

dissertations

In keeping with the nature of this special issue, *CM* here presents reviews of doctoral dissertations in music education. Four of the five reviews deal with the concepts, realities, and ideals of music education in America; these differ considerably in both aim and achievement. The dissertations discussed will give the reader some idea of the variety in scope and quality of doctoral work in the field today. One contains a comprehensive plan for an integrated music curriculum; another proposes a new definition of musical understanding to provide a philosophic basis for the curriculum; a third uses the polling technique in an attempt to discover the present philosophic basis of music education; a fourth attempts an evaluation of the effectiveness of the music curriculum of a specific teacher's college. These dissertations clearly evidence the gap now separating musicology from music education, as does the dearth of musicological theses having relevance to music education.

For further information about dissertations written in music education, the reader will find reviews in the *Council for Research in Music Education*, which has published four bulletins to date. These may be had by writing to the Editorial Office, Richard J. Colwell, College of Education, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois.

Martin Orville Johnson

The Philosophies and Attitudes of Selected Music Teachers toward Music Education (Research Study No. 1)

Ann Arbor: University Microfilms (UM order no. 61-6898), 1961.
(229p., pos. film, Colorado State College, Greely, Ed.D.)

Arthur Daniels

Public school administrators, prodded by such critics of the American educational scene as Hyman Rickover and James Conant and spurred by the achievements of the Soviet schools, have in recent years re-evaluated and revamped many areas of our primary and secondary educational systems. Advances are most noticeable in the study of languages, mathematics, and the sciences, but general progress is such that more and more colleges are now able to offer advanced credit courses designed to move the student

through his undergraduate curriculum in three years. Nevertheless, the area of public school music has thus far escaped reform; any college instructor of music can testify that incoming students, even prospective music majors, are for the most part poorly, if at all, trained for advanced music study. Martin Johnson, in his 1961 Ed.D. dissertation, has tried "to determine the current philosophies and attitudes toward music education in the public schools held by representative music educators," with the aim, presumably, of uncovering some of the reasons for the present appallingly low stature of his profession.

Mr. Johnson, currently Director of Music Education in the Independence, Missouri, school system, used two questionnaires: a form requesting data on the respondent's training and experience; and a "Q-sort (question-sort) instrument," that required the respondent to evaluate forty "philosophy statements" and forty "attitude statements" and to arrange them in order of relative importance. The forty philosophy statements were to be distributed among seven groups, so that the single "most important" statement be assigned to Group VII, the four statements next in importance to Group VI, the next nine to Group V, the next twelve to Group IV, the next nine to Group III, the next four to Group II, and the "least important" statement of the forty to Group I. The forty attitude statements were to be similarly ordered (p. 40).

Before mailing his questionnaires, Mr. Johnson ran a pilot study designed to weed out those statements which "were not clear, not concise, poorly worded, or of little or no value." Although he received 100 percent cooperation from the fifteen people involved in the pilot study, Johnson obtained only 39.2 percent return from the 362 questionnaires, and this despite repeated dunning. (An appendix to the dissertation contains samples of the letters which were mailed at various stages of the study.) Of those who did respond, 50 percent were high school music teachers, 22.5 percent were supervisors of music education, and 27.4 percent were college-university teachers of music education subjects. The respondents hailed from the sixteen states comprising the Southwestern, Western, and Northwest Music Educators Conferences.

Johnson differentiates between his two categories of statements as follows: philosophy statements refer to music education as "the study of a particular branch or subject of knowledge," and attitude statements imply "a position, disposition, or method with regard to" music education (p. 15). Later he informs us that the philosophy cards contained statements about: "aesthetics; class methods; communication in music; diversity of the music program; evaluation concerning (a) the performance of music, (b) the success of a music program, (c) the testing program; goals of education in general; music education [!]; the mind and knowledge; the social aspects of music; teacher training" (p. 42) and that the attitude statements concerned: "administration; aesthetics; amateurism; analysis; basic aims of music education; books (contents); performance in music; note reading; social aspects of music education; success and its relationship to music; symbols" (p. 70).

Repeated readings of these and similar passages left me confused as to the distinction intended between the two classes of cards, and a reading of the statements themselves only deepened my confusion. For example, the first philosophy statement: "The experimentalist places great stress on freedom

and socialization in the rehearsal room. Discipline develops from within the student rather than from without, hence, causes more individual growth” (p. 44) appears to be less “philosophical” than the first attitude statement: “If moral and spiritual values are to be found in music education, they must be found in the character, personality, and the life of the music educator” (p. 71).

Not until his concluding summary does Mr. Johnson concede that he has not distinguished satisfactorily between the two classes of statements:

Originally the writer had hoped that definite statements of philosophy and attitude could be found. In the development of this study, the writer became increasingly aware of the difficulty in delineating between philosophy and attitude statements of music educators. It could well be that the results of this study represent responses to general statements concerning music education rather than to specific statements of philosophies or attitudes (pp. 176-77).

It is evident that he failed in the critical phase of his study; one can only wonder that his committee allowed him to advance beyond this point.

Perhaps the few who did respond to Mr. Johnson’s pleas for cooperation did so because they share his love for the arcane. Of the forty philosophy statements, No. 23 (“We should be more concerned with what music can do for the child than what the child can do for music”) drew more first place votes than any other (although only 13.3 percent). I sense noble intimations in this remark, but its precise meaning eludes me. The author begins his discussion of the responses to this statement with these words:

In the desire to make music sound beautiful, to create good stage appearances, and to use music for both public relations and school aggrandizement, “we have often been negligent in our concern with what music can do for the child as over and against what the child can do for music” (p. 56).

The portion of this sentence within quotes differs substantially from the original statement, but at least the interests of clarity are served by the phrases which precede it. If this sentence says what the author intended to say, then the entire, amplified remark should have been presented as the original statement.

Mr. Johnson’s interpretations of the responses are less than revealing. On discovering that many respondents favored the notion that “a child’s attainment should not be limited by the capacity of his teacher,” he concludes that this “should give strength and comfort to teacher training institutions that better teachers are desired by those already in the profession” (p. 59).

The least popular philosophy and attitude statements, not surprisingly, were those which threaten the interest of the music education profession: “The contribution of the arts in public education, is not as essential in our day of science and automation as in earlier societies.” “Music education has been over-emphasized. The development of an art-conscious society could well be attended to through other means than music.” The author finds the response to the former statement “an interesting and important development” (p. 68); he believes that the response to the latter statement serves to “emphasize, that while this statement was considered unimportant, this aspect of music education should not be neglected. Materialism needs the spiritual reflection that music can provide” (p. 94).

Occasionally the illogic of Mr. Johnson's analyses is numbing. He castigates the supervisors for having little faith in tests of musical capacity as *aids* in the screening process, although his question specifies the use of tests as the *sole* determinant in screening students (p. 134).

While earning his degree Mr. Johnson apparently suffered at the hands of his instructors. In the course of his dissertation he directs several peevish remarks at one of his three groups of respondents: the college-university teachers of music education subjects. He notes early that "much of the criticism directed toward music education has come from college and university music leaders" (p. 3) and concludes much later that this is "due, no doubt, to the fact that the college-university teachers contribute more articles to magazines for publication than do high school music teachers or supervisors" (p. 184). This notion may go down in educational history as the "publish or cherish" doctrine.

Having found that "the consistency of the three groups of respondents, to almost all statements, was relatively low except to a few of the statements . . . which were unimportant," he assigns the responsibility for his own failure to achieve definitive results to the college-university group: "It could be assumed, however, that if more consistency toward basic philosophies is to be achieved, it will necessarily come from those who prepare teachers" (pp. 179-80).

He commits a gross error of fact in accusing college teachers of voting heavily in favor of the statement, "Music education could well be supplanted by other means in the development of an art-conscious society." The heavy vote (according to his Table 26, p. 131) actually was for the statement, "Teachers must possess musical insights in order to select proper music for performance. This depth or insight usually signifies the musical stature of the teacher." He compounds his error by asking, rhetorically, "Should we be concerned that college-university teachers of music really think that their subject matter is so unimportant as to do away with this part of a college curricula [sic]?"

Although the bulk of this dissertation consists of pseudo-statistical operations of the type illustrated above, the second chapter, a "Review of Related Literature," shows how tightly drawn the music education horizon can be. It begins:

The area of philosophy related to music education has little or no material from which to draw and only from these in related areas was it possible to make specific references regarding some aspects of music education, its criticisms, its weaknesses, and its strength.

It would take a lifetime of reading to absorb even a small part of the literature from Plato onward which touches upon Mr. Johnson's chosen area, but his bibliography lists only seven books, a handful of master's and doctoral theses, and a few articles, all in English.

Despite his failure to discriminate between his two classes of statement, Mr. Johnson hopes that the study could be refined by choosing fewer statements, more correspondents, and by concentrating on "the basic objectives" of music education. His complete misunderstanding of the purpose and technique of statistics is summed up in the final horrifying suggestion that

all 38,000 music educators of the MENC be questioned on “what basic philosophies and attitudes music educators should hold.” Before marching over the precipice of that objective, Mr. Johnson should learn that sampling procedures are designed expressly to avoid having to deal with entire populations and that you can’t discover what music educators *should* believe by finding out what they *do* believe. One can only hope that this dissertation is not typical of music education doctoral studies.

ARTHUR DANIELS is assistant professor of music at Oakland University.

Josiah Darnell
An Evaluation of the Bachelor of Music
Education Curriculum at Murray State
College through an Analysis of the Opinions
of its Teaching Graduates

Ann Arbor: University Microfilms (UM order no. 64-2257), 1963.
(Indiana University, Ed.D.)

James McKinnon

This dissertation is an evaluation of a particular curriculum, and logically enough the author begins by explaining why one undertakes an educational evaluation. He does so by quoting what various authorities have to say on the subject. For example, Troyer and Pace write:

What are some of the purposes and values of evaluation? Why do we evaluate? One very clear reason is in order to judge the effectiveness of an educational program.¹

And Leonhard informs us that:

Evaluation enables the teacher to ascertain the effect of the learning experiences of his students and the validity of his teaching methods.²

Thus we learn that the purpose of evaluation is evaluation, and in case the lesson is not grasped it is repeated later in a paragraph which defines educational evaluation:

... the process of judging the effectiveness of educational experience. It includes gathering and summarizing evidence on the extent to which educational values

¹Maurice E. Troyer and C. Robert Pace, *Evaluation in Teacher Education*, Washington, D.C. 1944, p. 2.

²Charles Leonhard, “Evaluation in Music Education,” *Basic Concepts in Music Education*, Fifty-seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, Chicago 1958, p. 313.