Producing Musical Citizens: Uncovering the Roles of Music Education in a Democratic Society

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In the late nineteenth century, following the Industrial Revolution, there was a shift in the goals of the global western educational systems and what the government wanted out of graduating students. The result was a shift towards a model that produced the 'ideal worker'. In Canada, education falls under the provincial mandate, meaning curricula differ from province to province. The curricula do, however, share some similarities; especially because of the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP) for Basic Education. The purpose of this paper is to explore societal goals for music and its place in Canadian curricula and uncover how high school music curricula are constructed to develop democratically involved citizens. This will be done by establishing an understanding of how curricula work and what a curriculum is composed of, reviewing a brief history of music in Canadian schools, what the factory model of education is, and how different music curricula contribute to shaping citizens. Rather than studying one curriculum, this paper will look at the music curricula from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba in an effort to better understand music's role through similar, but contrasting, curricula.

Curricula articulate what outcomes are expected for students and provide teachers with goals and a framework for how to reach them. Not all curricula share the same 'framework'; this 'framework' manifests most prominently in the scope and sequence of the curriculum, providing a suggested order of doing things and what to cover from those areas, but also in things such as suggested activities and lessons for teachers to use or take inspiration from. Curricular language tends to vary between provinces, with documents using different words to describe common ideas; throughout this paper, I will be using the Manitoban terms. Within a curriculum, there are a few key parts that are important to understand and know. There is the core philosophy section,

which describes the general purpose and point of the course/subject, and there are the actual goals or outcomes, which have two parts: the main learning areas, and the recursive outcomes within these main learning areas.

Music in Canadian schools originally served a far different purpose than it does now. Music was less common and less accessible and was used as a form of nationalistic and religious propaganda. Schools used music as a tool to "Canadianize the population" (Green, 2013), as much of the population were Europeans new to Canada. Early curricular songbooks, like The Manitoba School Song Book (1940) and Folk Songs of Canada: Choral Edition (1955), were mainly collections of Canadian poetry, old British folk songs, and hymns. Historic curricula designated sections or units to music appreciation focusing on folk songs as seen in the Manitoba music curriculum (Manitoba Education, 1935; Green, 1991, p. 84).

In 1963, a conference was held for American music educators at Yale University. The purpose of this conference was to discuss the neglect and shortcomings in the field of music education as a result of a national push to emphasize standardized testing in the core subject areas and to come up with solutions to these issues (Branscome, 2012). Similarly in Canada, in 1978, the World Congress of the International Society for Music in Education was held in London Ontario (Green, 2013). This event hosted people from all over the globe and brought Canadian music education forward to be recognized and expanded upon as a result. Similar to the United States' Yale Conference, Canadian jurisdictions started to develop their music education program further. The World Congress of the International Society for Music in Education conference pursued positive change in developing music education; this positive change can be seen in a shift to focus more on the learners (both as a group and as individuals)

and providing a wider base of useful musical knowledge for learners to grow as musicians and as citizens (Green, 2013).

The three provinces' curricula this paper will examine will share a lot of similarities because of the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Basic Education. The WNCP brought together four provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan) and all three territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon Territory) in a coalition to share common educational goals (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006). This means that a lot of the core ideas will be very similar, while the recursive learning outcomes are where there will be the most variation. This coalition creates frameworks and general directions for curriculum building and creation which are adopted and adapted by the individual provinces and territories to follow and include to keep some consistency between curricula and across the country. The following paragraphs will view the outcomes and curricula with the purpose of uncovering democratic values within the curricular outcomes and considering the commonalities between provinces in contrast to their different approaches and goals within this agreed-upon framework.

The factory model of education emerged in the late nineteenth century after the industrial revolution, which is why the factory model is also known as the industrial model. This model of education is marked by a strict, regimented routine with a focus on core subjects and producing ideal workers. Leland and Kasten (2002, p. 6) refer to these ideal workers as 'obedient subjects' compared to the 'informed citizens', who are the more well-rounded individuals coming out of newer education systems. The factory model values order, compliance, and punctuality (Leland & Kasten, 2002, p. 7). These values are consistent with the idea of maintaining the status quo, one of the central aspects of maintaining rule and power over society. By producing batches of

compliant and efficient workers in a system reminiscent of much of the workforce, the class structure is upheld, everyone knows their place, and law and order can easily be upheld.

While the factory model was designed to efficiently produce obedient workers (Leland & Kasten, 2002), when it comes to better learning and understanding there are many contradictory practices within this model of education. A standardized approach to learning only incentivizes memorization and regurgitation of less useful knowledge, whereas a more constructivist approach strives for higher levels of understanding as displayed in Bloom's taxonomy (1956). Benedict (2013) argues that when the primary goal of education and music education is understood to be just the final outcome, and not about the learning and musicking along the way, we stop valuing music as its own valuable thing. Modern education and curricula are attempting to steer away from this outdated factory model of product over process while still constrained by this original industrial framework of 'cells and bells' and standardized expectations. This framework fosters a competitive environment that is unhelpful for struggling learners and treats schools like businesses (Leland & Kasten, 2002, p. 9). When a school is focused on "production performance, output figures, projected increased rates of success, effectiveness of teachers, and student standardized test outcomes," (Van Mannen, 2007, p. 5) the focus is not on the learners. McPhail and Rata (2019) explain how North America is more stuck in its Western-centric education, especially with music. A less hegemonic system, like the education systems developing in European and Oceanic countries, would provide learners with a more diverse understanding of music that affords learners and society the benefit of appreciating the cultures around them as well as their own.

With core subjects being at the center of education's priority, arts, and especially music, are cast aside as less important or less valuable. "Central governments that are responsible for

developing standardized music curricula and allocating resources in an accountability vacuum may tacitly establish that ‘basic’ subjects such as literacy, numeracy, and science are ‘more mandatory’ than a mandated music curricula" (Horsley, 2009, p. 6). Subjects like literacy, numeracy, and science have clear correlations to the real world and market economy, whereas artistic pursuits like music, drama and the visual arts are valued but not with meaningful support.

Castells (2010) gives names to the ideas of specialized workers and versatile workers as generic workers and self-programmable workers, similar to Leland and Kasten’s (2002) idea of ‘obedient subjects’ and ‘informed citizens’. He describes the difference between generic and self-programmable workers through levels of education:

> Whoever is educated, in the proper organizational environment, can reprogram him/herself toward the endlessly changing tasks of the production process. On the other hand, generic labor is assigned a given task, with no reprogramming capability, and it does not presuppose the embodiment of information and knowledge beyond the ability to receive and execute signals. (Castells, 2010, p. 377)

Louth (2020, p. 100) talks about Castells’ generic workers and self-programmable workers in the context of musicians. He argues that to create self-programmable musicians, educators need to steer away from technical practices, measurable outcomes, and market values, and instead emphasize music as an art. Artistic ways of understanding better prepare students for flexible ways of thinking and problem-solving in the real world (Louth, 2020, p. 101). Music as an art is a form of expression and in learning about and understanding music, self-expression and interpretation of others' expressions becomes more nuanced.

When looking at current curricula, this history and context is still visible. The most recent Alberta high school music curriculum, made in 1994, has five general learning expectations: performing/listening, creating, researching, valuing, and attitudes (Alberta Education, 1994, p. 5). The two main focuses of the recursive learning outcomes are personal growth, and developing an understanding of society through music, including music's own role in society. Personal growth is shown in outcomes like developing self-expression, appreciating music as a life-enriching leisure activity, and developing a sense of purpose in life (Alberta Education, 1994, p. 5). Music's role in society and contribution to the more general understanding of society is shown in the outcomes like developing creative abilities to use to contribute to society, appreciating the contributions of music to civilization and cultural heritage, and developing an "awareness of the applications of music in our society with respect to music careers" (Alberta Education, 1994, p. 5).

Alberta's music curriculum fits well into this old factory model, with an entire section of the curriculum dedicated to educating students about the ways in which music can contribute to the market including all the different types of jobs one can get in the field of music (Alberta Education, 1994, pp. 29-35). Though this curriculum's emphasis on the industrial fashion of practical uses of music (personal feelings, benefit to society, place in the market, etc.) can be explained by its old age, it is still in use. Until a new curriculum is created and rolled out, teacher discretion and autonomy is the only thing that can push progress from within that framework. In terms of music as an art, the curriculum covers a range of specific areas, including music theory, music making, composition, history of western music, music and technology, world music, jazz appreciation, popular music, and the aforementioned topic of careers in music. (Alberta Education, 1994). There is a lack of emphasis on collaboration in this curriculum in comparison

to other curricula. Where other curricula include collaboration between peers in making and interpreting music, the Alberta curriculum does not. This curriculum is structured to produce learners who are knowledgeable about the field of music and can be fairly programmable musicians in terms of specialization, but with not as much of an emphasis on individual skills, growth, and collaborative abilities.

Saskatchewan's high school music curriculum (Saskatchewan Education, 2020) is a part of the larger arts curriculum, sharing broader outcomes with dance, drama, and visual art. This arts curriculum has three general learning areas: cultural/historical, critical/responsive, and creative/productive. The recursive learning outcomes within the larger learning areas of this curriculum dictate that the students will learn about the historical development of music "within its social, cultural and environmental context" (Saskatchewan Education, 2020, p. 10), develop critical thinking and response skills, "become participants in the interactive process… rather than passive consumers" (Saskatchewan Education, 2020, p. 11), equip students with the skills to develop informed personal interpretations rather than those based on quick judgement, and develop personal expression through music as a language and art form.

Saskatchewan's 2020 music curriculum has more of a focus on developing engaged and informed citizens by emphasizing culture, history, and inclusion, especially of Indigenous and Métis cultures, in the arts curriculum. The outcomes of which are consistent with Heimonen's (2008) conclusions about music education's purpose:

> The values and aims of music education are to be found both beyond and within the formal curriculum, the principal aim being to educate human beings in a multicultural society within a broad curriculum based on the fundamental principles of global ethics:

> the intrinsic value of every child, every adult, and every adolescent. (Heimonen, 2008, p. 74)

This curriculum encourages learners to think contextually, critically, and creatively, and develop themselves as human beings and members of society. Another important aspect of this curriculum is its inclusion of collaboration, both with other musicians, and other forms of art. When comparing the Saskatchewan music curriculum to the Alberta and Manitoba curricula, there is a clear direction from the outcomes that aims to build informed and engaged citizens through music.

The Manitoban high school music curriculum, made in 2015, is arguably the most unique curriculum of the three this paper examines. The curriculum uses the symbol of a butterfly, its body as the music learner, and its wings to represent the four essential learning areas: making, creating, connecting, and responding. The recursive learnings of this curriculum are more consistent with the modern approach to music education as having its own importance, independent from external justifications. This curriculum does share similar citizen-shaping outcomes to Alberta and Saskatchewan's music curricula, though less explicitly. The Manitoban curriculum seeks to develop the learner's "language and practices for making music," communication of "ideas for creating music," "understandings about the significance of music by making connections to various times, places, social groups, and cultures," ability to critically reflect, and "develop agency and identity" (Manitoba Education, 2015, p. 16).

The Manitoban music curriculum (2015) is more centred around developing the learner as a musician than developing them as citizens, but still encourages the development of important life skills like collaboration, critical and creative interpretation, and developing an understanding of the role that music plays in the world and society. This curriculum seeks to

produce self-programmable musicians that can appreciate, interpret, and convey broad assortments of music across the spectrum as highlighted in its overview of why music education is important (Manitoba Education, 2015, pp. 3-6). In the curricula's overview section ten reasons why music education is important are listed, which all contribute to the idea of building independent, but musically fluent and collaborative people: (1) "music has intrinsic value," (2) "music education develops creative, critical, and ethical thinking, (3) "music education expands literacy choices for meaning making," (4) "music education contributes to identity construction," (5) "music education develops communication and collaboration competencies," (6) "music education develops intercultural competencies," (7) "music is essential for well-being," (8) "music education supports sustainable development," (9) "music education is transformative learning," (10) "music education fosters human flourishing." Each of these points builds on the idea of personal development alongside musical development, all to the benefit of society and the individual.

While all three curricula examined in this paper share many similarities, they each have different goals for the product of education. Alberta's priority in music education is in preparing learners for the market economy, creating musicians that are equipped to enter a variety of different jobs in the field of music. Saskatchewan's priorities for music education lie in shaping learners to become more engaged and thoughtful citizens, ready to translate their skills learned through music to the general society and world. Manitoba's priorities for music education are in producing musicians that can create and critique different forms of music and develop themselves in their identity as musicians. The evolution of curricula across Canada has taken many forms, but all in positive directions. Curricula in Canada are shifting away from the industrial priorities of old and toward a more modern view of music as a valuable form of art and

expression. There is also more priority by curricula to create self-programmable workers and musicians over generic ones and informed citizens over obedient workers. Music is starting to be understood better as its own subject with its own value.

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