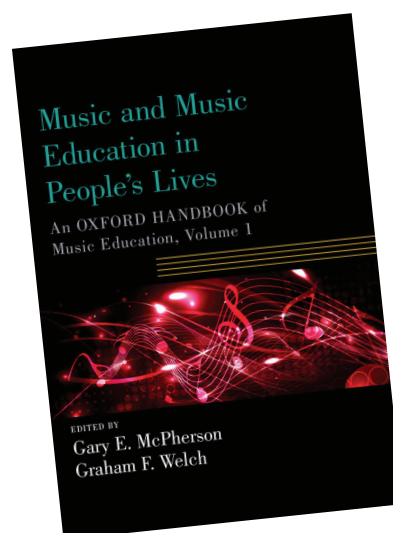


Reviewed by Joshua Smith

Music and Music Education in People's Lives: An Oxford Handbook of Music Education, Volume 1

Edited by Gary E. McPherson and Graham F. Welch
Oxford University Press, 2018



Music and Music Education in People's Lives is the first of a five-volume set of the newly updated *Oxford Handbook of Music Education*. The handbook presents a broad overview of music education, spanning many research topics pertinent to music practitioners, scholars, students, policymakers, and administrators. The chapters are written by 42 leading researchers, in many specialized areas, who hail from an array of different countries, including the United States, Canada, England, Ireland, Australia, Sweden, Brazil, Germany, and Israel. Gary E. McPherson and Graham F. Welch edited this first volume, organized into two parts. The first part forms a broad overview of music education and its role in people's lives. The second part contains the personalized critiques and insights of leading scholars on the current state of music education and on future actions that will be necessary for its continued vitality and strength. Together, they outline some of the most significant advances in music education research. They also offer professional insight to practitioners of all grade levels and music content areas.

The first 11 chapters introduce major research areas in music education and other ways in which the profession has developed. One chapter identifies growth in developmental psychology

and relates it to how people's musical identities affect their musical development. Another approaches psychological research through fostering motivation, demonstrating how teachers can adopt autonomy-supportive strategies so students can become more intrinsically motivated learners. Other chapters introduce the field of music education philosophy, and challenge readers' understanding of music education in the broader context of schools and society. One set of authors offers an historical and conceptual outline of music education's international development—past, present, and future. Developing new music programs in new contexts with an eye toward democratic notions of education are considered along with international topics. Another pair of authors considers the development, important ideas, and practices connected to cultural diversity in the classroom. The field of ethnomusicology and its expansive insights for teaching are discussed as well by a separate author. Neuroscientific research and its applicability to learning and teaching are discussed in a concluding chapter for the first section.

The second and shorter part of the book contains 25 chapters, each presenting the respective author's personal reflection and suggested framework for future action within music education. Although the editors did not prescribe the specific issues addressed in each chapter, they suggested that all chapters concern

ways in which the music education discipline might achieve greater political, theoretical, and professional strength. In terms of increasing the profession's political strength, several authors discussed the place of music as a mandated part of school curricula. They conclude that the discipline has largely grown in its universal acceptance in schools, with some exceptions. It remains important to elevate music in schools by speaking to members of the public in easily understandable ways. Because the status of music has depended on policy shifts, societal realities, and advances in scholarly work, these authors suggest the profession would benefit from considering potentially unintended or underappreciated consequences from that reality and work.

Contributing authors who address increasing the profession's theoretical strength speak of several strategies and issues in applying research to classroom practice. For example, one author explains how new and emerging understandings in educational psychology warrant educators' continued attention to the research literature. The existence of differing cultural norms across the globe presents an important reason for international dialogue within the profession. This will help educators overcome obstacles that can prevent evidence-based practices from reaching the classroom. It will also help facilitate imaginative thinking, strengthen teachers' practice, and develop shared beliefs globally.

Authors who discuss improving the music education's professional strength point to the need for accommodating the influence of informal music learning outside the classroom. They propose music educators can and should consider how school music aids students in both formal and informal settings. New and expanded technologies create the potential for students to take on self-directed learning while the teacher

acts as a resource for accomplishing their aspirations and interests in music. A model for music teacher education is argued as happening best between "education-in-music" and "music-education-research."

This handbook's original edition was offered as two hardcover volumes in 2012, each of which numbered over 700 pages. In the updated 2018 version, the chapters have been rearranged and refined to address five specialized areas in five volumes. The first volume is about half the length of its previous edition. Combined with the paperback format, each book of the series is also significantly more affordable.

The topics of music and music education in people's lived experience has broad applications for all music educators and researchers. This volume is beneficial for in-service music teachers, administrators, scholars, and pre-service music education students. It would provide a handy text for graduate foundations courses and introductions to research. Oxford handbooks as a whole convey broad overviews of many research disciplines. For practitioners, they provide useful pathfinding tools for pursuing new research interests. Although this book is not specifically oriented to the Orff Schulwerk approach, it nonetheless offers educators a powerful resource for strengthening our professional understanding and practice. ■

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