

For the Culture: The Importance of a Critical Social Theory within the Music Education
Classroom

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Abstract

This paper will analyze the history of music education in the United States and discuss how the music classroom can contribute to and dismantle social inequalities including social class, gender, and race. Class effects music education by creating barriers to necessary resources and opportunities as a result of economic positions.¹ Gender is the second focus because music has historically been a male-dominated profession. As a result, many textbooks and curriculum highlight the achievements of men while erasing the contributions of women which has taught women to devalue their own work.² The last focus is race. While the arts once served as a catalyst for community empowerment, it has become a way to control free thought and exploration of culture.³ Thus, the purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of the social justice issues affecting our youth as a guide for creating better pedagogies for music education.

¹ John G. Augenblick et al., "Equity and Adequacy in School Funding," *The Future of Children* 7, no. 3 (1997): 66, accessed February 01, 2019, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/cd41/0d9ef7f4d67fb0f13f7fcf4877a8e02674aa.pdf>.

² Julia Eklund Koza, "The Boys in the Band: Sexism and the Construction of Gender in Middle School Music Textbook Illustrations," *The Journal of Educational Foundations* 6, no. 3 (Summer, 1992): 85, accessed January 17, 2019, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1468386157?pq-origsite=gscholar>.

³ Robin James, *Resilience & Melancholy: Pop Music, Feminism, Neoliberalism* (UK, John Hunt Publishing, 2015).

Introduction

Music is a gateway that can connect people from different backgrounds and create a unique space for students to find their voice in a society that discourages advocacy. In the status quo, when one speaks out on a controversial topic, they are either excluded for critiquing the normative modes of engagement or get co-opted as a token for a greater narrative.⁴ Both results suppress one's ability to keep pushing towards their goal because they feel defeated. The music education classroom then becomes a key space to introduce students to the power music has through integrating critical social theories into the lessons. This pedagogy is of utmost importance because it provides students with an outlet to release their frustrations and to discover strategies to navigate the real world. Music has always been a large contributor in social justice movements because it is a source of healing and power. For example, a large part of the Black Power Movement was the integration of Black arts and the Harlem Renaissance. It was the ability for people who were told they were worthless to find their value and speak truths that were always covered up. Even today, performers such as Nina Simone, Lauren Hill, and Beyoncé spread messages of empowerment and equality as a way to replenish the community's energy and develop goals. As the school system increases in diversity, it is the responsibility of educators to equip themselves with the most effective approaches to reach their students. This paper will discuss class, gender, and race as three main categories that diversify students in

⁴ Examples of this exclusion can be found in black feminist critical literature in which activists who spoke against the normative models were scripted as the sapphire, welfare queen, mammy, jezebel, etc. as a way to suppress their voices as explained by Wendy Ashley in her article, "The Angry Black Woman: The Impact of Pejorative Stereotypes on Psychotherapy with Black Women," *Social Work in Public Health* 29, no. 1 (2014): 30, accessed January 15, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2011.619449>.

today's society and the benefits of integrating critical social theory within the music education classroom.

A Brief History of Music Education in America

The Colonial Era

In order to understand why the inclusion of a critical social framework is important, it is necessary to review the history of the music education system in America and how “whiteness”⁵ became the underlying foundation in its development. For the purposes of this paper, whiteness refers to the greater structure that positioned Europe as this powerful colonizer and inventor due to the work of predominantly wealthy white males and continues to shape many aspects of society including the music industry.⁶ Carrying the views from Europe, music was considered a tool for worship and social opportunity. Therefore, singing schools were established during the beginning years of America to improve the quality of singing and music reading for church services. These schools became official in 1721 when Reverend John Tufts wrote the first musical textbook.⁷ In addition to these schools, communities would have meetings to socialize and learn from one another. While educators may highlight these events as the start of music

⁵ Whiteness is defined by George Yancy through his studies as a structural, ideological, embodied, epistemological and phenomenological mode of being that becomes the normative and/or superior mode of being that relies on the submission of marginalized communities; George Yancy, "Whiteness and the Return of the Black Body," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 19, no. 4 (2005): 216, accessed, January 15, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/jsp.2006.0008>.

⁶ Deborah Bradley, “The Sounds of Silence,” Talking Race in Music Education,” *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 6/4 (2007): 137, accessed January 17, 2019, http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Bradley6_4.pdf.

⁷ Michael Mark, “Music Education in Early Times,” *A Concise History of American Music Education* (Lanham, MD: R&L Education, 2008): 12.

education, it is important to isolate a couple of social observations that will shape our understanding of music education.

The first observation to consider is how the curriculum being taught only spread the accomplishments of white male European composers therefore erasing the presence of marginalized cultures such as the structure of poetry and setting of text to music during the Middle Ages originating from Arab culture.⁸ Arab love poetry began in Andalusia and made its way into Southern France before spreading to other parts of Europe and influencing the Troubadour style. Modern classrooms performing a song in this style contribute the poetry to Latin texts rather than the Arab roots which is how cultural influences are erased.⁹ The same can be said for Chinese culture. Writers such as Oliver Goldsmith, Voltaire, and Goethe incorporated Chinese literature and philosophy into their works. In addition to literature, traditional Chinese music heavily influenced the work of European composers. Carl Maria von Weber discovered a Chinese song in Rousseau's Dictionary of Music that led to the *Turandot Overture* composition.¹⁰ Even though the connections existed, recognition was only given to the European composers even going so far as to label Chevalier De Saint-Georges the "Black Mozart" even though he came before Mozart.¹¹ Through these examples, it can be shown that the foundation of

⁸ Said I. Abdelwahed, "Troubadour Poetry: An Intercultural Experience." Arabworldbooks, (2017).

⁹ Joel Francis Nesvadba, "The Authenticity of Song: Performance Practice and Rhetoric in the Music of the Troubadours" (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 2017), 21.

¹⁰ Richard Taruskin, "Nation, States, and Peoples: Romantic Opera in Germany (Mozart, Weber)," *Music in the Nineteenth Century: The Oxford History of Western Music*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 192.

¹¹ Walter E. Smith, *The Black Mozart: Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges*, (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2004), 55.

music education in America positions one group as the dominant group because of the lack of diverse cultural narratives.

The second observation to consider is that the people who had access to this education and socializing were wealthy white immigrants from Europe. Neither the African slaves, “Latinx”¹² slaves, nor the “indigenous bodies”¹³ removed from their homeland could partake in these lessons. Nonetheless music, learning basic literacy skills was not something afforded to many of these populations. The lessons they were taught were skills that could make them more useful to the masters.¹⁴ There was a barrier created that denied these marginalized bodies access because of the social position they had been forced into. While it may have been advantageous for the white immigrants, it is key to realize that this development taught the marginalized bodies that their own culture was worth less than the wealthy white counterparts.¹⁵ Through these observations, it can be concluded that just as whiteness was colonizing the land, it was

¹² The term “Latinx” is used to refer to people of Latin American heritage/ethnicities in a way that includes those who do not identify with masculine and feminine social positions; Catalina (Kathleen) M. de Onís. "What's in an “x”?: An Exchange about the Politics of “Latinx”," *Chiricù Journal: Latina/o Literature, Art, and Culture* 1, no. 2 (2017): 79, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/chiricu.1.2.07>.

¹³ The phrase “Indigenous bodies” refers to the group of people indigenous to the United States rather than using the state-imposed label of ‘Native Americans’. The use of such language can contribute to the effects of settler colonialism. See Taiaiake Alfred et al., "Being Indigenous: Resurgences Against Contemporary Colonialism," *Government and opposition* 40, no. 4 (2005): 600, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/download/21166/17970>.

¹⁴ Henry Allen Bullock, *History of Negro Education in the South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 8-10.

¹⁵ Houston A. Baker, *The Journey Back*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 30-31.

simultaneously colonizing music.

As the concept of singing schools had spread to other colonies, the Boston Academy of Music was eventually opened in 1833 by Lowell Mason.¹⁶ This was a landmark for education because it was the first higher institution of music that focused not only singing but theory as well. The *Manual of Instruction* written by Lowell became a foundation for music education in America, but was largely influenced by the Swiss Pestalozzian System of education.¹⁷ The key observation to consider is how the music education system itself was rooted in the teachings of Europe. Since the people attending these schools were European, this development of education allowed them to learn about their heritage, appreciate milestones in music, and develop their own skills to match or surpass the geniuses. However, this education system is only beneficial when the class demographic is a monolithic narrative. What changes the success of this program is when people who come from different backgrounds enter the same classroom.

Reconstruction and Progressive Era

The nineteenth and twentieth century demonstrated an attempt by society to assimilate marginalized bodies into this monolithic narrative. Native American Boarding Schools were created in the late 1800s to assimilate the indigenous students into American Culture¹⁸. During

¹⁶ Estelle R. Jorgensen, "Engineering Change in Music Education: A Model of the Political Process Underlying the Boston School Music Movement (1829-1838)," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 31, no. 1 (1983): 70, accessed February 20, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3345111>.

¹⁷ Arthur Efland, "Art and Music in the Pestalozzian Tradition," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 31, no. 3 (1983): 172, accessed March 17, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3345170>.

¹⁸ Mary Stout, "Carlisle Boarding School: 1875-1900," *Native American Boarding Schools* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 28.

this time, the Office of Indian Affairs was created to determine what a true ‘American life’ consisted of and what should not be included within that lifestyle. As a result, many of the indigenous tribes were forbidden to engage in their traditional songs and dances because they were labeled ‘savage’ to American society.¹⁹ This also means that the curriculum within the schools was created based on what would help these tribes learn and accept to be considered true patriots. The danger with this process was the psychological violence being done to these people. Not only were the children being taught that the wealthy white immigrants were superior but that their own people were not. That means the children who were taken off of the reservations were being ripped apart from their heritage and being taught to police their own community crated barriers between tribes. The next example is the segregation of the school system which began after the Reconstruction era in 1877 and lasted until 1954.²⁰ During this time, colleges and conferences were established to lead America into a new wave of music education. One of the main events was the Tanglewood Symposium which a response to three movements at the time which include: school reform, civil rights, and technology.²¹ Even though the symposium touched on critical concerns, the result was a constant call to change the current system rather than reform it.²² One of the common results of this symposium has been the inclusion of

¹⁹ John W. Troutman, "Indian Blues: The Indigenization of American Popular Music," *World Literature Today* 83, no. 3 (2009), 44, accessed January 24, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20621591>.

²⁰ Betsy Levin, "Foreword," *The Courts, Social Science, and School Desegregation*. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), 1-2.

²¹ Michael L. Mark, "MENC: From Tanglewood to the Present," *Vision 2020* (2000), 2, accessed March 25, 2019, <https://nafme.org/wp-content/files/2015/12/5-MENCFromTanglewood.pdf>

²² Mark, "MENC: From Tanglewood," 4.

multicultural, but these efforts usually stop there. Instead of researching and incorporating the styles of these cultures, one song becomes the justification for teachers to remove any accountability for perpetuating stereotypes or the responsibility to further these discussions because they are the self-proclaimed allies.²³ While these may have good intentions, these efforts do little to actually resolve the way these students interact within this curriculum which only harms them more because they accept the narrative that minority students will fail.²⁴ Another justification for keeping the larger structure of the curriculum as is would be that teachers are satisfied with current musical concepts, but that lacks an understanding of how music from different cultures actually shaped these concepts.²⁵

Cultural Influences on American Popular Music

Recent studies have discovered the numerous contributions other cultures have had on Western music such as linguistics and rhythms. In particular, Latinx dance rhythms such as salsa and habanera have become the basis of US popular music.²⁶ In addition to rhythms, the folklores

²³ Deborah Bradley, "Music Education, Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism: Can We Talk," *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 5, no. 2 (2006): 29, accessed January 05, 2019, http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Bradley5_2.pdf.

²⁴ A study conducted by Jean S. Phinney and Steve Tarver showed that minority students have a higher awareness of their ethnic identity because of the belief that they will have less opportunities in life opposed to their privileged counterparts. This study proves how the students themselves still internalize these narratives in modern education classrooms; Jean S. Phinney and Steve Tarver, "Ethnic Identity Search and Commitment in Black and White Eighth Graders," *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 8, no. 3 (1988): 270, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0272431688083004>.

²⁵ Ibid, 271.

²⁶ John Storm Roberts, introduction to *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999) ix-x.

and storytelling of Latinx music have also influenced the structure and composition of American music. A great example would be Tin Pan Alley, an early formation of Broadway, relied on Latinx musicians for much of its success in 1946 including Osvaldo Farre's compositions.²⁷ Instead of recognizing these contributions as a foundation for modern music, music curriculum isolates these cultures as a foreign existence that immigrated in later years. In doing so, the curriculum has co-opted these achievements under the success of American popular music rather than highlighting the Cuban roots which also erases the influence of the Latinx bodies who existed during the makings of America.²⁸ While problematic, this was not a new pattern for Western societies. In the development of European music, many colonized cultures were co-opted for musical ideas without given the credit for them as discussed earlier in this paper.

Thus, a unique opportunity arises when performing this piece. Instead of just playing the notes, teachers are able to expand on world history in addition to Chinese music theory that shaped the composition of the tune used in the overture. The influence of other cultures on Western music is extraordinary and waiting to be explored. Therefore, incorporating this history and alternate theory would only strengthen the greater curriculum rather than taking away from it. The problem with protecting the current curriculum and refusing to acknowledge the violent history that contributed to its development is that it demonstrates an unwillingness from educators to understand their students. This history continues to affect the modern classroom because there is an increase of students from diverse backgrounds so a refusal to acknowledge the faults in the education system only recreates the systems of power that suppress the students

²⁷ John Storm Roberts, *The Latin Tinge*, 111.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 10.

and decreases engagement.²⁹ The next section of this paper analyzes these factors and outlines the importance of active engagement from the educator to break down harmful narratives.

Social Class and Music Education

Class hierarchy necessitates inequality because those in the lower levels are denied access to resources including the quantity and quality of education. Students from impoverished families are not expected to have a bright future, nonetheless profit society. This is because economic barriers make it difficult for people in poverty to create opportunities for themselves which leads to a cycle in which they are perpetually stuck in that position. If a person cannot create a better opportunity for themselves, the narrative that is accepted is that they will be unable to innovate society for the better.³⁰ As a result, impoverished students are criminalized without ever being given a chance.³¹ Students in urban areas with high poverty rates are grouped together in a school with scarce access to resources because the families do not have the funds to support the school. Not only does the subject of music suffer, but all subjects lack the ability to provide the children with the opportunities other children their age can access. Schools in areas with wealthy families are able to provide more resources, class options, and quality teachers because they can afford the expenses. Even though it has been decades since the government allocated funds through community taxes, the same bias divisions of school lines exist so that wealthy families are in one school and impoverished families are in another.³² This may not

²⁹ Deborah Bradley, "The Sounds of Silence," 138.

³⁰ "Critical Social Class Theory for Music Education," *International Journal of Education & the Arts* 18, no. 7 (2017) 7, accessed January 05, 2019, <http://www.ijea.org/v18n7/>

³¹ "Critical Social Class," 5,

³² John G. Augenblick et al., "Equity and Adequacy," 65.

seem like a pressing concern until one realizes the amount of students who are left with inadequate resources. In 2016, findings showed that among all children under 18 years in the U.S., 41 percent are low-income children and 19 percent—approximately one in five—are poor.³³ In addition, there are many children who live just above the poverty line which means almost half of the children in the US are struggling with class inequalities that present an uphill battle to receive a quality education. The danger that can be concluded from these statistics is that many of these children will get locked within the poverty cycle because of the inadequate education. Many students accept the “natural order of things” which subconsciously locks them within the cycle of poverty which continues for generations.³⁴

The Remains of a Class Hierarchy in Music

The music education classroom contributes to this class narrative because the curriculum highlights a wealthy lifestyle, requires expensive equipment and presents an unfair advantage to the wealthiest districts because they do not experience the cognitive suppression that impoverished students do.³⁵ Historically, music was something created for the upper class who had the time to spend their wealth on entertainment. For example, opera was originally something meant for the upper class and developed through the meetings of wealthy individuals’ court musicians during the sixteenth and seventeenth century.³⁶ Gradually, music became

³³ Heather Koball and Yang Jiang, "Basic Facts about Low-Income Children: Children under 9 Years, 2016. Fact Sheet," *National Center for Children in Poverty* (2018).

³⁴ “Critical Social Class Theory,” 12.

³⁵ “Critical Social Class Theory,” 7.

³⁶ Amanda Fawcett-Lothson, "The Florentine Camerata and their Influence on the Beginnings of Opera," *IU South Bend Undergraduate Research Journal* 9 (2009): 29, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/iusburj/article/view/19724>.

something to enjoy in the middle class as well but there was a gap as to how lower-income families engaged this music because they did not have the time or funds to engage in these activities. As a result, music of the upper and middle class became framed as ‘refined’.³⁷ This view still implicates how American society values music today. In the music classroom, classical music is framed as foundational in music history which delegitimizes other forms because they are deemed “vulgar music practices”.³⁸ The development of jazz is a great example. Marginalized populations such as African-Americans and indigenous tribes did not have access to popular American music because they did not have permission to access to the places where European descendants could. As a result, the music they created was rejected at first. Jazz was described by privileged communities as “evil” and “primitive”.³⁹ The rhythmic innovation, call and response, and improvisation were not appreciated, but a justification to label the jazz artist “savage” and “lacking modern sophistication.”⁴⁰ Eventually, there was a shift as some of the wealthy white musicians began to compose and perform jazz music. The response was completely different; openly enjoyed and supported.⁴¹ One of the reasons for the difference in response is because of the exposure available to each musician. There were little opportunities to overcome these narratives because performance in expensive clubs was not afforded to the

³⁷ “Critical Social Class Theory,” 12.

³⁸ Ibid, 13.

³⁹ Maureen Anderson, "The White Reception of Jazz in America." *African American Review* 38, no. 1 (2004): 135, accessed March 25, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1512237>.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 136.

⁴¹ Anderson, "The White Reception," 143.

African-Americans. As a result, traces of these narratives still remain in music education.

Previous efforts conducted by music educators to break down this class hierarchy have actually reinforced the same narratives.⁴² One of the most common methods used is the incorporation of multicultural songs to spread cultural awareness and inclusion, however, this approach usually results in a “spiced-up” program.⁴³ A great example of this is the song *Baba Yetu*. Even though it may be the Lord’s Prayer in Swahili, it was written by an Asian American born and raised in California.⁴⁴ The purpose of the composition was to contribute to a soundtrack about colonialization that highlights the US as a hegemon through the wealth accumulation of capitalism.⁴⁵ When conductors teach this song to raise awareness, it actually does the opposite by highlighting the economic system that created a class divide in the first place. As a result, when teachers do not include these intricate histories and background stories into the curriculum, the narrative that continues to dominate the education system is that ‘refined’ forms of art are the best and those in poverty should hold the same views.⁴⁶ For children with access to resources, all is well. However, for the 41% living under the poverty line, this focus teaches them that they will never be good enough. When they internalize that, it removes the motivation to even try because they believe they will never be able to break out of the cycle.

⁴² “Critical Social Class Theory,” 12.

⁴³ Bradley, "Music Education, Multiculturalism," 12.

⁴⁴ Christopher Tin, "About," Christopher Tin, accessed April 02, 2019, <https://www.christophertin.com/about.html#bio>.

⁴⁵ Karen M. Cook, "Music, History, and Progress in Sid Meier’s Civilization IV," In *Music In Video Games*, (Routledge, 2014) 168.

⁴⁶ “Critical Social Class Theory,” 18.

The Importance of Resources

Many of the famous pedagogies that exist require books, instruments, software, technology, and more. Thus, another barrier to breaking out of this cycle becomes expenses and lack of resources. For example, the Orff method is beneficial because it thrives off the child's natural ability to play, and has a list of instruments meant to enhance the child's learning, the xylophone being the most common. The problem is that this instrument can cost hundreds of dollars which can add up when considering class sizes. There may be cheaper versions, but that forces a teacher to choose between quality and quantity which can be avoided if the budget is large enough. More often, it is not. While this example focuses on a teacher who highlights Eurocentric models of education, even teachers who attempt to shift narratives of education run into the barrier of expenses.

Even more so, the students of wealthy schools have more of an advantage when presented with opportunities. Whether a person is auditioning for a camp, college, or production, there are resources and skills necessary to succeed. Students from a wealthy school have the money to fulfill any application or addition fees while a student from a low-income family may not. Often, wealthy students are more likely to have an extensive knowledge of musical concepts because the school can implement those classes and the resources necessary to teach them. In general, wealthy students can often most likely afford private lessons outside of school to put them even farther ahead. One on one training gives them the opportunity to not only perfect basic musical concepts, but develop their own voice or playing technique. Students from low income areas are less likely to be able to afford private lessons which could put them at a further disadvantage if the school systems are unable to provide the resources to teach the basic musical concepts. This means that even if students wanted to pursue music as a way to break out of the

cycle, they can't even open the door. For all of these reasons, economic inequality is an uphill battle for both the students and teachers which is why it is necessary to set the example by shifting the reliance on wealth to more innovative methods.

Gender and Music Education

Women have historically been excluded from music and the effects still exist. When music began to develop within the church, it was composed and performed by males. During the sixteenth century in Europe, music was taught to men as a tool to court females.⁴⁷ This time also defined the role of women as a subordinate to men with a focus on housework, motherhood, and marriage.⁴⁸ Even though there were some women who excelled in music, they were special exceptions society made to the greater narrative that women were inferior.⁴⁹ This time period is important because it includes the discovery and migration to America. Therefore, the roles of women that exist in Europe can be found when analyzing history in America. The woman was taught to perform household management so that the man would be able to handle the work outside of the house.⁵⁰ The eighteenth century showed an increase of opportunities for women in music such as singing in the congregation, but they were still restricted from singing in the choir

⁴⁷ Lynda Phyllis and Linda Phyllis Austern. "Women's Musical Voices in Sixteenth-Century England," *Early Modern Women* (2008): 130, accessed March 25, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23541522>.

⁴⁸ Karin Pendle ed, *Women & Music: A History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001), 59.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 59.

⁵⁰ Myrna I. Lewis, "The History of Female Sexuality in the United States," *Women's Sexual Development*, (Springer, Boston, MA, 1980), 22.

out of fear that this would be the start of women seeking professions in music.⁵¹ Eventually, women were included in secular music societies such as the Handel society in Boston.⁵² Despite this development, the musicians who could travel and gain attention were men.⁵³ Thus, the gender inequality music has contributed is no longer a question of whether women had access to music, but their role and the way they were treated within the industry. This implicates how female students are taught and policed to devalue their work within music.

Erasing Her-story

One of the consequences of gender inequality within music is the erasure of women's contributions and presence throughout history.⁵⁴ Even though there were many female composers from the medieval to modern days, textbooks and encyclopedias only mention a few names.⁵⁵ The pioneers of various musical genres who are taught are men. Historical records associate Baroque music with Bach, Classical with Mozart, Romantic with Beethoven, and jazz with Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. As a result, the narrative that dominates education is that even if women may be able to compose and perform, aesthetically pleasing music is not

⁵¹ Mary Brown Hinely, "The Uphill Climb of Women in American Music: Performers and Teachers," *Music Educators Journal* 70, no. 8 (1984): 32, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3400871>.

⁵² *Ibid*, 32.

⁵³ Mary Brown Hinely, "The Uphill Climb," 33.

⁵⁴ Sondra Wieland Howe, "Reconstructing the History of Music Education from a Feminist Perspective," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* (1998): 98, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40327121>.

⁵⁵ Julia Eklund Koza, "The Boys in the Band," 85.

compatible with their work as much as it is with traditional works by men.⁵⁶ These are subtle but effective ways of training women to suppress themselves.

One of the most effective and dangerous methods that perpetuate gender inequality is “self-policing”⁵⁷ because it locks a person within the confines of their own mind. When women internalize that they are not enough in comparison to men, it begins to implicate how they navigate the world and interact with other women because they are attempting to stay in uniformity with the dominant narrative; in the case of music education, has been male dominated.⁵⁸ As a result, women have been taught to settle for less than they deserve. This is unique to the music education classroom as the job of teaching was an act of settling during the 20th century because women were discouraged from composing and engaging in diverse musical careers.⁵⁹ Since women were dominating the education field, some can view this as a step towards progress. The problem with this argument is that it relies on the question of access. As stated earlier, the method of exacerbating gender inequality is through forms of psychological control. Thus, a closer analysis reveals this movement as an act of “self-policing”. While it may be true that some women wanted to teach, the larger motivation for choosing this career was that many women had internalized that they were not good enough or were not strong enough to

⁵⁶ Roberta Lamb, “Feminism as Critique in Philosophy of Music Education,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 2, no. 2 (1994): 64, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40327073>.

⁵⁷ This term is used to describe how a person will begin to correct their behavior before another person can especially in the context of music rehearsals as described by Patricia O’Toole, “I Sing in a Choir, but I have No Voice,” *The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning* 4, no. 5 (1994): 19, accessed February 20, 2019, <http://www.rider.edu/~vrme/>.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 23.

⁵⁹ “Women Composers In American Popular Song,” *Parlorsongs.com*, 1.

overcome the barriers to engage in other musical careers. As a result, they settled within the field of education.

The Narrative of Purity and Policing

The next tool that devalues female existence within music is the narrative of conservatism that is defined as a commitment to traditional values and ideas for the purposes of this paper. The way it influences gender inequality in America music is by upholding the traditional standard of modesty that punishes women with scripts of “hypersexualization”.⁶⁰ During the development of America, religion played a large role in upholding tradition and defining the acceptable ways society should operate. One aspect of that tradition was the importance of purity and the supporting role of women. Even though both genders were taught to purify themselves, there was a double standard in the way it was represented. For example, in the New England colonies where Puritan Calvinism dominated society, women were framed dangerous like the temptress Eve because of their sexuality.⁶¹ Representations like this create an image of women as one who purposefully engages in acts of impurity but the reality was the inability for men to control their own desires. To force women to overwork themselves to make sure men will not be tempted was unfair and an unrealistic expectation. Similar views existed across the other colonies which placed the responsibility upon women to police themselves and

⁶⁰ This term is used to describe the way images of women are overly focused on their sexuality. This way of viewing women exists in society writ large, but has become a key framing within the music industry; Erin Hatton and Mary Nell Trautner, "Images of Powerful Women in the Age of 'Choice Feminism'," *Journal of Gender Studies* 22, no. 1 (2013): 66, accessed February 20, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2012.681184>.

⁶¹ Myrna I. Lewis, "The History of Female Sexuality in the United States," *Women's Sexual Development*, (Springer, Boston, MA, 1980), 20.

remain extremely cautious of the way they carry and present themselves.

The same policing and “hyper-sexualization” still exists and uses the music classroom as a tool to reinforce the narrative of ‘modesty’ to young women. Each school has a dress code that deems what is acceptable to ensure a positive reputation within the community which upholds the demonization of a women’s sexuality.⁶² The positive reputation is rooted within a traditional view of purity which subconsciously represents women’s sexuality as an inevitable temptation. The way this translates to the music education classroom is concert etiquette. While the dress code for men teaches them how to assemble a formal suit, the code for women is based on covering up as much as possible. Basically, the men learn what to do while the women learn what not to do which teaches the students to actively police and shame females who are confident in their sexuality. This creates a barrier within the classroom because it should be a place of experimentation and acceptance, not victim-blaming especially when the same is not done to men.⁶³ This is especially true because of the professional careers in music. Classical singers wear revealing formal clothes which get labeled high fashion and sophisticated so and an educator should not shame a music student learning to do the same. In addition to being a positive role model that discourages bullying, the teacher should not create an overbearing focus on the clothes and sexuality of students because it will outshine the subject itself. When the teacher makes it a point to frame the music classroom as a space of respect, it teaches the

⁶² Rebecca Raby, ““Tank Tops Are Ok but I Don’t Want to See Her Thong” Girls’ Engagements with Secondary School Dress Codes.” *Youth & Society* 41, no. 3 (2010): 333-356, accessed March 07, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0044118X09333663>.

⁶³ Roberta Lamb, “Feminism as Critique in Philosophy of Music Education,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 2, no. 2 (1994): 68, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40327073>.

students how to better their character and hold each other accountable instead of tearing one another down.

Race and Music Education

The creation of the United States relies on racial inequality beginning with slavery and the genocide of “Indigenous bodies”, Jim Crow, the prison industrial complex, immigration reform, and the school to prison pipeline.⁶⁴ As a result, society at large remains inherently anti-black and colonialist even in the music education classroom as those who do not meet the Eurocentric ideals are excluded.⁶⁵ For this section, one must refer to the historical analysis of the music education system in America. Major points of development that are highlighted and taught to students studying to become teachers only tells one side of history. Even if moments like the creation of singing schools were great, it cannot be separated from the simultaneous holocaust that occurred towards Black and Indigenous bodies via colonialization.⁶⁶ This understanding of history becomes an ignorance that fails to truly engage students of today’s society because it operates in a linear understanding of time as opposed to a circular understanding. This means that the education system views these examples as events that have already passed instead of an extension of the same event. The problem with a linear mindset is that it removes any responsibility or accountability of today’s educators to reform the system. Making amendments is not sufficient because it is nothing more than putting a Band-Aid on a bullet wound. The

⁶⁴ Frank B. Wilderson III, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of US Antagonisms* (London, UK: Duke University Press, 2010), 10.

⁶⁵ Bradley, “The Sounds of Silence,” 137.

⁶⁶ Wilderson III, *Red, White & Black*, 11.

wound has not been dealt with and, in this case, the wound is that the system was built for a certain student which was the white immigrant.

This view has affected music education in the way we engage students of various races which does more to silence their voices than fuel critical thinking.⁶⁷ Similar to the hierarchy discussed in the class section of this paper, race also played a role in creating the standards of pure and sophisticated music. The music of the white man was pure and legitimate while the music of a marginalized race was considered a “bad taste”.⁶⁸ One example was the traditional music and dance of Indigenous bodies which were deemed a mismatch to the ‘American’ and excluded within the boarding schools.⁶⁹ Another example is jazz which was only legitimized once the wealthy white man played and it was a white man recognizing the music.⁷⁰ The white man had the power, respect, and authority to have a say in what music was good or not. During the development of jazz, the music had to be re-told through the white man in order to matter.⁷¹ Eventually, that narrative was broken in jazz but continued to manifest in other genres of music. A great example is hip-hop. After the civil rights movement ‘ended’, there was a lot of backlash towards the black community. White flight emerged relocating many social opportunities to the suburbs and negative stigmas like the welfare queen emerged to demonize black folk for stealing

⁶⁷ Bradley, “The Sounds of Silence,” 134.

⁶⁸ Robert G. O’Meally, ed. *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture*, (Columbia University Press, 1998), 137.

⁶⁹ Stout, “Carlisle Boarding School,” 27-46.

⁷⁰ Anderson, “The White Reception,” 136.

⁷¹ O’Meally, *The Jazz Cadence*, 138.

resources they had not earned from the government.⁷² Music was a tool widely used during the black power movement so it continued after and hip-hop emerged in the Bronx. It started out with young people gathering in random parts of the city such as parks, street corners, outside of stores to speak poetry over beats made by surrounding noise. They talked about their struggle, the systems of power that operate, happiness, and kinships.⁷³ This culture expanded to become a way to navigate an anti-black world and the response to the movement by white counterparts – fear.

The Criminalization of Music

Society was fearful of these art movements as it was any movement that existed by “black folk”⁷⁴ because it threatens the existence and privilege of whiteness.⁷⁵ “Blackness”⁷⁶ was

⁷² Ann Cammett, "Deadbeat Dads & Welfare Queens: How Metaphor Shapes Poverty Law," *BCJL & Soc. Just.* 34 (2014): 236-237, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/bctw34&i=243>.

⁷³ Bettina L. Love, "A Ratchet Lens: Black Queer Youth, Agency, Hip Hop, and the Black Ratchet Imagination," *Educational Researcher* 46, no. 9 (2017): 542, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X17736520>.

⁷⁴ This phrase is used in scholarship to describe a communal identity through the double consciousness of how black folk exist and how society views them. This concept was coined by William Edward Burghardt Du Bois and Manning Marable in *Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Routledge, 2015), accessed March 13, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315631998>.

⁷⁵ Frank Wilderson III, "Gramsci's Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?," *Social Identities* 9, no. 2 (2003): 237, accessed March 25, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1350463032000101579>.

⁷⁶ This term is used to describe an ontological position situated outside of the concept of humanity that provides the coherency to understand categories of the human as defined by Frank B. Wilderson III et al., *Afro-Pessimism: An Introduction* (Minneapolis, MN: Racked & Dispatched, 2017), 9.

a crime in and of itself so it did not matter where or how it presented itself.⁷⁷ “Black folk” were painted as a criminal in society because they were ‘loitering’ and ‘vandalizing’. This was a mischaracterization with the purpose of masking the true crime – being black in America.⁷⁸ Therefore, the reviews of early hip-hop was to be wary because it promoted gang related activity, violence, and anarchy.⁷⁹ This characterization was purposeful propaganda from civil society to keep the narrative around black folk negative so they could be further suppressed. It could not be a more misinformed characterization because before black folk realized they could create strategies through music, it was a form of community building and uplift.⁸⁰ In a society where they are constantly beaten down and silenced, music gave them energy and hope.

There are two important observations to take from this example. The first is how the responses to this genre differed between black hip-hop artists and white artists. White hip-hop groups like the Beastie Boys or Vanilla Ice released songs and profit off of appropriating African-American Culture.⁸¹ Black artists were still excelling by getting their music on the top

⁷⁷ Wilderson III, *Afro-Pessimism*, 9.

⁷⁸ Saidiya Hartman, "The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 117, no. 3 (2018): 465-490.

⁷⁹ Lamotte, Martin. "Rebels without a Pause: Hip-Hop and Resistance in the City," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 2 (2014): 687, accessed February 20, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1215/00382876-6942093>.

⁸⁰ Daphne A. Brooks, "'All that You Can't Leave Behind': Black Female Soul Singing and the Politics of Surrogation in the Age of Catastrophe," *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 8, no. 1 (2007): 190, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40338916>.

⁸¹ Mickey Hess, "Hip-hop Realness and the White Performer," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 22, no. 5 (2005): 379, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07393180500342878>.

charts, but the response from the greater public was labeling the music as violent. There was a clear double standard that showed it was not the music itself that was the problem but the society receiving it. Similar to jazz, it was not until white people who had power and respect began to perform and support the music that it became a legitimate genre.

The second observation to make is how the education system was a key tool to spread the negative narrative surrounding racialized music. The focus in the school system at this time was still praising the white male composers who set the foundation for modern music. The school was a tool society used to further train the students to be acceptable citizens in society so that meant condemning what society writ large condemned like hip-hop music.⁸² There are two problems that occur as a result. When schools teach this to non-black students, it reinforces the anti-blackness that has already been planted and fuels a hatred for this culture. The condemnation of hip-hop music and culture gets translated to that of blackness and justifies violence against these bodies. When taught to black students, they begin to experience resentment for their blackness resulting in a self-hatred. When they internalize that their culture is violent, the community loses hope which justifies their own elimination through “ressentiment”.⁸³

⁸² Adam J. Kruse, "Featherless Dinosaurs and the Hip-Hop Simulacrum: Reconsidering Hip-Hop's Appropriateness for the Music Classroom," *Music Educators Journal* 102, no. 4 (2016): 20, accessed March 24, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2F0027432116638904>.

⁸³ This term constitutes torment without relief, and the desperation for relief results in forms of self-injury, in which the body must speak the existential crisis that gets muted within humanist grammars as defined by Calvin L. Warren, "Black Nihilism and the Politics of Hope," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 15, no. 1 (2015): 228, accessed March 25, 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14321/crnewcentrevi.15.1.0215>.

While it may not be as obvious, the condemnation of another race's music still exists in the music classroom because of the way educators highlight white Eurocentric music and their inability to engage in the discussion of race.⁸⁴ Students are open to multiple forms of violence including police brutality and micro aggressions in their everyday lives which tear away at their psyche. Music is supposed to be a place to regenerate and heal but the classroom has become another site of violence by remaining silent on these discussions and refusing to train the students to express and advocate for themselves. Without the willingness of teachers to engage in a conversation of social justice, students do not have a space to release tension and, as a result, they internalize these scripts and remain silent.⁸⁵ Such a serious problem can be avoided if there are opportunities to have these discussion. The next section of this paper discusses the way music has been a successful tool to breakdown narratives of social inequality within the US.

Music as a Tool for Social Justice Movements

The Plantation Era

Music has been a tool for advocacy throughout history starting as early as work songs on plantations, to the Civil Rights Movement, and even today. While slaves were being transported through the Middle Passage, there are accounts of music and dancing.⁸⁶ These were important attributes of the African culture as they were used to empower the community and enhance spirituality. The crew of the ship would force the slaves to dance because they wanted to keep

⁸⁴ Bradley, "The Sounds of Silence," 138.

⁸⁵ Ashley, "The Angry Black Woman," 30.

⁸⁶ Geneviève Fabre, "The Slave Ship Dance," in *Black Imagination and the Middle Passage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 33-46.

the commodities strong and agile so they would sell for a good price. This situation may seem to counter the purpose of this paper, but it actually supports it because this moment marks the creation of a new culture. The slaves did not have to dance and many chose that death was better than whatever life lied before them. However, the ones that stayed used the music and dancing as a method of survival which continued on the plantation. Slaves began singing songs as they worked to connect with one another. The call and response was like a check-in system. It let them know that no one was alone and that even if the work was hard, there are brothers and sisters to share the load. This evolved from a strategy of empowerment to a method of escape. Songs such as *Wade in the Water*, *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, and *The Gospel Train* all concealed hidden messages that guided many slaves to the north.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, escaping the plantation did not make black folk free from the anti-black oppression. Years after emancipation, slavery had found new ways to exist and hinder black bodies through Jim Crow, the Prison Industrial Complex, and police brutality.

Civil Rights Era

The beginning of this era includes the fight for civil rights. One of the main representatives was the freedom singers who highlighted the political and humanist agenda.⁸⁸ Music was not just a tool to unite the community, but inspired people to engage in the political sphere to make change. Repertoire was chosen to meet the ten components of music highlighted

⁸⁷ James B. Kelley, "Song, Story, or History: Resisting Claims of a Coded Message in the African American Spiritual "Follow the Drinking Gourd"," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 41, no. 2 (2008): 262-280.

⁸⁸ Leslie Paige Rose, "The Freedom Singers of the Civil Rights Movement: Music Functioning for Freedom," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 25, no. 2 (2007): 59.

by Merriam: for emotional expression, aesthetic enjoyment, entertainment, communication, symbolic representation, physical response, enforcing conformity to social norms, validating institutions and religious rituals, contributing to continuity and stability of culture, and contributing to the integration of society.⁸⁹ As a result, the freedom singers' performances increased voter registration, created a new form of communication, and inspired strategies.⁹⁰ Their involvement also contributed a large amount of funds to gain access to necessary resources. Overall, music became a foundational force to strategize and energize minority communities during the civil rights era and set a precedent for future movements as well.

The Black Power Movement

During the Black Power Movement, music was a main tool used by the black community to achieve social justice. The Black Arts Movement was the outlet of the Black Power Movement that demonstrated a pride and love of blackness. This movement reframed the dominant view of blackness as something that is always in opposition to something else or purely a focus on survival.⁹¹ Music was a moment of catharsis that created a space for the black community to be themselves. This is not to be confused with a safe space because blackness is something that is always hyper-surveilled and targeted, but music was still a way to be opaque to

⁸⁹ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 218.

⁹⁰ Rose, "The Freedom Singers," 65.

⁹¹ L. Forsgren La Donna, "'Set Your Blackness Free': Barbara Ann Teer's Art and Activism during the Black Arts Movement," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 36, no. 1 (2015): 136-159.

the structure while transparent within the community.⁹² Even in today's social climate, music remains a large unifier of the black community. Black artists from various styles including jazz, blues, R&B, hip-hop, and even pop use their platforms to bring awareness to racial injustice and give back to uplift the black community. A great example is Chance the Rapper launching a full campaign to uplift Chicago's Public School System. Through all of these examples, music has proven to be a powerful outlet for activism on the micro-political level. As a result, the music education classroom becomes a key space to expose students to the possibilities music has for advocacy. The next section of this paper introduces specific frameworks to incorporate within the music education classroom.

Critical Social Theory within Music Education

Integrating critical social theory within the music education classroom has created a new framework to dismantle inequalities. This is not to be confused with multiculturalism which focuses on using commonalities to integrate cultures instead of recognizing the injustices that exist because of difference. Past multicultural movements have failed to make curriculums more diverse and continue to advantage the white able-bodied male. Statistics show that only just more than half of minority students actually graduate high school and, in 2007, only 10% of the total number of teachers were minorities.⁹³ Critical social theory emerged as a response to this failure and has shown benefits because it requires that teachers think critically themselves and confront personal bias as a starting point to creating an environment in which the students can do the

⁹² Erica Nichole Duncan, "Marie Hill and Her Intimate Terror: An Examination of Intimate Violence and the Disposal of Black Girls, Women, and their Insurgency in Carceral Spheres" (PhD diss., UCLA, 2017), 11.

⁹³ Bradley, "The Sounds of Silence," 143.

same.⁹⁴ Thus, a pedagogy rooted in social theory has been shown to create a discussion that identifies discrimination, analyzes the causes, challenges values, and changes behaviors that perpetuate oppression.⁹⁵ Rather than ignoring or silencing anti-oppression dialogue, this praxis encourages social justice activism as a material response to oppression. For example, classrooms can generate conversations about slave revolutions or the apartheid system in South Africa when singing the freedom songs.⁹⁶ This creates an awareness that shows the teacher is not afraid of these discussions and creates a space for students to heal and develop strategies.

Substantial benefits have been shown by implementing this approach such as student empowerment and hope. In an interview with students from the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, lessons utilizing social theory had the biggest impact.⁹⁷ The revolutions in South Africa became an inspiration for students to change how the world operates today. The students also recognized messages within the songs as a guide to view and navigate society. Students were encouraged to reject negative ideas society had tried to feed them and instead embraced self-love. Another example is two queer music educators who redefined the term ‘coming out’ as an escape from the heteronormative ideas that suppress students’ voices.⁹⁸ The result has been a

⁹⁴ Vincent C. Bates, “Introduction: Reaffirming Commitments to Critical Theory for Social Justice,” *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15, no. 5 (2016): 2.

⁹⁵ G. J. S. Dei, *Power, Knowledge, and Anti-Racism Education* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2000), 12-13.

⁹⁶ Bradley, “The Sounds of Silence,” 151.

⁹⁷ Bradley, “Music Education, Multiculturalism,” 9.

⁹⁸ Randall Everett Allsup and Eric Shieh, “Social Justice and Music Education: The Call for a Public Pedagogy,” *Music Educators Journal* 98, no. 4 (2012): 50, accessed March 23, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2F0027432112442969>.

growing sense of care between students and teachers as well as a refusal of exclusion.

While the current curriculum may create a disadvantageous environment for marginalized bodies, adopting a critical framework in music education gives them the tools to find their voice and advocate for change. This can include discussions about current social issues such as the #blacklivesmatter or #metoo movement. Of course there has to be classroom management to facilitate these discussions because every student has an opinion and opening the floodgates could easily do more harm than good. However, these discussions are important to understanding one another. Especially for a group that is making music together, understanding and exposure to different social locations is key to unity. Practical mediations may look like selecting songs that relate to these issues, assigning a composition project with themes of these social movements, or allowing the students to write letters of things they want to see changed. Small activities like this can build into larger awareness that allow the students the freedom to explore their desires and develop strategies that work for them. The music classroom is one of the best places to do that because it gives them a platform to work from and teaches them how to speak up for themselves.

Implications for Music Education Policy

Music as a tool for activism may not be available for students who do not have the resources to explore their artistry. In this scenario, it is the responsibility of the teacher to advocate for reform in the macro-political sphere to ensure long-lasting change within the education system of America. Even though music was deemed irrelevant by the government in comparison to key subjects such as STEM courses, recent studies have proven the positive

correlation between the engaging the arts and improves performances in other subjects.⁹⁹ This is because learning about music activates different parts of the brain that enhance learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Using studies like this should be the catalyst to correcting years of harmful policies.

The original standards for music education assumes were created with the goal of growing the “reasonable citizen” which justifies the exclusion of students who are not valuable towards society.¹⁰⁰ In the early colonial days of America, the valuable students were the wealthy white immigrants. The standards in 1892 were simply sight-reading, tone, and expression.¹⁰¹ These later evolved to the official standards of 1994 which were changed as recently as 2014. All of the changes were only Band-Aid fixes which never got to the root of the problem because the foundation of the curriculum continues to uphold hegemonic ideals.¹⁰² That means when a classroom has students with a different narrative, teachers have to go the extra mile and adapt according to the needs of other cultures or abilities. However, if there are no resources then it is the teachers fault for not being prepared. This is the trick of whiteness that

⁹⁹ Mariale Hardiman, Luke Rinne, and Julia Yarmolinskaya, "The Effects of Arts Integration on Long-Term Retention of Academic Content," *Mind, Brain, and Education* 8, no. 3 (2014): 147, accessed January 20, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1111/mbe.12053>.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas S. Popkewitz and Ruth Gustafson, "Standards of Music Education and the Easily Administered Child/Citizen: The Alchemy of Pedagogy and Social Inclusion/Exclusion," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 10, no. 2 (2002): 80, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40327182>.

¹⁰¹ Cathy Benedict, "Chasing Legitimacy: The US National Music Standards Viewed through a Critical Theorist Framework," *Music Education Research* 8, no. 1 (2006): 17, accessed March 13, 2019, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613800600570686>.

¹⁰² Benedict, "Chasing Legitimacy," 21.

exists in today's education system. Placing fault on the teachers or the students for not meeting the standards locks them into an emotional prison because they believe they are not good enough when the standards were never written for them in the first place.¹⁰³ Instead, standards should be developed from scratch with the voice of the marginalized populations. This is not a new discovery and many organizations support advocacy to improve music education programs. There are also resources for teachers to engage the macro-political sphere and ensure a change is made so that the students are afforded the opportunity to learn and explore music.

Conclusion

Music is a key tool toward achieving social justice. On the micro-political level, it unites communities through enjoyment, love, and fellowship which has been demonstrated through indigenous tribes using music to carry their traditions or black communities using music to find healing. Music also empowers communities to develop strategies to fight back against injustice and provides moments of relief to re-energize which has been demonstrated by the way the civil rights movement encourage macro-political participation. As a result, music itself has proven to be a strategy that allows marginalized bodies to resolve forms of oppression. These powerful functions of music will be necessary as these movements continue to work toward equality, but require a shift in the standards enforced by the US education system. There needs to be a change in perspective and an exposure to these marginalized voices instead of solely the white privileged body. The change at the macro-level starts with the micro. Critical social theory is a pedagogy and praxis designed to combat oppression within the music education classroom. It allows

¹⁰³ Cindy L. Bell, "Beginning the Dialogue: Teachers Respond to the National Standards in Music," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* (2003): 32-33, accessed March 20, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40319172>.

teachers to not only understand the violence students can face, but confront the way formal education has contributed to it. The important concept of this framework is the necessity for teachers to engage in their own prejudices. Critical social theory has been proven in numerous classrooms to overcome the negative stigmas surrounding students and present a chance to change the dominant narrative that minorities are not enough. Additionally, it reveals the duty of a teacher to recognize the diversity of students that enter the classroom and provide them with the tools to engage in the real world. Integrating a critical framework within the music education classroom provides avenues of activism that allow the students to develop strategies to gain the resources necessary. In doing so, there is a larger probability the next generation of activists can succeed and create a society where everyone is included and valued.

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