the instructional literature, and educate school teachers, if American schools and society in general are to have a music education with the intellectual excellence and esthetic richness they need.