Work in the arts is not only a way of creating performances and products; it is a way of creating our lives by expanding our consciousness shaping our dispositions, satisfying our quest for meaning, establishing contact with others, and sharing a culture (Eisner 2002, 3)

University of Alberta

The schoolhouse dance in the Alberta grade four music program: an action research project

by

David Stanley Stark

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Ethnomusicology

Department of Music

©David Stanley Stark
Spring 2011
Edmonton, Alberta

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Libraries to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only. Where the thesis is converted to, or otherwise made available in digital form, the University of Alberta will advise potential users of the thesis of these terms.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis and, except as herein before provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatsoever without the author's prior written permission.

Figure 1 - Edmonton's first public school building with students 1886

Dedication

Soli Deo Gloria

Abstract

This action research project seeks to explore the question, “how can the community dances of Alberta’s past become a context for learning in the Alberta grade four music program?” This question gives the researcher an opportunity to explore several things, one of which is David Elliott’s idea of music education as praxis, which is explored through teaching a unit of instruction “praxially,” and having it culminate in a cultural/ musical event, a historical community “schoolhouse dance” simulation. Because the research method for this project is action research, the researcher is able to interrogate his practice as a music teacher. Finally, at a time of planned change to Alberta’s fine arts curriculum, this study contributes to the discussion about what the nature of arts education in Alberta can - and should - be by exploring the areas of: community involvement; student engagement; and the integration of other subject areas within music learning.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been written without the considerable help of many people. I would first of all like to thank my wife Jody Stark and my children Emily, Rachel and Jamie for their support.

I owe my advisor Dr. Michael Frishkopf a debt of gratitude for his guidance, his openness, and his cool-headedness in times of tight deadlines.

I also would like to thank my examining committee – Dr. Frishkopf, Dr. Federico Spinetti, Dr. Regula Qureshi, and Dr. Kathy Robinson – for reading this thesis and discussing it perceptively.

I wish to thank my friends Janelle and Jason McFeetors for not only their tremendous support but also their academic and technical advice, respectively.

I wish to thank my friends Heidi and David Archer for Heidi's generous gift of interview transcription and David's technical help in getting the audio interviews onto Heidi's computer.

I wish to thank my friend Randy Chute for supporting me in finishing final edits.

I wish also to thank the Westglen School community: staff participants Jody Lundell, Patrick Caron, Brenda Gunn - for their contributions of time and ideas - and the rest of the staff for their support; the parents who participated in the project and provided feedback; the Westglen parent council for supporting the project in spirit and with finances; and the students of Westglen grade four class, 2009-2010.

I owe thanks also to the people who granted ethics permission for this project: Mary-jo Werther, John MacNabb from the Edmonton Public School Board, and Dr. Federico Spinetti from the University of Alberta.

Finally, I wish to thank this project's culture-bearers: Rod Olstad, Ihor Nedoshytko, Brian Cherwyk, Hope Pennock, and Ernie Power. It was a pleasure to work with these members of the Edmonton music community, and I thank them for their contributions to the musical education of the 2009-2010 Westglen school grade four class.

Contents

Introduction 1
- Project Goals 1
- Personal History 1
- Kodály and the "Musical Mother Tongue" 9
- Folksong in Alberta 17

Chapter 1- Context 23
- The Schoolhouse Dance in Alberta 23
- Description of Project 26
- Alberta Music Education – Music Education as Aesthetic Education 29
- Alberta Arts Education Future Directions 35

Chapter 2 - Theory 41
- Praxialism 41
- Praxial Implications for Music Education 43
- Praxial goals for the SDP 46
- Elliott's Praxialism and Robinson's Recommendations for Core Arts Learnings 47

Chapter 3 – Method 49
- Method I: Action Research 49
  - Action Research Today 51
  - Action Research in Education 54
- Method II – Applied Ethnomusicology 56

Chapter 4 – The Project 60
- Project Implementation through Action Research 60
  - Hope Pennock 60
  - Ernie Power 62
  - Rod Olstad 62
  - Teachers 63
  - Parent Council – May 11th 63
  - Lesson #1 – May 21st 64

Poster-making – May 25th 66
Lesson #2 – May 26th 67
May 28th – Rod and Ihor 72
June 2nd and June 4th 75
Schoolhouse Dance Simulation, June 11th 77
Epilogue – The Family Dance, June 18th 89
Schoolhouse Dance Analysis 92
Chapter 5 – Conclusions, Recommendations 102
Future cycles of the SDP 102
SDP: MEAE vs. praxial music education 103
Praxial Teacher Roles 104
Elliott problematized 106
The SDP and the Musical Mother Tongue 107
Elliott and "authenticity" in multicultural music practica 108
Elliott and dance 111
Curricular Integration: Social Studies through music 112
Conclusion 117
Bibliography 119
Appendices 126
Appendix 1 – grade 4 readings 126
Fort Edmonton Days – 1850s 126
Alberta Railway History 1862 and following 127
The Schoolhouse 1881 and following 128
Why Shoot the Teacher – 1930s 129
Appendix 2 – annotated budget 131
Appendix 3– Letter of Initial Contact with timeline number one 132
Appendix 4– Time-line number two for parent council 135
Appendix 5 – Hope Pennock's Dance History Chart 136
Appendix 6 – Schoolhouse Dance Invitation 137
Appendix 7 – Dance in Music answers 138
Appendix 8 – Interview Scripts 140

Appendix 9 – Ethics Approval 143
Research Methods and Procedures 143
Participant Information 143

Table of Figures

Figure 1 - Edmonton's first public school building with students 1886 2
Figure 2 - Map of Alberta "Origin of the Peoples," 1901 19
Figure 3 - Alberta population, 2005 census 21
Figure 4 - Family Dance Poster..67
Figure 5 - Hope Pennock, May 26th, 2010 68
Figure 6 - Hope teaching Students, May 26th, 2010..69
Figure 7 - Dancing the 7th Step in the Music Room, May 26th, 2010 71
Figure 8 - Rod Olstad, Ihor Nedoshytko, and students, May 28th, 2010..........73
Figure 9 - Rod and Ihor playing for the dance: Alex sitting out. 74
Figure 10 - student-made sign at the schoolhouse dance simulation afternoon 78
Figure 11 - student made chalkboard sign at the schoolhouse dance simulation afternoon...79
Figure 12 - Rod, Ihor and Brian warm-up before the schoolhouse dance simulation 79
Figure 13 - William in his schoolhouse dance garb 80
Figure 14 - William and Mrs. Miner at the schoolhouse dance simulation 81
Figure 15 - Ernie Power with microphone 82
Figure 16 - Emma and her mother..83
Figure 17 - multigenerational participation...83
Figure 18 - schoolhouse dance simulation agenda...85
Figure 19 - Ernie shows a step to Eve 86
Figure 20 - Deanna and William dancing 87
Figure 21 - Sam, Niayah and students ready to dance 88
Figure 22 - Newspaper clipping of Rod and dancers at the schoolhouse dance simulation afternoon..88
Figure 23 - Hope and Ernie at the Family Dance...90
Figure 24 - Alex, Jade, Zoya and Vicky at the Family dance 90
Figure 25 - starting the Virginia Reel at the Family Dance 91
Figure 26 - The Virginia Reel continues at the Family Dance..........................91

Introduction

Project Goals

My aim in this thesis is to explore what ethnomusicology can contribute to elementary school music education. My purpose is to see how teaching music from a cultural perspective (teaching the dances of Alberta's settler times with the help of "informants" and a historical reenactment) can contribute to music teaching that is maximally valid.

One component of "validity" in music education, it seems to me, is that music teaching should honor what music is: if music is indeed "humanly organized sound," as John Blacking[1] says (Blacking 1973, 10), then music education should focus on the "humanly organized" as well as the "sound." If, as Christopher Small says, it is true "...that human beings the world over … find in [music] such satisfaction, … [that they] invest in it … much of their lives and resources…" (Small 1998, 2), then it should be possible to teach music in ways such that every student "invests" in it – genuinely, without coercion, with engagement. If music is, as David Elliott says "inherently multicultural," then, as he also says, "music education ought to be multicultural in essence." (Elliott 1995, 207)

In this thesis I explore whether or not music teaching that honors cultural context might bolster the quest for this type of validity in the elementary music program.

Personal History

My interest in music education began in kindergarten.

I grew up across the street from a school that piloted a Kodály[2] music program in Nanaimo, BC,[3] and, in addition to a serendipitous house location, I seem also to

---

[1] John Blacking (1928-1990) is an English ethnomusicologist with an interest in music education. His field work amongst the Venda of South Africa resulted in the book *Venda Children's Songs* (1967), an important contribution to the discussion of ethnomusicology's contribution to music education.

[2] Zoltan Kodály (1882-1967) was a Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist and music education theorist. His ideas on music education were imported to North America in the 1960s.

have had lucky timing because I enjoyed a banner cohort year of the Nanaimo Kodály program. My kindergarten music teacher was Connie Foss More, an excellent and enthusiastic teacher, and, as my cohort went through elementary school, we were able to participate in a school choir, a district strings program and a district choir, all with fabulous, Kodály-method-trained music teachers.

The "Kodály method," is a way of teaching music based on the philosophy of Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist and music education theorist Zoltan Kodály. In Hungary, the pedagogy based on Kodály's philosophy was developed by several teachers – one of whom was Katalin Forrai (1926-2004).[4]

In Katalin Forrai's book *Music in Preschool*, she states several tenets of Kodály's philosophy, including: music education should start with the folksong of the people being educated[5] ("The music education of a people[6] must begin with its own folk traditions" (Forrai 1988, 3)); that folk traditions should lead to study of western art music ("It is through the small musical forms [folksongs] that world masterpieces can be approached" (Forrai 1988, 3)); that music for teaching should be aesthetically excellent ("Only music of artistic value can serve as teaching material" (Forrai 1988, 3)); that music education should start as early as possible ("Music education must begin at birth" (Forrai 1988, 3)); that music reading and writing – in western staff notation – should be taught, and taught systematically ("a systematic method of teaching the reading and writing of music must be found which will make musical literacy accessible to all" (Forrai 1988, 3)); solfa syllables should be used as a bridge to literacy ("Kodaly recommended

---

Kodály is discussed further below and in the next section of the introduction of this thesis, "Kodály and the Musical Mother Tongue."

[3] Lois Choksy writes of this program, "Two music educators from Western Canada, Alastair and Isobel Highet, went to Hungary for a year's study and returned to establish the first Kodaly program in British Columbia at Nanaimo. In both the Halifax and Nanaimo programs music instruction was given daily in the schools" (Choksy 1988, 8)

[4] as Csebfalvi and Sims recount: "One of the most noteworthy of Katalin Forrai's pedagogical accomplishments is her work implementing Kodály's philosophy of music education. With Kodály's guidance and friendship, she developed methods and materials for pre-school children in Hungary that provide a model for pre-school curricula around the world." (Csebfalvi and Sims 1992, 35)

[5] For a discussion of folksong, please see the next section of this thesis, Kodály and the "Musical Mother Tongue."

[6] For a discussion of "a people" ("nation") please also see the next section of this thesis, Kodály and the "Musical Mother Tongue."

relative sol-fa for learning how to read and write music" (Forrai 1988, 3)); the singing voice should be the first musical instrument ("Kodály considered singing the most natural form of active music-making and the best preparation for learning an instrument" (Forrai 1988, 3)); and music education is for everyone:

> Kodály wanted to create a Hungarian public which would cultivate, love and understand music. To achieve this, he considered it necessary to introduce universal music education – for everyone from infants to adults. (Forrai 1988, 3)

Starting in the 1960s, music teachers (including Connie Foss More, Alastaire and Isobel Highet, and Lois Choksy) adapted the Kodály method for the North American context. Lois Choksy wrote several text books on the Kodály method including *The Kodály Context: Creating an Environment for Musical Learning*; *The Kodály method: Comprehensive music education from infant to adult*; *The Kodály method II: Folksong to masterwork*; and, with David Brummitt *120 singing games and dances for elementary schools*. In *The Kodaly Context*. Choksy gives a thumbnail sketch of Kodaly's music education philosophy, one of the tenets of which is that folksong comprises a "musical mother tongue:"

> - …music literacy is something everyone can and should enjoy..
> - …singing is the foundation of all music education.
> -… music education should begin with the very young.
> -… the folk songs of a child's own culture is his musical mother-tongue and should be the vehicle for early instruction.
> -… only music of the highest artistic value (folk and composed) should be used in teaching. (Choksy 1981,11)[7]

---

[7] In the same book, Choksy distinguishes between the Kodaly philosophy and the Kodaly method - which she observes is actually quite syncretic:

> The system of music education that developed under Kodaly's guidance drew on the best of educational thought, past and present, from around the world. From England, where Kodaly had visited and been impressed with the quality of choral singing, came the use of movable-*do solfa* (in which *do* is the tonic in major and *la* is the tonic in minor) and a system of hand signs devised originally by John Spencer Curwen (1816-1880). …A system of rhythm syllables – a way of expressing duration aloud correctly – was adapted from the work of French musician and teacher Emile-Joseph Chéve (1804-1864)…From Switzerland, certain aspects of the work

Houlahan and Tacka, in their 2008 book *Kodaly Today: a Cognitive Approach to Elementary Music Education*, single out many of the components of the Kodaly philosophy identified by Forrai and Choksy: music education is for everyone ("…music should belong to everyone and not just to a musical elite" (Houlahan and Tacka 2008, 19)); singing is crucial ("…singing is the most direct means to a musical education"(Houlahan and Tacka 2008, 21)); only "the best" music is suitable for teaching material ("It was Kodaly's belief that the communication of inferior music inhibits the growth of maximum musical understanding"(Houlahan and Tacka 2008, 23)); and that children should be taught how to read and write music in western staff notation ("Kodaly believed that all students should become musically literate, that is, they should be able to read and write music with ease; comparable to the ease with which they read and write their own language" (Houlahan and Tacka 2008, 24)).

In speaking of the Kodaly method of the present time, it appears that Houlahan and Tacka also embrace the idea of a "musical mother tongue" approach mentioned by Choksy - using a community's traditional music as basis for teaching music in that community:

> Through the use of folk songs and singing games in the school, the teacher can proceed with suitable material that is already part of the child's cultural experience…The connection between folk tradition, art music, and recently composed music is important in the music of each historical era. Therefore it becomes one of the goals of the music teacher to teach the best folk and composed music to children so that they can become the cultural stewards of this repertoire for their community. (Houlahan and Tacka 2008, 23)

The Kodály method – as outlined above – really did work for me: I liked to sing, I enjoyed learning to read and write music by developing skills in solfa and rhythm syllables, and I did not question that knowledge of classical music was the proper end of a musical education. Alistaire Highet is Scottish, and my family

---

of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze in eurhythmics were incorporated: stepping the beat, clapping rhythms, performing rhythmic ostinati, rhythmic movement of various kinds. (Choksy 1981, 9-10)

background is English. My "musical mother tongue," if it can be considered to be a personal thing, is British folksong, the choral music of John Rutter and Benjamin Britten, and the music of the Beatles. Perhaps the Kodály approach developed by Alastaire Highet, with its British inflection, worked for me partly because it fit with my family's ethnic background. Perhaps it also fit with my family's values: in grade five, when my friends and I sang in the after-school district choir, I remember thinking that we were mingling with the musical elite. And, if the elite could be considered to consist of children whose families valued extra curricular music involvement (and singing), we were. Perhaps the Kodály method provided a way for me to become the person I already was, musically speaking.

The Kodály program at my school, however, did not work for everybody. Students who did not like to sing, did not care about learning to read and write music, or were not interested in classical music, did not enjoy the music program - even if they actually were "musical." One of my classmates played in the Salvation Army band, for example, but did not engage with school music. There was attrition amongst those who did engage, too: only two of us stayed in Kodály-based extracurricular district music after grade seven.

The Kodály method worked well enough for me, in fact, that I made it my career. I studied Kodály music education during summers at the University of Victoria (with Connie Foss More) and at the University of Calgary (with Lois Choksy), and, in these programs, I learned how to teach rhythm and melody via syllables leading towards music reading and writing in staff notation; teach melodic and rhythmic vocabulary through a carefully ordered sequence of (mostly British, Canadian and American) folksong; and expose students to classical music through folksong.[8] It is the "folksong" part of the Kodály method that made me interested in ethnomusicology and (ultimately) in this project.[9]

---

[8] The title of Lois Choksy's *Kodaly Method II: Folksong to Masterwork* (Choksy 1999), refers to this path from folksong to Western, classical music.

[9] Because of my Kodály background, I will mainly refer to the Kodály method as the context for my discussion below. This is not to disparage other methods. In Alberta, the other main approach to elementary music education is Orff-Schulwerk, based on the educational work of

One reason that it is relevant to mention this recollection of my (Kodály) music education – besides personal context – is because the Kodály method continues to be relevant: it is very much an available music education path for students and teachers in North America today. In Canada and the US, the Kodály method is a big part of the music education conversation at the level of the classroom,[10] if not at the level of music education theory.[11] Lori-Anne Dolloff, in her practical discussion of implementing the praxial philosophy of music education in the elementary music classroom, for example, spends most of her article measuring praxialism against various facets of not only the Orff approach but also the Kodály method. (Dolloff 2009) In 2010, the Kodály method also remains an active part of elementary school music education in Alberta.[12]

Another reason that I mention this recollection is because it opens a discussion about how music education can – or should – be practiced in elementary school in general. Thomas A. Regelski's[13] account of a "tension" in music education

---

German composer Carl Orff (1895-1982). The philosophies of Shin'ichi Suzuki (1898-19980 and Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) are also represented in Alberta's music education scene.

[10] The Organization of American Kodaly Educators (OAKE) website (https://oake.org/default.aspx). lists 30 "Endorsed Teacher Education Programs," four regional divisions of American Kodály Organization Chapters, and a national conference. The Kodály Society of Canada (KSC) website (http://kodalysocietyofcanada.ca/) sponsors a "Music Education Excellence Award" for individual schools throughout Canada that meet its criteria, lists five provincial branches (including the Alberta branch, the Alberta Kodály Association, or AKA), and publishes a national journal.

[11] In the debate between David Elliott and Bennett Reimer concerning the *praxial* versus the "Music Education as Aesthetic Education" philosophies, Kodály is not referenced. MENC (The National Association for Music Education in the United States) may include OAKE as an "affiliated organization" (http://www.menc.org/about/), but it is concerned with more general issues: its position statement on "the value and quality of arts education" (1999) lists seven items, none of which resonate specifically as "Kodály," but some of which are reminiscent of the 7 core learning statements in Shelley Robinson's literature review for Alberta Education, *Promising Practices and Core Learnings in Arts Education: Literature Review of K-12 Fine Arts Programs* (Robinson 2008).

[12] The AKA website says "THE ALBERTA KODÁLY ASSOCIATION (AKA) was started by Alberta music educators who follow the teachings of Hungarian composer and music educator; Zoltán Kodály." The AKA is very much a part of music education in Alberta: it publishes a journal, puts on workshops, and offers a summer training course. It was founded by the first graduating class of Lois Choksy's University of Calgary Summer Kodály course in 1983. Graduates of the program number in the hundreds. I was a member of the 1996 graduating class.

[13] Thomas A. Regelski is a "Distinguished Professor of Music (Emeritus), State University of New York at Fredonia NY," (Bowman 2009, 84) and the author of, "*Teaching General Music: Action Learning for Middle and Secondary Schools* (Schirmer Books, 1981), and *Teaching General Music in Grades 4-8: A Musicianship Approach* (Oxford University Press, 2004)." He "is presently a Docent at Helsinki University (Finland)." ((Bowman 2009, 84) Regelski is also a

between teaching to everyone and teaching for advanced levels of knowledge and skills seems to capture some of the internal dissonance of the Kodály method in my experience:

> There is a tension … between the ideals of music education's inclusive claims as part of general/universal education and certain traditional ideals about musical quality that end up being exclusive. (Regelski 2009, 188)

If the Kodály method in practice perhaps tends toward exclusivity (because of its quest for "the best") – in spite of its stated goal of music for all – is it possible to teach music in elementary school in such a way as to truly be engaging for all? Given that all students perhaps already have some kind of a relationship with music when they arrive at school, engaging everyone in school music seems like it should be an achievable goal.[14]

What paths to a broader student engagement in music might be effective, particularly for students who do not enjoy singing? Is it legitimate to teach aspects of music other than how to read and write it? Must music's formal elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, form, expression) constitute the core of music learning in elementary school? What is the value of teaching the reading and writing of music in western staff notation? What other aspects of music could one study, and how would they be justified? If classical music is not "the goal," what place should it occupy in music education? Is folksong a valid path to multicultural music education? If not through folksong (as the Kodály method would advocate), how else might the multicultural (or cultural) aspect of music be

---

proponent of a *praxial* philosophy of music education (see chapter three of this thesis for a discussion on praxialism). J. Scott Goble writes that Regelski's "…interest in attending to 'what music is "good for"' independent of the claims of writers who espouse aesthetic philosophies – and then predicating the practice of music eduation on such a foundation – seems to have begun emerging in the early 1980s." (Goble 2003, 29)

[14] John Blacking suggests this in his book *How Musical is Man* when he says:

> There is so much music in the world that it is reasonable to suppose that music, like language and possibly religion, is a species-specific trait of man. Essential physiological and cognitive processes that generate musical composition and performance may even be genetically inherited, and therefore present in almost every human being. (Blacking 1973, 7)

addressed? Should music education seek to play a role in the formation of Canadian identity?

As a Kodály teacher, one of the preconceptions that I bring to music teaching that I would like to examine is the nature of the "music" in music education. I think that music often becomes reified – consisting of skills and sound elements. I think that conceiving of music as a set of sounds and skills is not only an incomplete view but also that it is of limited appeal to students – or only of genuine appeal to certain students. Since every student in elementary school studies music, and since every student potentially has a relationship with music, I would like to explore what it might take to engage a broader range of students in the productive contemplation of music in school.

It is my view that a music program should first of all do no harm: students should leave their music education not hating music, or feeling that they cannot participate in music. It is also my view that an elementary school music program should not pander to what students think they want to learn or what is easy for them to learn: students should not only experience genuine challenges in their music class, but also be exposed to music as it is – or has been – actually practiced in various ways in the world outside of school. Lastly, it is my view that music education (at its best) should provide a means by which students engage with their own humanity and with the humanity of others.

The human context surrounding music touches on the topic of multiculturalism in music education. Terese M. Volk in her 1998 history of multiculturalism in music education – *Music, Education and Multiculturalism: Foundations and Principles* – writes about the challenges that multiculturalism has historically brought to music education. From her vantage point in the mid-nineties, she writes about where the conversation about multiculturalism in music education had arrived:

> Questions still loom unanswered: What is the place of the Western classical tradition in a multicultural classroom? If we add other musics to the curriculum, whose music(s) do we choose? Why? What about curricular implementation? Both pre and in-service teachers need training to be able to

present these musics accurately to their students. What does this mean both for teacher training institutions and school districts? For the teachers themselves? (Volk 1998, 16)

Volk then states some principles guiding her discussion (that come from the International Society for Music Education's (ISME) Panel on World Musics in 1996 (Volk 1998, 120)) and are germane to the Alberta context:

1. There are many different and equally valid music systems in the world.
2. All music exists within its cultural context.
3. Music education should reflect the inherently multicultural nature of music.
4. Given that the American population is made up of many diverse cultures, music education should also reflect the diverse musics of the American population.
5. Authenticity is determined by the people within the music culture. (Volk 1998, 15)

These principles, it seems to me, remain important to consider today when approaching music education multiculturally as I attempt to do in this project.

Kodály and the "Musical Mother Tongue"

Although, for many music teachers (including Kodály-trained teachers) the main content of music teaching is the formal, sound elements of music,[15] for Kodály teachers music teaching also encompasses a multicultural (or at least cultural) resonance because of its utilization of folksong.[16] As Katalin Forrai

---

[15] This is what Patricia Shehan Campbell calls teaching "music-as-music." Teachers who teach this way, Campbell says, teach music: "…for the sheer sound of it, and for its sonic structures, and all of the strategies for developing listening, performance, and creative expressive skills will fill their classroom time with students. Music will be sung, played, danced, listened to, analyzed and created anew, all in a discovery of what makes it tick" (Campbell 2004, 215). "Music-as-music" teaching is surely the norm in many instrumental and choral programs - where the focus is on learning to play an instrument or to sing. It is also the major thrust of the Alberta's elementary school program of studies in classroom music (see discussion in Chapter one).

[16] Teaching through folksong could encompass, I would argue, what Campbell calls teaching "music-as-culture." She writes: "As stellar as are the notable success of music-as-music instruction, something is missing in the scenario…The study of music "close-up," in all of the cultural details that surround its sound, and to draw back in consideration of its broader implications, is a certain way of knowing it fully. Rather than to detach music from the contextual issues that surround it, as study of its connections to the past and the present add depth to musical understanding while also allowing music to function in its natural way as an important piece in the study of the world and its people. For as ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl ensures us once again in

says, Kodály "…frequently emphasized the importance of learning the rudiments of music *from music which is actually sung or played*, so that living music be the means of illustrating musical principles." (Forrai 1988, 13, italics added)

The category of folksong is a contested one, however. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), coined the term "Volksleider,"[17] and, as John D. Baildam points out, meant it to denote a specific, ideologic concept. He writes:

> For Herder… the only genuine poetry was that produced spontaneously by a specific people withn a peculiar historical and social setting, and in a particular language. These themes came together in his use of the term 'Volk'. As used, for example, in the word 'Volkslieder', the term was employed by Herder to refer to anything which expressed itself directly or spontaneously, as well as philosophically, provided the philosophy was common sense rather than subtle logic. (Baildam 1999, 81)

Since Herder, one of the contested things about folksong is the identity of the "Volk" in "Volkslieder." Ruth Hellier-Tinoco, for example, discusses – from the example of "folklorization" in Mexico in the 1920s and 30s – how folk music can become reified and used to support hegemony:

> "Intrinsically connected with the formulation of *indigenismo* was the process of folklorization. As a tool of integration, 'indigenous symbols were nationalized, establishing the indigenous people as part of the national folk culture.'" (Hellier Tinoco 2005, 54)

Folksong (Herder's "Volkslieder") has been used in the service of various ideologies. Britta Sweers notes how the idea of folksong has become tainted in modern day Germany because its association with the extreme right Nazi ideology: "Music associated with the term Volksmusik is viewed problematically in Germany today, and is marginalized largely because of its propagandistic uses during the Nazi era (1933-1945)" (Sweers 2005, 65) and: "During the Nazi

---

his Encounters in Ethnomusicology, (2002), music is not separated from culture: it is culture (Campbell 2004, 216).

[17] Baildam writes in a footnote, "the term "volkslied" was first used by Herder in his Ossian essay. For Herder, 'Volkslied' applied to any song that could be sung and had something of the patina of older poetry about it." (Baildam 1999, 82)

regime, music was recognized as an important tool to organize and control the masses; folk music in particular became a focus of interest." (Sweers 2005, 71) Gillian Mitchell writes that the second folk music revival in the United States, by contrast, was decidedly left leaning politically:

> Folk music was, by the post-war period, firmly established as the favored musical form of the left-wing intellectuals of the urban north, and groups such as the Almanac Singers, featuring Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie, and solo singers such as Paul Robeson, Burl Ives and 'Aunt' Molly Jackson, performed at, and participated in, workers' rallies and union meetings. (Mitchell 2007, 10)

Since the time of Herder, it seems, folksong has been a tool for the formation of national identities, a phenomenon that Benedict Anderson characterizes as an act of imagination. (He writes "… I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign." (Anderson 2006, 4-5))

As indicated in the Forrai, Choksy and Houlahan and Tacka descriptions of Kodály's philosophy of music education, his use of folksong comes from the concept of the "musical mother tongue," a notion that James Parakilas summarizes in his article on Bartók's pedagogical series of piano pieces, "For Children:"

> This study is a case history of a nationalist idea in music: the idea that when a nation's art music was based on its folk music and when that folk music was taught to the children of the nation at an early age, they would grow up performing their national art music as naturally as they spoke their native tongue. (Parakalis 1995, 476)[18]

---

[18] In Hungary this seems to have worked: Hungarian musicians that I have met have learned music starting with folksongs (sequenced by Kodaly, Bartok and their teams) and from this foundation have become proficient at the various styles in the classical canon, and they seem to play them "as naturally as speaking their own language."

The "musical mother tongue," although it is historically a "nationalist idea," can be seen as one way to teach music multiculturally.[19] As Kodály writes in 1967, after his ideas had gained an international following:

> As in the teaching of languages, the beginning must be unilingual. Afterwards, it should be enlarged, first by neighboring or related music and later by music of more distant peoples… To become international we first have to belong to one distinct people and to speak its language properly, not in gibberish. To understand other people, we must first understand ourselves.[20] (Kodály 1967, 61)

The idea of teaching music through a "musical mother tongue," *is* an expression of nationalism for Kodály – and in his activities (as well as in his writings) nationalism can be seen as a prime motivation. With Bela Bartók, Kodály collected, analyzed and published thousands of Hungarian folksongs, with the aim of establishing not only a distinctively Hungarian music education but also a distinctively Hungarian art music. In the introduction to his first folksong collection publication – included in his collected works – Kodály indicates that his ambition for his folksong collecting appears to extend to the instigation of a folksong revival in the service of "Hungarianization."[21]

> If only these expressions of the spirit of our people, often very ancient in origin, would meet with even half the affection they deserve. …The overwhelming majority of Hungarians are not yet Hungarian enough, no longer naïve enough and not yet cultured enough to take these songs to their hearts. …But the time will come: a time when there will be Hungarian music in the home, when Hungarian families will not be content with the most inferior foreign music-hall songs or with the products of domestic folksong factories, when there will be Hungarian singers, when not only the lover of rarities will

---

[19] Does the idea of learning music through a "musical mother tongue" *have* to be bound up with national identity? Could various musical traditions – even pedagogical traditions such as the Toronto Conservatory, band program music, Orff practice, or the English language folksong canon used in the North American Kodaly method- be considered "mother tongues?" If so, could a non-nationalist "musical mother tongue" concept be a legitimate path to multicultural music education?

[20] Benedict Anderson, however, points out that the composition of a group called "ourselves" is an act of imagination. He writes: "It [the nation] is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion." (Anderson 2006, 5)

[21] I discuss applied ethnomusicology in chapter 3.

> know that there are Hungarian folksongs other than *"Ritka búza"* and "*Ityóka-pityóka*." (Kodály 1974, 10)

Because they sought to revive folksong for nationalistic and educational ends, Kodály and Bartók could be seen to have been engaging in applied ethnomusicology.[22]

As inspiring as it is, Kodály's conception of folksong in the service of the nation and its art music is also not without its difficulties. For example, first of all, how is the composition "the nation" to be determined? Kodály, in writing about one type of Hungarian folksong, writes about "1000 years" of Hungarian history:

> Hungarians have a great many kinds of songs, but this type is never missing where Hungarians live….What do these traces reveal? That the spiritual foundation of the Hungarian people has not altered in a thousand years; that links with other peoples did not shake their original system of music nor change their musical way of thinking. (Kodály 1974, 30)

Benedict Anderson, also referring to a "thousand years" of Hungarian history, shows that even the "first king of Hungary" felt that defining the nation as a unified ethnicity was a questionable idea:

> 'Saint' Stephen (r. 1001-1038) might admonish his successor that:
> The utility of foreigners and guests is so great that they can be given a place of sixth importance among the royal ornaments… For, as the guests come from various regions and provinces, they bring with them various languages and customs, various knowledge and arms. All these adorn the royal court,

---

[22] The efforts of Kodaly and Bartok are perhaps similar to Finnish ethnomusicology of the 1960s and 1970s. As Vesa Kurkela reports, some of the activities of Finnish ethnomusicology since the 1960s and 1970s could also be considered as examples of applied ethnomusicology:

> It was … the 1960s that folk music scholars became politically active. In the years that followed it was common for Finnish ethnomusicologists to apply their research findings to practical purposes in the service of the national folk music movement or the leftist cultural movement….The … folk music movement had a decisive influence on the founding of an independent research institute, The Folk Music Institute, in 1974. The main concern of the Institute is applied ethnomusicology, characterized by its patronage of the folk music movement and its goals, its authoritative stance on musical-political issues, the organizing of the International Folk Music Festival in Kaustinen, and educational activities for folk musicians. (Kurkela 1992, 404)

> heighten its splendor and terrify the haughtiness of foreign powers, for a country unified in language and customs is fragile and weak …[23](Anderson 2006, 109)

The Hungarian people, for Kodály, are descendents of the "Magyars," a "nation" that Kodály attempts to uncover through musical traces in folksong:

> If we select and set aside all pieces from the songs of the people that we have in common with neighboring nations, or originate from Hungarian or foreign composed music, or reveal the influence of an European culture, what we are left with can hardly be anything else but the ancient, natural music of the Magyars, who once conquered the Hungary of today.…We know that the conquering Magyars did not constitute a homogeneous racial formula; but they were much more than that, for they were a people of superior values – a military, political and cultural organization of tribes of different origins, and even different languages. The music of these tribes may also have differed from one another originally. But as a uniform language emerged, it is quite probable that a uniform music developed, too, …(Kodály 1974, 29)

The Magyars are an example of Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" if ever there was one.

If the composition of the ancient Magyar nation is difficult to ferret out, the membership of the present day Hungarian nation is also problematic: Bartók's reading of his folksong collection, for example (as Parakalis notes), leads him to write music for two separate groups living within Hungary's borders:

> Actually, his is two national collections rather than one: the first half of the set is based on Hungarian folk songs, the second on Slovak ones… Bartók was creating separate national collections of folk song arrangements for piano students of two nationalities – neighboring nationalities within what at the time of publication (1909-11) was the "Hungarian" half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. (Parakilas 1995, 487)

Kodály dismisses also the intelligentsia. He writes of Liszt's "Hungarian" Rhapsodies, (which are not really Magyar, so not really Hungarian):

[23] Anderson then writes: "But such words would not in the least prevent his subsequent apotheosis as the First King of Hungary." (Anderson 2006, 109)

> The ambience of the Liszt rhapsodies was that of the intelligentsia. …From all this it follows that the intelligentsia an only have a secondary role to play in the formation of public taste in music. (Kodály 1974, 36)

Kodály also excludes gypsy music from the truly Hungarian, even though he says that the gypsies had lived with "Hungarians" for 500 years.

> For five hundred years now gypsies have been begging for bread, lamenting and playing music here. The Hungarians listened to them, tolerated them and fed them, but they did not adopt their music. (Kodály 1974, 30)

In addition to the difficulties of defining the nation, the idea of applying ethnomusicology (folksong revival) in the service of the nation is also littered with pitfalls. As was noted earlier, this approach to applied ethnomusicology has routinely been (mis)used by totalitarian regimes. (Sweers 2005)

Nationalism and its difficulties aside, Kodály's use of folksong does give music teaching a welcome cultural resonance. Folksong in Kodály's view has the potential to connect children not only to a sense of a particular, culturally-rooted music, but also to a sense of music's general human association. Even if Kodály advocates that *folk* music should connect *Hungarian* children to the Hungarian people – however "Hungarian" might be defined – he can still be seen to be advocating that *music* be used to connect children to *people*. I think that this general appreciation of the value of introducing children to the humanity in music can be seen in Kodály's writings. As he writes in 1967:

> Folk songs offer such a rich variety of moods and perspectives, that the child grows in human consciousness, (Kodály 1967, 61)

Like Kodály, composer and folk music specialist Ruth Crawford Seeger (1903-1953) writes – in her book *American folk songs for children in home, school and nursery school: A book for children, parents and teachers* – of folksong as a way to introduce children not only to a particular people, but also to humanity in general:

> If it is one of the aims of education to induct the child into the realities of the culture in which he will live, may we not say that this traditional music and language and ideology, which was not only grown out of but has in turn influenced that culture – and is still influencing and being used by it – should occupy a familiar place in the child's daily life, …This music has been a natural part of work, play, sleep, fun, ridicule, love, death. It has grown out of and passes through many ways of living and doing. Facts and fantasies cling to it from its wandering. …This music has many fingermarks. It has been handled roughly and gently. It has been used. It has been sung and resung – molded, modified by generations of singers from Maine to Florida and across the country. (Seeger 1948, 21-22)

The cultural resonance resulting from the use of folksong (an example of Forrai's "living music") – as problematic as the concept may be – gives the "Kodály method" richness that perhaps contributes to the ongoing devotion of its practitioners. Furthermore, the concept of the "musical mother tongue" as an approach to multiculturalism in music education is also perhaps not without merit.

Parakilas writes, referring to Bartók's use of the philosophy of musical mother-tongue:

> …the urge to teach music multiculturally provides the most compelling reason today to reexamine the pedagogical works of nationalists like Bartók and his predecessors, for their debates raise the most important questions that need to be addressed in multicultural education… if the idea is to use music as a tool for teaching about different cultures, [teachers who wish to teach music multiculturally] will be … attracted to Bartók's model of music as a cultural spirit capable of expressing itself in different styles. (Parakilas 1995, 496)

And Kodály's idea of mastering one "musical mother tongue" – even if one identifies that "mother tongue" only through an act of imagination – before exploring other (imagined) "musical mother tongues" must (at least theoretically) be one possible way of approaching music education multiculturally.

Folksong in Alberta

No matter what the efficacy of the "musical mother tongue" as an approach to multicultural music education, however, it cannot reasonably be deployed *through folksong* in Alberta.

One reason that folksong is an unlikely candidate for a "mother tongue" that is truly Albertan is that there is nearly a complete dearth of historical records of English language folksong or folksong singing in Alberta. T. B. Rogers states the case this way:

> English-speaking peoples in this part of Canada show considerable populations of cowboys, homesteaders, and railroaders. As these are "folk-music prone" groups you would expect some folk-music tradition in this region. However, a review of the available resources suggests that very little material has been documented. (Rogers 1978, 23)

Rogers goes on to list – in the area of folk music documentation in Alberta – how extensive is the lacuna:

> Considering available recorded archives (field recordings, collection tapes, etc.) *an Alberta collection has yet to be found*. While some work has been done, there is no record of substantial scholarly activity orientated toward Alberta English-language folk music. The *Glenbow Foundation, in its systematic documentation of Alberta's heritage, has failed to uncover any major collections of folk music materials.* All of these negative findings seem to reinforce the "man in the street's" view that Alberta does not have a viable folk-music tradition. (Rogers 1978, 23: italics added)

The Penguin Book of Canadian Folk Song lists only one song from Alberta (*The Alberta Homesteader*) and in her introduction Edythe Fowke writes that one of the reasons for this is the recent settlement of the western provinces.[24]

---

[24] In addition to "The Alberta Homesteader," Edythe Fowke (elsewhere) mentions cowboy tunes that may have been sung in southern Alberta in the 1880s:

> Moving a little farther west to the foothills of the Rockies, we come to the ranching country where, of course, many American cowboy songs were sung. This was very natural, for the first ranches in Canada were stocked by cattle driven up from Texas in the 1870's and 1880's. It was quicker to bring them up the Old Chisholm Trail and on into Alberta than to drive them across the then unsettled Canadian prairies from eastern Canada. Although we know that many

> Some national collections group the songs by regions, but this is not practical in Canada. Most of our songs come from the eastern part of our country: Newfoundland, the Maritime provinces, Quebec and Ontario. The four western provinces were settled more recently and fewer folk songs have taken root there. Hence the west is represented only by a few samples: *Moody to the Rescue, Chanson de Louis Riel, The Red River Valley* and *The Alberta Homesteader*. (Fowke 1973,11-12)

Brenda Dalen, in her notes to the "Classic Canadian Songs" cd from Smithsonian Folkways, writes that the provenance of "The Alberta Homesteader" (one of two arguably Albertan songs in this collection, the other being "The Cree Prisoner's Song") is American words with an Irish tune:

> In "The Alberta Homesteader," Mills impersonates the cranky bachelor Dan Gold, who invites us into his ramshackle sod shanty and unleashes a tirade of complaints—many of which he seems to have learned from his American cousin, "The Greer County Bachelor" (Folkways 5801, 5003, and 2175)—about "starving to death on a government claim." The lyrics are set to the tune of "The Irish Washerwoman." (Dalen 2006, 11)

One of the reasons for the dearth of folksong documentation in Alberta, perhaps, is that people have searched for English language folksong and Alberta has never spoken exclusively English. Even in fur-trading times, the population was not only English speaking (Irish, Scottish, American, Eastern-Canadian) but also French and Aboriginal. After settlement, people arrived in Alberta from many European countries. The 1901 atlas below depicts pockets of population from at least 8 countries of origin[25] (National Resources of Canada).

> cowboy songs were sung, few have been collected. Carl Sandburg gives a version of "The Tenderfoot" (or "The Horse Wrangler") learned from a cowboy in Alberta, and Dr. Ned Corbett, prominent in adult education circles, reports hearing a cowboy sing "Blood on the Saddle" when he worked on a ranch near Calgary in 1905. I have a version of "Tying a Knot in the Devil's Tail" which my informant learned in Alberta before World War I, and the same man also sang what appears to be one of the few Canadian cowboy songs: "The Dying Outlaw." While it has echoes of such familiar songs as "The Cowboy's Lament" and "Bury Me Out on the Lone Prairie," the Canadian influence is apparent in the "red-coated foeman," a reference to the famous red uniforms of the Canadian Mounties. (Fowke 1962, 252-53)

But a few cowboy tunes and one American/Irish variant do not add up to a folksong oeuvre.

[25] Each square in the legend on the map in Figure 2 represents a people group.

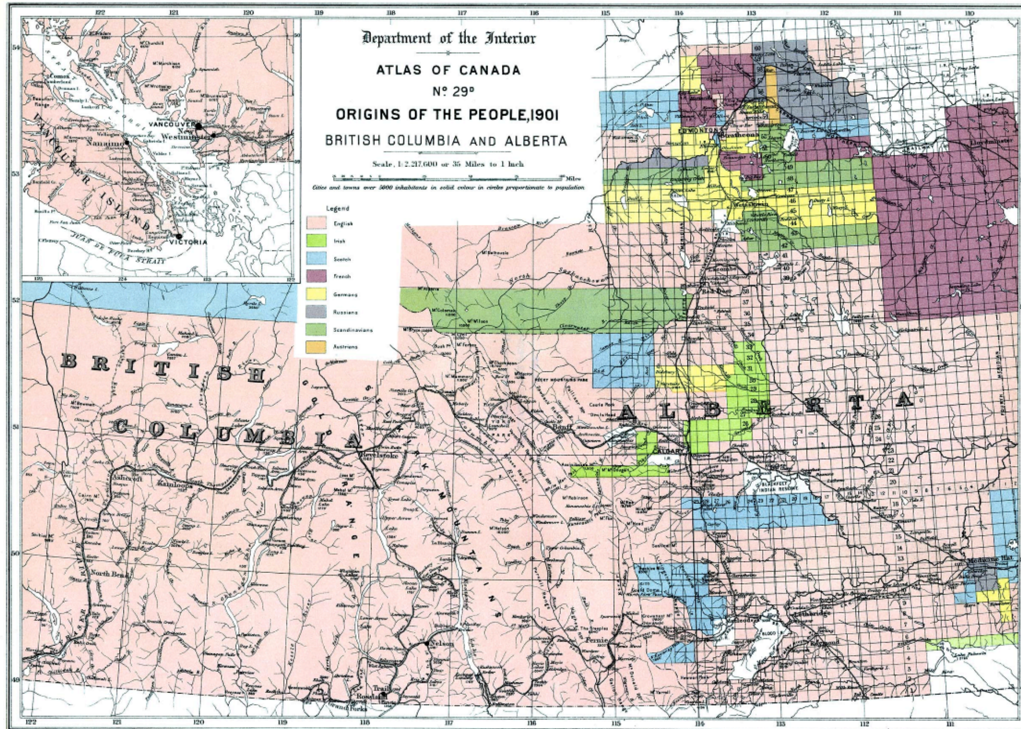


Figure 2 - Map of Alberta "Origin of the Peoples," 1901

Another reason for the lack of historical records of folksong in Alberta may be time-span: settlement in Alberta started in earnest only after the railroad arrived in Calgary in 1883 (Atlas of Alberta Railways) – it arrived in Edmonton in 1891 – and then it happened all of a sudden. The "Atlas of Alberta Railways" website says that, "Population grew from 73,022 in 1901, to 373,943 in 1911, a five times increase. A further 200,000 people were added by 1921…" There was only 20 years from the beginning of major settlement (1883) to provincial status (1905). The picture at the beginning of this thesis (figure 1 – showing the class of 1886) shows the (one-room) building that housed the entire student population of Edmonton Public Schools in 1881. Today Edmonton Public Schools serves about 80,000 students.[26]

A third reason for the absence of a known folksong heritage may be that Alberta became an entity within the modern age. The Glenbow Museum website

[26] "Edmonton Public Schools serves about 80,000 students and their families in 197 schools…" (Edmonton Public School Board Three Year Education Plan 2010-2013)

talks about the CFCN Oldtimers – a popular radio band which was broadcasting from Calgary only forty years after the railway arrived:

> "In 1924 Calgary's CFCN radio introduced a weekly program of old time waltzes, marches, polkas and other dance music, featuring a band called Cy, Ebenezer and the Kid. By 1927 the group was called Cy Hopkins and his Oldtime Band. The orchestra was soon known simply as the CFCN Old Timers." (Glenbow Museum)

If Alberta is going to imagine itself as a community with a heritage of folksong, it cannot refer – like Hungary – to a history of "1000 years:" at best it can speak of a history of 40 years – from the railroad to the radio.[27]

Perhaps people did bring songs with them from their home countries, but there is no recorded history of "homegrown" folksong in Alberta, and scant documentation of folksong originating in other places being sung here.

Lyon sums up the dearth of folksong in Alberta and some of the reasons for it (many sources of immigration, modern communications) in the introduction to his book "Alberta Community Music:"

> Canadian folk music is often identified with the old time musics of Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritimes, each of which has its own flavor. The music of the prairies has been a well-kept secret; indeed, many folklorists have doubted the existence of any indigenous folk culture on the prairies. Western Canada is a large region, and it was populated by many groups, each of whom brought their own ingredients. To the British root stock was grafted the Norwegian *hoppwaltz*, the Ukrainian *kolomayka*, and the *polkas* of many nations. Since much of the settlement of the prairies occurred during the twentieth century, modern communications have brought in such influences as Edith Piaf's Parisian torch songs, the jazz of New York and Chicago, and the rock of Memphis. And there has always been classical music on the prairies. (Lyon 1999, *xvii*)

For many reasons, if Alberta is going to use an *Albertan* "musical mother tongue" approach to multicultural music education, it cannot be through folksong. If Alberta is going to teach through folksong at all, in fact, it must be folksong

[27] There is a longer heritage of aboriginal music in Alberta, but using this music as a "musical mother tongue" would require a very great act of imagination for Albertans who are not aboriginal, and it would not be culturally sensitive to do so.

from other places (there are less than ten English-language folksong examples from Alberta). But from what places? The figure excerpted from the 2006 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada), in Figure three, shows that if Alberta began with multiple ethnicities, it has become only increasingly multi-ethnic:

Population by selected ethnic origins, (Alberta)

	Total responses
Alta.	
Total population	**3,256,355**
Ethnic origin	
European origins	1,588,160
British Isles origins	1,488,090
English	885,825
Western European origins	862,460
Other North American origins	713,095
German	679,700
Canadian	667,405
Scottish	661,265
Eastern European origins	609,840
Irish	539,160
French origins	390,140
French	388,210
Ukrainian	332,180
Northern European origins	308,445
Scandinavian origins	295,660
Aboriginal origins	244,560
East and Southeast Asian origins	238,840
Dutch (Netherlands)	172,910
Polish	170,935
North American Indian	169,355
Southern European origins	168,650
Norwegian	144,580
Chinese	137,600
South Asian origins	107,690
Swedish	93,805
Russian	92,020
East Indian	88,165
Métis	83,235
Italian	82,015

Figure 3 - Alberta population, 2006 census[28]

[28] A discussion of Canadian census methodology is beyond my expertise and the scope of this thesis, so I am unable to explain how the “ethnic origins” numbers relate to the “Total population”

If the "musical mother tongue" aspect of the Kodály philosophy and method –a method very much current in English-speaking North American music classrooms today – does not transfer well to Alberta through Albertan folksong, it also does not transfer well to Alberta through English language folksong generally. Songs from the United States are often foreign to students' lived experience (what is a "paw paw?" a possum?), as are songs from Eastern Canada ("ah hah, me boys, a riddle–i–day?"), and songs with British provenance represent the (often distant) ancestry of only about half of the population.

There are many non-English "mother tongues" in Alberta, and there always have been: it is impossible to imagine otherwise. Teaching music through English language folksong in Alberta – something that we actually do in Kodály-inspired music classrooms (and other music classrooms) – is an approach to multiculturalism that reflects the imagined community of only a few.

---

numbers in figure three. I include this figure to illustrate the general point that people in Alberta have come from many places in addition to Canada, Great Britain and the United States.

Chapter 1- Context

The Schoolhouse Dance in Alberta

Alberta may not have a common heritage of folksong, but it is interesting to note that it does have – arguably – something of a common musical heritage in the form of community dance. From the beginning of European contact until World War II, community dancing seems to have been a ubiquitous feature of Albertan social life. As Lisa Doolittle writes in her account of social dancing around Lethbridge before WWII, "Every Friday and Saturday night in Alberta in the 1930s and 1940s in Southern Alberta, everybody danced, or so the story goes…" (Doolittle 2001,11). Doolittle connects this practice to community building: "Social dancing happened on a large scale at a pivotal time for community formation in Canada's west." (Doolittle 2001, 11)[29]

George W. Lyon situates the community dance as a specifically Albertan musical practice:

> There are many figures who could qualify as stars of Alberta community music; I wish I could portray them all, but there isn't space even to name them. Roy Logan and his Orchestra will have to stand for so many others. This ensemble played for dances at the Fifty And Over Club in Calgary for nearly forty years, every Monday night, except for summer and holidays. That's a pretty heroic engagement. Their music was vigorous, elegant, and humorous, and it emerged from the schoolhouses of Alberta. It was an Alberta music; you'll never hear anything like it in Quebec or Newfoundland, or in Nashville, either. To play for dancers, you've got to have your act together. (Lyon 1999, *xvii*)

---

[29] Doolittle, a Professor of Theatre at the University of Lethbridge, researched community dance initially to connect a dance piece with student performers with a cultural context. In this preparation, (in addition to her own "archival and library research") she had her students "collect stories about the dance hall days form their own elderly relatives." She writes:

> Working with verbatim reminiscences and personally relevant material was part of an effort to improve the authenticity of student performance and their engagement with the community around them. (Doolittle 2001, 11-12)

And community dancing was a part of life in Alberta long before settlement, too: there is an account given by Peter Erasmus,[30] for example, of a dance at Fort Edmonton on Christmas day, 1856. This was Erasmus' first dance at the Fort, but from his account it appears not to have been the first dance held there.[31] (Erasmus 1999, 36-43) Erasmus's story indicates several features of this early Albertan community dance – in addition to its multicultural make up – mentioned in many later accounts: dances would last all night (sometimes because dancers lived a long way away and it was safer to travel in daylight); would break for a midnight lunch; and have music provided by a fiddler (or a band including a fiddler).

There are also many accounts of dances during settler times. As George W. Lyon says in the opening sentence of the first chapter of *Community Music in Alberta: Some Good Schoolhouse Stuff!* often a center for community activities was the local schoolhouse:

> One of the first orders of the day for settlers on the prairies was the creation of the school district. There was a board to be elected, land to be set aside, taxes to allocate, a schoolhouse to be constructed, and a teacher to be hired. The schoolhouse became the location for a variety of essential social, cultural, and spiritual activities. (Lyon 1999, 1)

And one of the "essential social, cultural" activities was the community, "schoolhouse" dance, as can be seen from the Caroline Relf, *Building and Working Together* quote that follows the sentence above:

> Our schoolhouse was certainly the centre of community life for many years. I remember with what special excitement the older pupils would say on a Friday afternoon, 'there is going to be a dance here tonight!' Teacher would tell us to take our books and pencils out of our desks and put them in one special corner with the teacher's desk. Then if I was lucky enough to come to the dance, what a thrill to walk in and see an unfamiliar room, all empty of furniture, the desks piled row on row against the window side of the school and crude benches along the other walls …The dances were so different from what they are today. Which of our children have seen the grace and beauty of a roomful of couples,

---

[30] Peter Erasmus (1833–1931) was "a Métis trader, guide, hunter, translator, Indian agent, farmer and mission worker involved in many of the notable historical events in western Canada in the late 1800s." (

[31] Appendix #1 has the student handout of Erasmus's account

> all in regular line, dancing the beautiful four-step? What of the dainty French Minuet, the militarily precise three-step, and the joyous and bouncy Cabbage-dance direct from the Ukraine? (Lyon 1999, 1)

This excerpt shows not only the possible provenance of the modern elementary school family dance (the dance at my daughter's school is advertised as an "old-fashioned family dance"), but also the multicultural nature of the dances that were often part of the dance – Ukrainian, French, English in this excerpt. The schoolhouse dance served to make one community out of many – and arguably one "musical mother tongue" out of many.

This excerpt also shows that dancing fashion changed rapidly in Alberta's history ("The dances were so different from what they are today…"). It seems a feature of Alberta community dances that old dance styles mingle with new. In the article "Old timers' pow wow – Pemmican Club Dance from the Alberta Folklore and Local History Collection at the University of Alberta (Mudiman 1942-46), the author notes the old mixing with the new at a dance for pioneers:

> It is a far cry from the Sun Dance to Swing, but a happy medium is reached when pioneers from all over the South Country gather New Year's Eve to greet old friends, swap yarns, and welcome the dawn while keeping alive the old-time dances. (Mudiman 1942-46, 3)

Towards the end of the research for this project my wife and I had dinner with our friends Mark and Rachelle Goos, one of whom – Mark – is a former music teacher now teaching upper elementary, including social studies. When I told him about this project, he "spoke the vision" of community dancing as a quintessential, musical, historic, community activity in Alberta. As I recorded what he said in my journal:

> People got land – 160 acres – for $10.00. How far was that apart? So you lived alone. And then someone organized a party. Would everyone get together for poker? Or horseshoes? But they'd get together and someone would pull out a fiddle, and someone would pull out maybe a keyboard, maybe an accordion, and everyone would dance. Everyone would come. (Stark 2010)

Description of Project

In response to my desire to explore what ethnomusicology can contribute to elementary school music education, my background in the Kodály method, my curiosity about multicultural music education, and the historical reality of community dancing in Alberta, I decided to undertake the project that I'm writing about in this thesis – which I will refer to as the "Schoolhouse Dance Project" (or "SDP"). The SDP explores how the schoolhouse (or community) dance could be an example of a multicultural curriculum element in Albertan elementary school music education.

I apply the term "multicultural music education" to the SDP – even though the project ended up concerning one culture, and the dominant, anglophone culture in Alberta at that – for three reasons: 1) because the original schoolhouse dances in Alberta were often multicultural in themselves – as noted above, not only did people came from various (mostly European) countries to settle in Alberta, and mix at the dances, but also aboriginal and Métis people participated; 2) because, to be multicultural, music education must at least first be *cultural*, and the schoolhouse dance of settler times *is* a documented cultural practice – even if it is not a foreign practice to the ancestors of many of the students involved in the SDP; and 3) because I do wish to explore the question of whether or not the concept of a "musical mother tongue" – a perhaps problematic approach to multicultural music education, but perhaps a possible approach nonetheless – can be an aspect of music education in Alberta.

The original title of the proposal for this project was "The Family Dance[32] as a site of learning in the Alberta elementary music program: An Action Research Project," and the central research question (at the project's inception) was, "how

---

[32] The "family dance" is an event that takes place at many elementary schools in Alberta. It is usually an evening event and usually all family members of students are invited. It is often sponsored by the parent council. Often the music will be provided by a dj.

The family dance is clearly conceived of by schools as a community event. Perhaps there is some memory of community dances of the past in the institution of the family dance in Alberta: at Grandin School, for example, it was advertised as an "old time" family dance. Attempting to make the family dance into an opportunity for learning came about because of its perceived kinship with the schoolhouse dances of settler times.

can the family dance be a site of music learning in the Alberta Elementary school?" As the title and question suggest, I was initially interested in exploring whether or not the community-building function of the schoolhouse dances of settler times could be replicated in the new frame[33] of the family dance at Westglen School. Accordingly, the focus was to be the family dance ("The Family Dance as a site of learning…"), not the schoolhouse dance simulation, which was to be something of a rehearsal in preparation for the family dance.

The SDP was planned to take place with the grade four class at Westglen school, the elementary school where I teach music. It was planned to consist of teaching and learning about the historic "schoolhouse dance" for a month leading up to Westglen's family dance, culminating in the dance itself.[34] Research around the activity of the SDP was to consist of taking photographs of activities, reflective journalling (by me and by students), and interviewing students, teachers and parents.[35]

My inteview "sample"[36] for the SDP was: seven grade four students (Alex, Deanna, Emily, Emma, Jetta, Vicky and Zoya) whom I interviewed after the family dance; three parents (Mrs. Olson, Mrs. Miner, and Mrs. Patrick) whom I interviewed about their perspective of the dance unit and their participation in it; and three staff members – the principal (Jody Lundell), the grade four teacher (Brenda Gunn), and the gym teacher (Patrick Caron). The interviews were audio recorded and resembled informal conversations.[37] The students and parents who were interviewed because they volunteered (all parents and students were invited to be interviewed): the staff members agreed to be interviewed after I asked them directly.[38] I chose to interview seven students, three parents and three teachers, because it was manageable number of participants within the given time

---

[33] Please see Chapter three, section four, "Method II – Applied Ethnomusicology" for a discussion of the idea of "framing."

[34] See appendix two .

[35] Please see appendix nine, "Research Methods and Procedutes."

[36] This is a qualitative research, non-scientific sample, and not a social science "sample" in the sense of quantitative survey research. (Bartlett, II, Kotrlik and Higgins 2001, 43)

[37] Please see interview scripts, appendix eight, for the interview outlines. These questions served as prompts to begin informal conversations about the project.

[38] Please see appendix nine, "Pariticpant Information."

Below is the original timeline for the project presented to the Westglen parent council:

Schoolhouse Dance Project Timeline

May 21st – June 11th: unit of instruction in music class about the schoolhouse dance with the grade four class at Westglen School. Guest presenters fiddler Rod Olstad and dance teacher Hope Pennock.

June 11th, afternoon – simulation of schoolhouse dance - parents of grade four students, grade four students, and interested members of the Westglen School Community invited. **Live fiddle band and caller.**

June 18th - Family Dance - 30 minutes of traditional dancing facilitated by caller Ernie Power.

June 21st-29th Interviews – parents and students.

Figure 4 – SDP timeline

Westglen School is a kindergarten to grade six school of about 200 students – more younger than older: at the time of this project there were two classes each of kindergarten and grade one, and one class each from grade two to six. It is located in the old Edmonton neighborhood of Westmount, an architecturally protected neighborhood that retains the look and "feel" of historic Edmonton. There is a strong community emphasis at Westglen – there is currently a plan for a community garden next to the school, for example, and stakeholders from various community groups, including the Westglen school parent council, are planning it together. The grade sixes at Westglen are part of the International Baccalaureate middle years program, which would have outcomes compatible with a community focus.[39]

I taught the SDP in the music period, collaborating with Patrick Caron (homeroom and gym teacher) and consulting with the grade four homeroom

---

[39] The ibo.org website says, under the heading of "The curriculum": "The programme consists of eight subject groups integrated through five areas of interaction that provide a framework for learning within and across the subjects." One of the "five areas" is "Community and service": "This component requires students to take an active part in the communities in which they live, thereby encouraging responsible citizenship." (ibo.org)

teacher – Brenda Gunn – who reinforced the community dance history learning in social studies class.

Alberta Music Education – Music Education as Aesthetic Education

It is important to ascertain whether exposing students to Alberta's musical heritage in the form of the schoolhouse dance project would be permissible under Alberta's current music curriculum.[40]

In the 1989 program of studies for elementary music – still in force in Alberta – there is some provision for the study of dance and traditional music, even if it is not the main thrust of the document. A "General Learner Expectation" of the curriculum is that "students will develop … awareness and appreciation of a variety of music, including music of the many cultures represented in Canada" (Government of Alberta 1989, B.1): however, of 253 "specific learner expectations," only seven might point to Alberta community dancing as an area of study.[41] (Serendipitously for this project, the one expectation that pertains directly to teaching and learning about Alberta community dancing in an active way – "students will be able to … participate in folk, square or traditional ethnic dances" – occurs in grade 4, the year that students also study Alberta history in social studies).

If the study of Alberta's community dance history is only tangential to the 1989 curriculum, it is informative to note the curriculum's main focus. One

---

[40] Since the 1989 program of studies is still in force in Alberta, even though its ideas may be out of date, it is the law that guides my practice as a music teacher.

[41] These "Specific Learner Expectations" are listed below.

Under "Concepts," "The student will understand that:" "There are many kinds of rhythm; e.g., ethnic rhythms, dance forms such s the waltz, tango" (Rhythm, #20, grade 6); "Melodies may be base on other scales; e.g., ethnic, whole tone, atonal, chromatic, modal" (Melody, #13, grade 6); and "Music has different styles; e.g., blues, jazz, rock, reggae, country and western, classical" (Expression, #18, grade 6). Under "Skills," "The student will be able to:" "Recognize music and some composers of other times, places and cultures" (Listening, #21, grade 4); "Participate in folk, square or traditional ethnic dances" (Moving, #12, grade 4); and, "Move to illustrate phrase, repetition contrast, AB, ABA and rondo patterns, introductions, interludes and endings (codas), as appropriate to the psychomotor development of the students," (Moving, #14, grade 6).

observable aspect of this curriculum is that it is concerned with what Patricia Shehan Campbell calls "music-as-music," (as opposed to "music-as-culture").[42]

A second observable aspect of the 1989 program of studies, is that it is influenced by the Kodály method, as it developed in Alberta.[43] Many of the "specific learner expectations" in the 1989 program of studies appear to be taken directly from Choksy's *Kodaly Method* book (Choksy 1988).[44]

A third aspect of the 1989 program of studies, in addition to its "music-as-music" orientation and its nod to Kodály, is that it arguably exhibits an over-all philosophy – that of Music Education as Aesthetic Education, or MEAE.

McCarthy and Goble write that the MEAE philosophy began under the influence of the writings of John Dewey, Susanne Langer and Leonard Meyer - among others – in the 1940s and 50s. Langer and Meyer in particular (according to McCarthy and Goble) express key themes of what was to become crystallized as MEAE:

> …both [Langer and Meyer] tended to focus primarily on *works* of music (i.e., compositions) in their writings regarding them as forms of *art*; both employed conceptual vocabularies usually associated with *Western art* music; and both emphasized the notion that all music is similarly *expressive* of human feeling. (McCarthy and Goble 2002, 20)

McCarthy and Goble recount that the publication in 1958 of the book *Basic Concepts in Music Education* (an outcome of a "Music Educators National Conference (MENC) sponsored commission" (McCarthy and Goble 2002, 20)), "served to launch the new philosophy [MEAE] in a formal way" (McCarthy and Goble 2002, 20); and that in the 1970s, MEAE experiences a "Heyday" "…beginning with the publication of Bennett Reimer's landmark book *A*

---

[42] See footnotes fifteen and sixteen in introduction, section two.

[43] It is also influenced by the Orff approach, Alberta's other prominent elementary school music method. This can be seen in "specific learner outcomes, " for example, referring to playing barred percussion instruments.

[44] The order of solfege learning in the 1989 program of studies (Government of Alberta. 1989, C.9), for example, is exactly the same as in *The Kodaly Method* (Choksy 1988, 49; 67; 91; 114,-115).

Philosophy of Music Education" (McCarthy and Goble 2002, 21). McCarthy and Goble express Reimer's philosophical position as follows:

> Reimer advanced the philosophical position of "absolute expressionism," which he had *adopted* from Meyer's theory of musical expression. According to the absolute expressionist position, the meaning of a given musical work is primarily internal to that work; the expressive emotional meanings evoked by the music "exist without reference to the extramusical world of concepts, actions, and human emotional states." [Leonard B. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning,* 3] Of primary importance is the notion that the relationships within a musical work alone are capable-in and of themselves-of exciting feelings and emotions in the listener. (McCarthy and Goble 2002, 21) [45]

McCarthy and Goble say that part of Reimer's advocacy for "absolute expressionism" came from a desire to find a basis upon which music education could be conceived of as essential to a general education. They write:

> This philosophical viewpoint, Reimer argued, provides a sound basis for "the claim that the arts in education are both unique and essential for all children. " [Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education,* 2nd Ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989), 27.]

Alperson writes about reasons why MEAE has been such a useful concept for music education:

---

[45] David Elliott further deconstructs the assumptions on which MEAE rests:

> The aesthetic concept of music rests on four basic assumptions. The first assumption is that music is a collection of objects or *works*. The second assumption is that musical works exist to be listened to in one and only one way: aesthetically. To listen to musical works aesthetically means to focus exclusively on their so-called aesthetic qualities, the elements or structural properties of musical works: melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, dynamics, and texture and the organizational processes (et., variation, repetition) that give form to these qualities. The third assumption of the aesthetic concept is that the value of musical works is always intrinsic or internal. Most (but not all) aesthetic theorists believe that the value of music lies exclusively in the structural properties of musical works alone. The fourth assumption is that if listeners listen to pieces of music aesthetically they will achieve (or undergo) an aesthetic experience. The term *aesthetic experience* refers to a special kind of emotional happening or disinterested pleasure that supposedly arises from listeners' exclusive concentration on the aesthetic qualities of a musical work, apart from any moral, social, religious, political, personal, or otherwise practical connection these qualities may embody, point to, or represent. (Elliott 1995, 23)

…The appeal of a philosophy of music education based upon strict aesthetic formalism is considerable. First of all, it identifies and provides methods to train students to attend to musical qualities and relationships the appreciation of which, as Hanslick rightly notes, can genuinely enhance the enjoyment of music. *It also gives teachers something to do in the classroom*. … strict aesthetic formalism gives music educators a subject matter, a standardized vocabulary, and a methodology. (Alperson 1991, 221: italics added)

McCarthy and Goble go on to imply that Reimer considered matters of context to be outside of the scope of MEAE: "The meanings that particular forms of music carried within the social contexts in which they had originated were not considered." (McCarthy and Goble 2002, 21)

In the third edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education* (2003), however, Reimer does consider matters of context, and in his call for a "synergistic" approach to engaging with other viewpoints (Reimer 2003, 38ff), Reimer also displays a commendable openness to new ideas in his philosophical thinking. His reimagining of the "U.S. National Content Standards for Music Education" (a document that he helped to draft) in the 2003 edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education*, for example, appears to broaden his music education philosophy to explicitly include matters of curricular integration and cultural context.[46]

In his working definition of aesthetic education (what he calls a "description" (Reimer 2003, 11)), however, Reimer still advocates for MEAE's core values:

Aesthetic education in music attempts to enhance learnings related to the distinctive capacity of musical sounds (as various cultures construe what these consist of) to create and share meanings only sounds structured to do so can yield. Creating such meanings, and partaking of them, requires an amalgam of mind, body, and feeling. Musical meanings incorporate within them a variety of individual/cultural meanings transformed by musical sounds. Gaining its special meanings requires direct experience with music in any of the ways cultures provide, supported by skills, knowledge, understandings, and sensitivities education can cultivate. (Reimer 2003, 11)

[46] Standard number eight (of nine) is, "Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts;" and standard number nine is, "Understanding music in relation to history and culture." (Reimer 2003, 250)

From the above “description,” although Reimer conceives of music as culturally-situated, he still locates music’s “meaning” in its (structured) sounds: And, in the chapter on “The meaning dimension of musical experience,” Reimer once again locates the “meaning” of music within musical sound itself:

> To summarize: Music can be described as sounds organized to create meanings inherent within the ways and means the sounds are organized, including all manner of additional meanings as they influence and are encompassed within that inherence To simplify even further: Music can be described as sounds organized to be inherently meaningful. (Reimer 2003, 152)

And these meanings, for Reimer, still have to do with the education of feeling. He writes:

> …music is a “*direct presentation* of the feelingful dimension of experience.” We get the feelings *directly from the music* – not from ideas about music, information about music, the vocabulary of music, facts about music, the history of music, cultural backgrounds of music, music theory, philosophy of music, or any or the other associated learnings in the music education enterprise. All those learnings (knowing about and knowing why) *serve a purpose* – the purpose of enhancing the quality of the direct engagement with the sounds of music themselves-of knowing within music. (Reimer 2003, 95)

And:

> The higher qualities of affective experience is a direct result of a process that enables feelings to be precise, accurate, detailed, meticulous, subtle, lucid, complex, discriminating, powerful, meaningful. *In this profound sense, composing music and listening to music educate feeling*. (Reimer 2003, 101)

Furthermore, Reimer still appears to view music – even if culturally situated – as a collection of works. This understanding can be seen in Reimer’s conception of music as “art:”

> The “components” of art – the materials and qualities each art utilizes as its basic materials – are, by “emphasis or combination or juxtaposition,” “made something of”; they are organized in ways to intentionally lift (or, if one prefers, deepen) the experience of them to the level of the special, significant, powerful, beautiful, meaningful, *as a function of the intentional ways the*

> *components have been treated*. …Music does this with sounds... (Reimer 2003, 68; 69)

I do find Reimer's view persuasive. As Alperson says, MEAE "identifies and provides methods to train students to attend to musical qualities and relationships the appreciation of which, as Hanslick rightly notes, can genuinely enhance the enjoyment of music." (Alperson 1991, 221) Many pieces of music – the music of the western classical canon, for example – have traditionally been analyzed as art objects. Furthermore, I think that a music program that abandoned the aesthetic study of music would be the poorer for it. Reimer's is a problematic view, I would argue, however, in dealing with some musics – such as schoolhouse dance music. Can the music of the traditional schoolhouse dance be considered "art"? Is it interesting only because of its sounds and its structure? Is it not the case in this music that the feelings it inspires have more to do with the activities surrounding it than with the internal workings of the music (sound) itself? The point of music made for dancing seems to be functional and not aesthetic. The music that we heard in the SDP was never intended primarily for aesthetic contemplation, and it does not seem to be interesting if contemplated aesthetically. MEAE does not seem to provide the tools to study this kind of music.

The Alberta 1989 program of studies situates Alberta elementary school music education as MEAE in its "Program Rationale," which references music's "expressive elements:"

> Music education should begin at an early age and should continue to encourage creative expression through performance, listening and composition. As students become sensitive to the expressive elements of music, they develop insight into human feelings. (Government of Alberta 1989, A.1)

And:

> The organization of the elements of music into an intrinsically satisfying composition generates aesthetic creativity and perception. (Government of Alberta 1989, A.1)

There is a sequence of aesthetic, expressive elements and skills set forth in the 1989 Alberta elementary music Program of Studies that can be seen in some ways to be "comprehensive." But perhaps because it attempts to be comprehensive, or because it attempts to combine methods under an MEAE umbrella – it seems (to me) to lack focus.[47] This lack of focus that I sense may be a strength, however: a music teacher actually has a great deal of latitude under the 1989 program of studies: practically speaking, she can teach whatever she wants. The teaching profession accepts this: nobody complained when I suggested teaching community dance for a month, even though it addresses only one of 253 "specific learner expectations" in the program of studies.

Alberta Arts Education Future Directions

A third important aspect of the context for this project is that Alberta music education at this moment is in the midst of a transition in arts education. Alberta is currently undertaking a process of Arts Education curriculum review.

This process stands to change music education in Alberta in fundamental ways. Whereas the 1989 elementary program of studies arguably starts with an aesthetic frame of reference (as a unifying philosophy),[48] for example, the new arts curriculum seems to be almost entirely research based. The "Background" to the *K-12 Arts Education Curriculum Report (2009 draft)* states that the revision will be based on research and reality on the ground (there is no mention of an imposed, unifying, overall philosophical thread such as MEAE):

---

[47] The Kodaly method also emphasizes sequence, but perhaps because it is rooted not only in cultural music materials (folksong), but also in a specific musical practice (choral singing; classical music), it seems to have more focus: Kodaly teachers know what they want to teach and they have reasons to teach them – building the nation – that many find compelling.

[48] Bennett Reimer seems to have applied an aesthetic philosophy to arts education to unify what he was already happening – to give philosophical justification to the activities of the arts program – with an eye towards giving them political cover. "At the political level," he writes in 1991, "we should remind ourselves that aesthetic education in one of its dimensions began as a political movement – that is, as an attempt to win for the arts the support, money school program time, staffing, and prestige which its advocates dearly desired but had had a notable lack of success achieving in American education. In unity, perhaps, there might be political strength." (Reimer 1991, 195)

> Existing fine arts programs require revision to represent current research, promising practice, cultural diversity and technological infusion in response to Alberta's needs. (Government of Alberta 2009, 1)

Alberta Education is aware that this research-based approach will lead to a philosophical shift, a shift that will be evident even in the program's very name: it will change from "Fine Arts" education to "Arts" education.

> The current programs of study are named *Fine Arts Programs*. New research and pedagogy uses the term *Arts Education* to broaden the concept of the fine arts to include learning in, through, and about the arts. (Government of Alberta 2009, 1)

In the field of music education, the shift from "Fine Art" to "Art,"[49] and its broadening to "learning in, through, and about" the Arts (i.e., music) is a step away from Music Education as Aesthetic Education as the sole purpose of study: learning "in, through, and about" music opens up the field to more integrally include context and other topics in addition to the expressive building blocks of the music sound itself.

Related to the broadening of scope beyond MEAE is the idea that more important than the "what" being studied – the music – is the "who" doing the studying – the student. In the consultation process that resulted in the *K-12 Arts Education Curriculum Report (2009 draft)*, for example, stakeholders were asked to "use arts processes to communicate the kinds of experiences they would like Alberta's students to have in the arts" (Government of Alberta 2009, 1). To an MEAE curriculum planner, this broadening of the borders of what comprises arts study is possibly outrageous: in the MEAE philosophy, there exists a scope and

---

[49] There was not unanimity among focus group participants about this name change. The concerns of those opposed included that:

-"*Arts Education* is associated with *liberal arts* and includes subjects/topics such as literature, creative writing, history, and sociology.

-*Arts Education* is too broad a term, and therefore has no meaning.

-*Arts Education* is an administrative tactic to diminish the arts … instead of allowing music, art, drama and dance to take the space that they require.

-*Arts Education* erodes or "waters down" individual disciplines. We must maintain the integrity of each discipline and not have them disappear into one term. (Government of Alberta 2009, 10)

sequence of elements to be taught, and these comprise the field of study. Experiences in MEAE (it seems to me) are solely predicated on the teaching of these elements: the student is not the focus, the field of study is the focus.

Shelley Robinson, in her literature review to support the revising of Alberta's Arts curricula, expresses this shift in emphasis from the thing to be studied to the student. She writes:

> The current fine arts research appears to be making a shift from justifying its existence to focusing on how it develops the whole child in the context of his or her real-life experience, in the global atelier. "Efland … argues that the arts are educationally important 'if and to the extent that they enable individuals to integrate their understanding of the world'" (Kamhi 2007, 34). The fine arts visionaries see the arts as a means of building a broader view of the global cultural experience.
>
>> As is true for multiculturalism in education, fundamental to the expansion of theory and pedagogy in the arts is the notion that educational institutions and educators themselves must support students in transforming existing practices for academic achievement, cultural understanding, social equality, and social justice. (Gadsden 2008, 37)
>
> It is in this "transformation" (not the "transmission of knowledge") of learning in the arts classrooms and other subject areas, and its connections to real-life experiences, that the true value of the fine arts appears to be unfolding. (Robinson 2008, 39)

And, in her statement of "Research Problem and Methodology," Robinson states that:

> The context for this research is the 21st century learner. This research orientation provides a basis for some recommendations for future curriculum development in this current Canadian context. (Robinson 2008, 1)

Within the context of the 21st century learner, Robinson identifies several "Trends in Teaching K-12 Fine Arts" that, if they were included in the future music curriculum, would make the teaching and learning about the historic community dances in Alberta more in line with the main thrust of Alberta's elementary music program.

One of these trends is an increase in the number of "locally developed courses with an emphasis on dance," in recent times (Robinson 2008, 5). Interestingly, the

contributors to the *K-12 Arts Education Curriculum Report* also reflect this trend. The report says that:

> All focus groups were strong advocates for a provincial dance program. While dance is included in the physical education program, the focus is on physical activity and not on creative expression. There was some discussion about the need to expand the range of disciplines in the arts to include emerging and interdisciplinary arts activities. (Government of Alberta 2009, 7)

A second trend relevant to the SDP reported by Robinson is a concern for "subject expertise." Robinson writes:

> There has also been an ongoing argument about whether the fine arts should be taught by generalists or specialists in K-12 schools (McWhir, 2005). It appears that "[a]n essential condition for successful arts programming is expertise … [However], [b]cause of the opportunities educators have to partner with arts organizations to create arts-integrated instruction, no one person has to be expert in both the arts and education." (Fineberg 2004, 150) (Robinson 2008, 6)

This is a relief for the music specialist in the area of multicultural music education. It seems to indicate that the music teacher – although an expert in music – does not have to be an expert in every kind of music in order to bring it to his classroom. Expertise is critical, but it does not all have to come from (even a specialist) teacher. This, it seems to me allows a music specialist to broaden his program in a way appropriate to his students without having to become the master of the whole world of music.

A third relevant trend, also concerning community involvement, is an acknowledgement that parental participation in arts education has value. The SDP could provide "a valuable link between the school and community by providing a vehicle for which the educational community, e.g., parents, community members, school and other educational stakeholders, can enter into the lives of the students through their fine arts school experiences." (Robinson 2008, 9)

A fourth trend – consistent with the student-centered concern of the new arts focus – is attention given to student engagement.[50] In terms of "learner engagement," this project could allow students to experience "flow."[51]

A fifth trend in the arts pertinent to the SDP is curricular integration.[52] In terms of curricular (subject) integration (which is both a "trend in teaching" and an "effective practice" in Robinson's study) the SDP is actually intended to teach the grade four social studies curriculum through the arts in an integrated way.[53] Dance learning in music class should teach the cultural history of Alberta at least as much as the cultural history learning in social studies class teaches the context

---

[50] Since in the MEAE philosophy music is conceived of as being aesthetic, student engagement in this paradigm relies on the degree to which students are interested in engaging with music aesthetically. This is problematic for student engagement: Does everyone interact with music aesthetically? Is this everyone's mode? Can it or should it be everyone's mode? Perhaps the Kodály method has the same issue: it is transformational for some, but not all. The singing, folksong, and classical music focus of Kodály, as is clear from my experience, also does not engage all students. In both of these paradigms, student engagement is not a central concern: engagement takes a secondary place to course content.

[51] There is more information about "flow" in chapter 2 where it arises in a discussion David Elliott's *praxial* philosophy of music education.

[52] Because in the MEAE philosophy the content is the expressive, formal qualities of music, I feel that it does not present a good opportunity for curricular integration (teaching "through music"). Any other study connected with music would "water down" the main focus of study, music's aesthetic qualities.

[53] Generally, a value of the social studies curriculum is that, "social studies provides learning opportunities for students to … value the diversity, respect the dignity and support the equality of all human beings" (Alberta Education 2005, 2); "knowledge and understanding" expected of Albertan social studies students includes that they, "understand the challenges and opportunities that immigration presents to newcomers to Canada," and that they "understand how social cohesion can be achieved in a pluralistic society" (Alberta Education 2005, 2); "skills and processes" include that students, "engage in active inquiry and critical and creative thinking," and, "apply historical and geographic skills to bring meaning to issues and events" (Alberta Education 2005, 2).

Specifically for grade four, a general outcome is "The stories, histories and peoples of Alberta;" Another is "Alberta: Celebrations and Challenges" (Alberta Education 2006, 1). Specific outcomes include: that students "appreciate how an understanding of Alberta's history, peoples and stories contributes to their own sense of belonging and identity (Alberta Education 2006, 5);" that students "value and respect their own and other cultural identities (Alberta Education 2006, 7); and that students ask, "How has multiculturalism in Alberta evolved over time?" (Alberta Education 2006, 7). "Skills and Process for grade 4" include: that students will, "develop skills of historical thinking: [by using] … photographs and interviews to make meaning of historical information;…[and by using] … historical and community resources to understand and organize the sequence of local historical events (Alberta Education 2006, 9); and demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building…[partly by]…work[ing] collaboratively with others to complete a group task (Alberta Education 2006, 9)."

of the dance. This project will also integrate physical education outcomes into a music-based project.[54]

In line with these future directions for arts education in Alberta, added dimensions of the research that I examine through the SDP are curricular integration (combining social studies, physical education, music learning), student engagement, and community involvement.[55]

---

[54] General outcome "A" (of A-D) of the Alberta physical education program of studies puts dance first: "*Students will* acquire skills through a variety of developmentally appropriate movement activities; dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in an alternative environment; e.g., aquatics and outdoor pursuits." A specific grade four dance outcome says "*Students will...*select, perform and refine basic dance steps and patterns; e.g., creative, folk, line, sequence and novelty, alone and with others" (Alberta Education 2006, 11)

[55] See appendix eight, "Interview Scripts."

Chapter 2 - Theory

Praxialism

If Shelley Robinson's literature review (and the stake-holder exercise undertaken by Alberta Education) shows that the conversation about music education in Alberta now encompasses issues – student engagement, community involvement, and subject integration – outside of the scope of MEAE and more relevant to the SDP, David Elliott's work in *Music Matters* (1995) presents a possible framework within which to explore these issues. Elliott's framework – called a *praxial* philosophy of music education – is the paradigm through which I seek to implement the Schoolhouse Dance unit of instruction at Westglen School.[56]

At its root, Elliott's praxial philosophy conceives music to be not a thing, but an activity. Elliott writes:

> Regarding the human phenomenon we call music, let us ask ourselves the following: Is there any sense in which music is a human activity? Both common sense and logic answer yes. Without some form of intentional human activity, there can be neither musical sounds nor works of musical sound. In short, *what music is, at root, is a human activity*. (Elliott 1995, 39)

Elliott calls the activity of doing music, "musicing." This position – the move to the study of music *making* (from the study of *music*) – also has echoes in the work of Christopher Small, who uses the term "musicking" (with a "k"). Small says:

> ...scholars and musicians have tried to explain the nature and meaning of music and find the reason for its extraordinary power in the lives of human beings. Many of these attempts have been complex and ingenious, and some have even

---

[56] I count two masters' theses (Itoh, 2003; Morin, 2008) that touch on the *praxial* philosophy in Proquest. Although the idea of *praxial* music education has been a big part of the philosophical debate in music education in the last fifteen years, there do not appear to be many studies that attempt to try it out in music classrooms.

> possessed a kind of abstract beauty, reminding one in their complexity and ingenuity of those cycles and epicycles which astronomers invented to explain the movement of the planets before Copernicus simplified matters by placing the sun instead of the earth at the center of the system. But no one has succeeded in giving a satisfactory answer to the question – or rather, pair of questions – *What is the meaning of music?* And *What is the function of music in human life?* – in the life, that is, of every member of the human species. (Small 1998, 2)

Small's solution is, like Capernicus, to put the sun where it belongs: "It is easy to understand why ...: Those are the wrong questions to ask. There is no such thing as music" (Small 1998, 2). Small says that music (musicking) should be defined as: "to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composition), or by dancing" (Small 1998, 9). Small says that, in looking at "music" not as a noun, but as a verb – "to music" – "we begin to see a musical performance as an encounter between human beings that takes place through the medium of sounds organized in specific ways" (Small 1998,10); and, "Like all human encounters, it takes place in a physical and social setting." (Small 1998,10)

Small makes explicit that music does not equal the "musical work," although the musical work involves music. He writes:

> But they [musical works] are not the whole of musicking and in fact are not even necessary for it to take place, as can be seen from the large number of human musical cultures in which there is no such thing as a musical work, in which there are only the activities of singing, playing, listening – and most probably, dancing." (Small 1998,)

Beyond conceiving of music as an activity, Elliott says (like Small) that the activity of music is situated, and this is part of the meaning of *praxis*:

> The noun *praxis* derives from the verb *prassser*, meant (among other things) "to do" or "to act purposefully." But when we use *prasso* intransitively its meaning shifts from action alone to the idea of action in a situation. As Aristotle uses the word in his *Poetics*, *praxis* connotes action that is embedded in, responsive to, and reflective of a specific context of effort. (Elliott 1995, 14)

This means for Elliott that music is "inherently multicultural." He talks of three levels of music: MUSIC, which is the entire category of everything to do with music; Music, which is a specific, culturally situated example of MUSIC; and music, which is being involved with the practice of a particular Music.

Furthermore, according to Elliott, because it is situated, music is reflective of community values:

> By calling this a praxial philosophy I intend to highlight the importance it places on music as a particular form of action that is purposeful and situated and, therefore, revealing of one's self and one's relationship with others in a community. The term *praxial* emphasizes that music ought to be understood in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making and music listening in specific cultural contexts. (Elliott 1995, 14)

Praxial Implications for Music Education

One of the implications of Elliott's *praxial* philosophy for music education concerns the meaning of musical knowledge. He says that, "Music making is essentially a matter of *procedural* knowledge" (Elliott 1995, 53: italics added). To demonstrate "procedural knowledge," for Elliott, is "to act thoughtfully and knowingly as a musical performer" (Elliott 1995, 55), and this is what Elliot calls "musicianship." He writes:

> This book's praxial philosophy of music education holds that *musicianship equals musical understanding*. Musicianship (which always includes listenership) is a form of *working understanding*. (Elliott 1995, 68: italics added)

Teaching music, then, becomes a matter of equipping students "to *act*" – "*thoughtfully*" and "*knowingly*" as "*performers*". For the SDP, then, participants should mainly be involved in actually learning to dance, and performing the dances that they have learned.

A second, (related), implication of Elliott's philosophy – part of "acting knowingly" – is that gaining procedural knowledge needs to be situated (like music itself is *situated* human activity). He writes:

> There is an important sense in which musicianship, like all forms of robust knowledge, is a kind of instrument or tool…Authentic musical problem solving requires immersion in the belief system of the music culture in which the tool is used. (Elliott 1995, 176)

For the SDP, then, this means that students should learn not only the dances, but also the ethos[57] of the dance, as it has taken place in Alberta.

A third implication of the praxial philosophy of music education, for Elliott, is that music learning should enhance personal growth.[58] Because the goal of music learning is "self-growth," Elliott writes, music is a means to an end: "The musicianship we deploy in the actions of singing and playing is a tool for achieving the life goals of self-growth, self-knowledge, flow and self-esteem" (Elliott 1995, 176). When he mentions "flow," Elliott is referring to Csikszentmihalyi's concept (Csikszentmihalyi 1993) which Elliott identifies as that "...affective experience of buoyant satisfaction" that happens when "consciousness is ordered by incoming information that matches the goals of the self" (Elliott 1995, 114). The "flow" aspect of the *praxial* philosophy makes it student-centered in a way called for in Robinson's report for Alberta Education. Elliott says that this goal of "flow" is achieved in culturally situated learning opportunities: "…learning how to use this tool appropriately occurs only when it is engaged for authentic purposes in realistic situations: in relation to the working beliefs and values of the practices in which the tool has been developed and refined" (Elliott 1995, 176); and also when the learning opportunities are sufficiently challenging: He says, "Students can acquire musicianship and learn

---

[57] Clifford Geertz defines "ethos" this way: "A people's ethos is the tone, quality and character of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood; it is the underlying attitude toward themselves and their world that life reflects." (Geertz 1973, 127) This is the type of information concerning setlters that students hopefully become conversant with to some degree through engaging in the SDP.

[58] Elliott says that, as human beings, "the central goal of each self is to order the self, or strengthen the self (Elliott 1995, 113);" and, "there is an affective experience of buoyant satisfaction" when "consciousness is ordered by incoming information that matches the goals of the self (Elliott 1995, 114)." This, Elliott says, is what Csikszentmihalyi "variously calls "optimal experience, autotelic experience, or flow (Elliott 1995, 114)." We are motivated, Elliott says, when we experience "…the enjoyment or 'flow' that arises when we apply our conscious powers and knowings effectively in goal-directed action" (Elliott 1995, 114). This is consistent with Shelley Robinsons's (2008) literature review for Alberta Education.

how to use it only through progressive musical problem solving in genuine musical practice situations" (Elliott 1995, 176); and "self-growth, self-knowledge, flow and self-esteem do not result from setting and meeting trivial goals"(Elliott 1995, 133). For the SDP, then, this means that teaching the dances of the Alberta community dance "praxially" should proceed in a step-by-step progression of appropriately increasing challenges.[59]

A fourth implication of the praxial philosophy of music education, for Elliott, is that music teaching be conceived of as a "reflective practicum." He writes:

> The music curriculum-as-practicum is meant to *approximate* authentic music cultures. It does not attempt to duplicate real-world practices because the aim of music education is not to educate all students for careers as professional musicians. (Elliott 1995, 270)

For the SDP, this would mean in Elliott's conception that a dance that students are involved in should approximate the conditions of the historic Alberta community dances.[60] Cameron and Gatewood offer the caution, however, that participating in an historical reenactment does not guarantee acquisition of historical facts. They note a boom in interest in history-related experiences such as "civil war reenactments" and stockpiling of "old records, comic books and baseball cards," (Cameron and Gatewood 2003, 55), but they write:

> Ironically, the interest in, or possibly mania for, history does not parallel knowledge of it. (Cameron and Gatewood 2003, 55)

They further write that the increase in heritage tourism and in the past generally may be partially attributable to a search for transcendence, a search that Cameron and Gatewood dub "numen seeking:"

---

[59] Motivated by the goal of flow, not the goal of teaching the elements of expressiveness in music.

[60] A fifth implication of the praxial philosophy of music education, for Elliott, is that *music listening* should also come through involvement in a musical practice. He says, "to become an enthusiastic and knowledgeable listener requires knowing MUSIC as the interpretive and social art it is." (Elliott 1995, 102).

For a community dance unit, this may mean that students would listen to the tunes associated with traditional dances before the unit and after they have danced to the tunes at the end of the unit. I was not able to implement the listening part of the praxial philosophy in a formal way.

> The main finding of our survey pertains to the desire by some people to transcend the present and engage with the past in a highly personal way. This desire for an affective connection with an earlier time is termed "numen-seeking." Numen, in its Latin etymology, translates as a nod or beckoning from the gods. …It is used here as a component of an individual's experience at a historical site or museum. Some people make a personal connection with a site that may be manifest as a deep engagement, empathy, or spiritual communion with the people or events of the past. To the extent that making such connections is a motivation for heritage tourism, very likely coexisting with other interests, needs, and desires, the numen impulse needs to be taken into account in the public crafting of historical sites and museums. (Cameron and Gatewood 2003, 57)

This passage introduces what is perhaps a note of caution concerning the teaching of history through historical reenactment: in the engaging experience of the SDP, it is important to ensure that students' experience be not only "numinous" but also related to accurate historical information.

Praxial goals for the SDP

To make it *praxial*, the focus of this project – as much as possible – was intended to be on actually dancing (as opposed to on reading about or watching dancing). The praxial value of learning through "... immersion in the belief system of [a] music culture" (Elliott 1995, 176) was to be facilitated by the teaching of dance instructor Hope Pennock, a senior citizens with fifty years each of traditional (square) dancing experience, and a dance caller. The idea that "[t]he term *praxial* emphasizes that music ought to be understood in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making and music listening in specific cultural contexts" (Elliott 1995, 14) was to be facilitated by fiddler Rod Olstad who was to talk about context and play tunes commonly played at dances in Alberta's settler times. Teaching music "...as reflective practicum..." in a way "...meant to *approximate* authentic music cultures" (Elliott 1995, 270) – was to be addressed by having students dance to live music, and participate in a "schoolhouse dance" simulation. Elliott's reference to "flow" was attempted by

aligning the "schoolhouse dance" unit goals that students' might hold for themselves.[61]

Elliott's Praxialism and Robinson's Recommendations for Core Arts Learnings

As mentioned, Elliott's philosophy of praxial music education is more in line with the proposed future directions of arts education in Alberta then with the (MEAE) 1989 program of studies. As an example of the homologies between the praxial philosophy and Alberta's future arts education directions, it is interesting to note the similarities between Elliott's views and four (of the seven) "Recommendations for Core Learnings across the Arts"[62] in Robinson's literature review – *Promising Practices and Core Learnings in Arts Education* – for Alberta Education listed below:

> 4. Students will *apply* their learning by *participating* in process-oriented and product-oriented *activities* in their fine arts discipline.

One of the ways in which Elliott's *praxial* philosophy lines up with Robinson's core learnings is in its emphasis on "doing,"[63] and this can be seen in "Core Learning" number four.

> 5. Students will better *understand self* by learning to reflect on their ideas and experiences within their fine arts discipline.

A second (related) way that Elliott's *praxial* philosophy – as seen in Robinson's core learning number five – shows a kinship with Alberta's future arts

---

[61] See Chapter four, sections entitled "Lesson #2 – May 26th" and "Schoolhouse Dance Simulation, June 11th."

[62] Perhaps Elliott's praxial philosophy provides a way to implement the directions outlined in the Alberta Education documents?

[63] As has been mentioned, Elliott conceives of music as a "human activity" (Elliott 1995, 39), and of music making as "essentially a matter of procedural knowledge" (Elliott 1995, 53)

education directions is in its concern for student engagement.[64] Both sources reference the concept of "flow." (Elliott 1995, 114; Robinson 2008, 15)

> 6. Students will contextualize their learning in their fine arts discipline by considering aspects of time, place and culture.

A third similarity between Elliott's *praxialism* and Robinson's core learning recommendations is in the recognition that learning in the arts should be situated. I have already quoted Elliott as saying that, "… music ought to be understood in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making … in specific cultural contexts" (Elliott 1995, 14). And Robinson writes, "By looking at life, past and present, through unique fine arts lenses, students can appreciate their diverse histories and cultures in a multitude of ways …" (Robinson 2008, 26)

A fourth core learning that I wish to explore in this project, but that is not mentioned in *Music Matters* (Elliott 1995) concerns integration of the arts and other subject areas:

> 7. Students will integrate *and extend on* their learning and experiences in their fine arts discipline with other subjects, technology and real-life (employment or other) opportunities.

In this project I explore the potential for curriculum integration not only in a study of the Schoolhouse Dance, but also in Elliott's praxial philosophy. If music learning is contextual, as Elliott wants it to be, could a unit on a particular music extend to the study of the context of that music? Would it be possible in this way to learn social studies *through* music, as Robinson's document suggests?[65] It seems a small step from the exploration of a music practice to the exploration of intrinsically related subject areas. In this project I seek to look at the possible extension of the praxial music education philosophy into the area of curricular integration.

---

[64] As noted earlier, Robinson writes, "The context for this research is the 21st century learner" (Robinson 2008, 1).

[65] Is this kind of integration what Robinson calls "learning in, through, and about the arts"? (Government of Alberta 2009, 1)

Chapter 3 – Method

Method I: Action Research

The method that I chose for this project is action research. Kurt Lewin coined the term "action research," in the mid-1940s. At this time – the end of the Second World War, (still perhaps under the influence of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal[66]) – Lewin was advocating for making social science research useful for addressing actual social challenges. The impetus for wanting to make social science apply to real needs – during this time – was not only that the needs were obvious, but also that the response to the needs was inadequate. Lewin writes :

> On whatever unit of group life we focus ... [the] degree of complication seems to be rivaled only by our lack of clarity about the true nature of the problems. Social action at any level is based to a high degree on opinion and tradition rather than on rational understanding about possible alternatives or on clear foresight about what the effects of different social actions would be. (Lewin 1945, 128)

To address the "lack of clarity" about the nature of social problems, Lewin suggests a more systematic (scientific) approach. He writes:

> ...Realistic fact-finding and evaluation is a prerequisite for any learning. Social research should be one of the top priorities for the practical job of improving intergroup relations. (Lewin 1946, 35)

Lewin then goes on to label the type of research that would propose practical solutions to social issues:

---

[66] Lewin quotes Roosevelt at the beginning of his article on "The Research Center for Group Dynamics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology:" "But, my friends, the period of social pioneering is' only at its beginning. And make no mistake about it-the same qualities of heroism and faith and vision that were required to bring the forces of Nature into subjection will be required-in even greater measure-to bring under proper control the forces of modern society" (Lewin 1945, 126). Lewin revisits this idea in his article: "It is a commonplace that a main source of many disasters in modern society is the discrepancy between our ability to handle physical nature and our lack of ability to handle social force" (Lewin 1945, 128). In developing the ideas that become action research, Lewin is seeking methodology to rationalize the study and policy-making surrounding social issues in the way that the practices of engineering (and war-making) have been rationalized.

> The research needed for social practice can best be characterized as research for social management or social engineering. It is a type of action-research, a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action. Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice. (Lewin1946, 35)

Lewin's writing at this time addresses many of the aspects that characterize action research in the present day. He highlights, for example, the idea – still key in today's action research – that study useful for a community (school, factory) needs to take place within the community. The social scientist needs to have not only theory, he says, but also particular knowledge: "To act correctly, it does not suffice... if the engineer or the surgeon knows the general laws of physics or physiology. He has to know ... the specific character of the situation at hand" (Lewin 1946, 37).[67] Consequently (as in action research today) Lewin says, that in order to be effective in bringing about change, action research needs to involve participants:

> It seems to be difficult to 'sell' even good social research to practitioners. As a rule, only if they themselves have been involved in the planning and execution of the fact-finding, do the practitioners gain the insight and interest necessary for social action. (Lewin 1945 , 132)

A researcher, in Lewin's view, would arrive at an understanding of "the situation at hand" through a process of "diagnosis" – "This character is determined by a scientific fact-finding called diagnosis - and this diagnosis would need to be "deep." He writes: "...they have, as a rule, used rather superficial methods of poll taking and not the deeper searching of the interview type used by Likert which gives us some insight into the motivations behind the sentiments expressed." The diagnosis would then lead to action: "... in other fields of social management the diagnosis has to be complemented by experimental comparative studies of the effectiveness of various techniques of change." (Lewin 1946, 37)

---

[67] The music specialist, then, is valuable even when working with guest musicians in the classroom: because of her training she knows "the character of the situation at hand."

Thus the process of action research, in Lewin's view - and in the view of action researchers today – is cyclical: "Rational social management, therefore, proceeds in a spiral of steps each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action." (Lewin 1946, 39)

Interestingly, Lewin's desire for the social sciences to focus on action leads him to call for – in the service of social change – the breaking down of disciplinary "silos." He writes:

> Psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology each have begun to realize that without the help of the other neither will be able to proceed very far. During the last five years first timidly, now very clearly, a desire for an integrated approach has become articulated. What this integration would mean is still open... I am of the opinion that economics will have to be included in this symphony if we are to understand and to handle intergroup relations more effectively. (Lewin 1946, 36)

In this vein, he also writes: "The task which social scientists have to face in objectively recording these data is not too different from that of the historian" (Lewin 1946, 41). Furthermore, he says:

> The Research Center plans to use whatever qualitative or quantitative psychological, sociological, or anthropological methods are needed for investigation. The main methodological interest, however, will be the development of group experiments and particularly change experiments. (Lewin 1945, 131)

Action Research Today

In recent times, action research has become prevalent as a tool for the pursuit of positive change within communities. Interestingly, many researchers have slightly different conceptions of what action research is. There are certain things, however – reflected in Lewin – that are common to most action research interpretations.

The "Center for Collaborative Action Research" website (based at Pepperdine University in Los Angeles), for example, conceives of action research as a

methodology to be used in the workplace (it also conceives of the workplace as a community):

> Action research is a process of deep inquiry into one's practices in service of moving towards an envisioned future, aligned with values. Action Research is the systematic, reflective study of one's actions, and the effects of these actions, in a workplace context. As such, it involves deep inquiry into one's professional practice. The researchers examine their work and seek opportunities for improvement. As designers and stakeholders, they work with colleagues to propose new courses of action that help their community improve work practices. . (Center for collaborative research)

The "Center for Collaborative Action Research" site also reaffirms Lewin's idea of action research as cyclical:

> As researchers, they seek evidence from multiple sources to help them analyze reactions to the action taken. They recognize their own view as subjective, and seek to develop their understanding of the events from multiple perspectives. The researcher uses data collected to characterize the forces in ways that can be shared with practitioners. This leads to a reflective phase in which the designer formulates new plans for action during the next cycle. (Center for collaborative research)

Also like Lewin, the "Center for Collaborative Action Research" site sees action research as scientific and systematic:

> Action research as a method is scientific in which the effects of an action are observed through a systematic process of examining the evidence. The results of this type of research are practical, relevant, and can inform theory. Action Research is different than other forms of research as there is less concern for universality of findings, and more value is placed on the relevance of the findings to the researcher and the local collaborators. Critical reflection is at the heart of Action Research and when this reflection is based on careful examination of evidence from multiple perspectives, it can provide an effective strategy for improving the organization's ways of working and the whole organizational climate. (Center for collaborative research)

The website for the journal *Action Research*, by contrast, sees action research as a tool par excellence for positive change, regardless of research area. It says this with a revolutionary zeal in its "manifesto" entitled "Action Research:

Transforming the generation and application of knowledge." Beyond the workplace, this group sees action research as a way to address problems of almost any nature, anywhere:

> We, the undersigned leaders and friends of the Action Research journal, believe that our journal flourishes by serving the community of action researchers and putting its contributions at the service of society and our planet. As a community we are committed to doing work that brings appreciable positive impact through the collaborative character of our research.... having meaning and relevance beyond an immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.... At this time we are called to engage with unprecedented challenges that are inter-related and compounding; challenges such as poverty and injustice, climate change, globalization, the regulation of science and technology, the information and communication technology revolution, inequalities and fundamentalisms of all types. Conventional science and its conduct are part of these problems. (Action Research)

This manifesto also echoes Lewin in its concept of action research as applied social sciences:

> We see our work as providing models for increasing the relevance of conventional social research to wider society. What makes our work fundamental to the revitalization of social research more generally lies in its orientation towards taking action, its reflexivity, the significance of its impacts and that it evolves from partnership and participation (Action research journal).

The *Action Research* group also highlights the idea that action research takes place within a community, and – as Lewin also says ("…only if they themselves have been involved in the planning and execution of the fact-finding, do the practitioners gain the insight and interest necessary for social action" (Lewin 1945, 132)) – that it is effective as far as it has the community's participation:[68]

> We acknowledge the complexity of social phenomena and the non linearity of cause and effect and see that the best response to such complexity is to abandon the notion of understanding as a product of the enterprise of a lone researcher, and to engage local stakeholders, particularly those traditionally

[68] This idea of research being of the community (and by the community) approaches the version of action research called "participatory action research," or PAR.

excluded from being part of the research process, in problem definition, research processes, interpretation of results, design for action, and evaluation of outcomes. In this way, we step beyond what has been labelled 'applied research,' into the democratization of research processes and program design, implementation strategies, and evaluation. (Action research journal)

Action Research in Education

Action research has become a prominent method in the field of education. Mills defines educational action research in this way:

> Action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. This information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved. (Mills 2003, 5)

Regelski recommends action research to music teachers, specifically, as a means of "relating research to practice," because he says that research in music education – like social research in Lewin's day – is not resulting in solutions to problems in the music classroom.[69]

> As Roger Edwards admits: Research is not viewed as being in the mainstream of either music or music education. Most musicians and music teachers have little interest in what music researchers do, how they do it, or the conclusions that they reach. Ironically, when the effects of research do reach the music profession, they usually come from a different field. The reason he gives is straightforward: "Research in music simply hasn't produced enough useful information to merit the attention of practitioners."(Regelski 1994, 65)

In his account of the state of the music teaching profession (in need of an action research base), I recognize echoes not only of my own experience

[69] Of action research he says: "Applied research transforms fundamental research into useful products. Rather than presuming to dictate what works by reference to theoretical research, its operative relationship is how to translate theory into useable results. (Regelski 1994, 79).

(beginning my apprenticeship in kindergarten) but also of the idea of praxialism, something that was perhaps "in the air" in the mid nineties:

> Music teachers begin their informal apprenticeship in kindergarten and their received attitudes and procedural knowledge are institutionalized, legitimated, and perpetuated during formal music and teacher training. Thus, they find themselves without important conditions that typically guide learned professions in which practice is not a matter of rehearsing given techniques or exercises, as in learning a new musical score. As I shall argue, it is instead a matter of *praxis* in which technique is guided by theory towards a principled vision of 'right results' governed by variable and ever-changing criteria. (Regelski 1994, 63)

Regelski says, furthermore, that the issues facing music teachers (such as multicultural education) are both too complex and too contextually situated to be usefully addressed by traditional (scientific) modes of research. In this he recognizes complexities such as those found in Alberta's multicultural make up:

> Virtually all of the issues to be addressed by multicultural education, for example, concern the discernment that subjective experience varies, often considerably, according to cultural variables in our pluralistic society. This includes not just cultural products, such as music, art, logic, language, manners, and socioeconomic class, but even cognitive amplifiers of culture that directly influence basic perceptual, cognitive, and affective experience. If generalized, oversimplified, extrapolated, stereotyped, or overextended into positivist laws, the resulting culturalism fails to take into consideration adequately the situational embeddedness of individuals and, thus, leaves out "the fundamental category of [intentional] action, without which cultural phenomena themselves are unintelligible. (Regelski 1994, 67)

Responding to Regelski's comments, perhaps the SDP, situated in a particular community, can contribute usefully to a conversation about the cultural aspect of the practice of music education in Alberta.

The activities of the SDP could be considered to be the first cycle of an action research spiral design: the next cycle, in this understanding, would be a future implementation of the SDP with perhaps another grade four class. The activities could also be considered as cycles in a spiral themselves, too, because – as can be

seen in chapter four – the SDP changed as it proceeded because of reflection on events as they took place.

Method II – Applied Ethnomusicology

Although Keith Swanwick says that:

> …the aims of music education seem to me to differ radically from those of ethnomusicology. Education is essentially interventionist in character and culturally subversive… Ethnomusicology, on the other hand, presumably aspires to be more locally descriptive and culturally neutral. As an anthropologist, it would never do to intervene in a situation under scholarly observation. (Swanwick 1992, 137)

Applied ethnomusicology is a branch of ethnomusicology that does "attempt to bring about change," – whether or not Swanwick is accurate about anthropologists' qualms about intervention – and therefore is similar in focus to Swanwick's idea of music education.

Of action research specifically, but applied research in general, Regelski says:

> Applied research transforms fundamental research into useful products. Rather than presuming to dictate what works by reference to theoretical research, its operative relationship is how to translate theory into useable results. (Regelski 1994, 79)

Applied ethnomusicology, like action research, attempts to be an "integrated theoretical and practical field." (Impey 2002, 14)[70] Sheehy elegantly situates applied ethnomusicology as one way to practice ethnomusicology:

> If ethnomusicology is an approach to the study of the music of the world's peoples, then applied ethnomusicology is an approach to the approach to the study of the music of the world's peoples. (Sheehy 1992, 323)

---

[70] Three examples mentioned in this paper can be considered applied ethnomusicology: the Hungarian folk music revival in the service of nationalism undertaken by Bartók and Kodaly; the publishing of a book of folksongs for cultural education by Ruth Crawford-Seeger; and perhaps the packaging and selling of cds of Canadian Folksongs by Smithsonian Folkways.

Sheehy also makes the point that it is hard to draw the line about what counts as applied ethnomusicology. She says that all ethnomusicology is applied to some degree:

> I believe that all ethnomusicologists have at one time or another been applied ethnomusicologists. What ethnomusicologist has never gone out of his or her way to act for the benefit of an informant or a community they have studied? Are teaching and writing not ways of applying ethnomusicological knowledge? (Sheehy 1992, 323)

Sheehy's need to justify applied ethnomusicology in this way indicates that it perhaps does not always get the respect given to its unapplied cousin. One of the reasons for this lack of respect is perhaps found in its relation to "frames," outlined below by Sheehy:

> Sociologist Erving Goffman has thoroughly articulated the notion of culturally-determined "frames" that give meaning to events (1974). The same action in one situational frame may not have the same meaning nor implications for the actor or viewer as in another frame. Many applied projects involve the creation of new frames that give new meaning to pre-existing types of events. (Sheehy 1992, 331)

It is conceivable that an ethnomusicologist may be hesitant to engage in applied ethnomusicology because, in helping to "re-frame" a musical practice, she is making judgements about what is or is not appropriate concerning the actors in the practice, and concerning the practice itself. Taking these decisions may appear to open her up to an ethical quagmire: she would have to be mindful of potential power imbalances, issues of exploitation and of legal rights to music products and music making, for example. An ethnomusicologist doing applied work would also need to consider carefully whether or not the changes she might bring to a practice by moving it to a new frame would be justifiable or desirable. Moving to applied ethnomusicology appears to turn the ethnomusicologist from an observer (or participant) to an impressario, And even though Sheehy persuasively says, "all ethnomusicologists have at one time or another been applied ethnomusicologists,"

some ethnomusicologists may be uncomfortable with applied ethnomusicology's explicitly interventionist quality.

C.K. Szego,, speaking about John Blacking's work with the Venda people, makes the point that performing music in new frames is a very common – possibly unavoidable aspect of engaging in music of other places or times:

> Speaking of the South African Venda, [Blacking] freely admits that "the surface of sounds in Venda polyrhythms can also be produced in a 'non-African' way." "But," he says, "in an alien environment, and without the tension of the original performance context, they cannot have the same significance for performers and audience. They lose their artistic force, in much the same way as a string quartet performed on a piano" (Blacking 1985, 5). Lest music educators be too discouraged by Blacking's statement, it is helpful to remember that a great deal if not most performances in the modern age separate sound from their original context—think of Monteverdi's *Vespers* sung at Carnegie Hall. Even in the best of all possible worlds, it is unlikely that music educators will be able to live up to the most stringent demands for recreating performance context. This observation has been made by Palmer (1992), who perhaps understates the situation when he says "transferring music from its original cultural context to the classroom increases the chances that authenticity will be in jeopardy." (Szego 2009, 209)

I suppose it is important for the researcher involved in applied ethnomusicology to be aware of the potential pitfalls inherent in "creating new frames" for musical practices.[71] What different meaning does the schoolhouse dance, for example, take on when it moves from the frame of recreation for settlers to new millenium music education curriculum? Is it ethical to advocate that the schoolhouse dance become a curricular activity in Alberta education? Is it ethical to profit from creating curriculum around the schoolhouse dance? As Sheehy writes:

> It is, of course, always important to keep in mind that the musician and form of music may be affected beyond the realm of perception of worth by the transition from the primary frame of the ordinary context to the new frame with

---

[71] On the brighter side for this project, the SDP is moving a practice to a not very different frame - a different time, but not place (the school was often the site for community dances in settler times, and the school is the setting for the SDP).

> a different set of rules and conventions (Goffman 1974:21-2). Commenting on this concern, Bess Lomax Hawes wrote "On bad days, we tend to think of framing as the ultimate co-option of the innocent by a society that is determined to make a buck out of everything that it touches, turning every act into a packageable and saleable commodity. On good days, we hope that we are providing a smaller cultures with a defense mechanism whereby they can protect their art forms and carry them into the future" (1980:89). Through careful consideration of the needs, techniques, and effects of framing, hopefully there will be more good days than bad days. (Sheehy 1992, 332-333)

Because the SDP has to do with meeting educational objectives with music, it is not only action research, but also applied ethnomusicology. What is my purpose for using applied ethnomusicology? What good am I seeking for my students? What good am I seeking for the "culture-bearers"? What plans do I have for this musical tradition? Hopefully moving the schoolhouse dance to the new, educational frame is worth the risks this poses around its re-contextualization.

The aspect of the SDP that could be considered applied ethnomusicology was the attempt to bring "culture-bearers" – Hope Pennock, Rod Olstad and Ernie Power – into the Westglen school grade four music program in order to deploy actual musical practices – fiddling, square dancing – for the purposes of teaching and learning about music. Although the authenticity of these participants as "culture bearers" could be questioned (none of them were alive during settler times) Szego has some calming words about authenticity versus "representation:"

> While the objective of absolute authenticity will necessarily be compromised in some fashion, steps that music educators can take in the pursuit of the more attainable goal of respectful representation are to consult with tradition bearers and experts; to read widely in the scholarly literature; and to inform students and audiences of what is happening. (Szego 2009, 212)

Chapter 4 – The Project

Project Implementation through Action Research

Implementing the Schoolhouse Dance Project highlighted the fact that, in action research – because it is community-based – aspects of a project may change resulting from community interactions (related to the "spiral" nature of action research). I include a detailed account below of the events of the SDP in an attempt to convey a "thick description" (Geertz 1973, 6) of the project not only in order to draw the most credible conclusions about the results of exploring community involvement, student engagement and curricular integration in the SDP, but also in order to give a sense of the experience to teachers who might want to try an SDP at their own school.

Hope Pennock

The first changes to the project brought through community interaction came about as I made contact with guest presenters, the project's "culture bearers."

I had spoken with Rod Olstad, a fiddler and fiddle historian,[72] months before about a possible project of this nature, and he had given me Hope Pennock's name as a potential instructor for traditional dance. After I related the project to Hope, she agreed to teach dances to students in two sessions on consecutive Wednesday afternoons at the school (May 26th and June 2nd - she was not available on the third session, a schoolhouse dance simulation on the afternoon of Friday, June 11th).[73] We discussed what these dances could be. I had heard of the "schottische," the "jig," and the "square dance." My teaching colleague Patrick Caron had taught this group "The Virginia Reel" (which also counted as an "old-time" dance) in gym class the previous year. We settled on the "7th Step," "Put Your Little Foot," (Hope's suggestions), the "Schottische," and the "Red River

---

[72] Rod interviewed fiddlers from around northern Alberta for a project called the Northern Alberta Fiddle Project (NAFP). The NAFP is archived at the University of Alberta's Folkways Alive! Center. [bit.ly/vmctm]

[73] The grade 4 class had two 45-minute music blocks per week, on Wednesdays after lunch and on Fridays at the end of the day. The Friday afternoon time turned out to be ideal for schoolhouse dancing.

Jig"[74](my suggestions), and the "Virginia Reel." The first two were Hope's suggestions from what she thought of as "old time" dances, the third was there because of students' prior knowledge and my colleague's hoped-for participation, and the last two I wanted because they came up often in source material.[75] I asked Hope if I could pay her, (if I was successful in my request to parent council for funding), and she said, "do you have coffee at the school? You can get me a cup of coffee" – and that was that. Hope also said that she had two stipulations about working with children: 1) she did not want to do discipline, she only wanted to teach dance; and 2) she wanted boys and girls to be able to dance with each other. Perhaps Hope made this second stipulation because she had the belief that it is appropriate for boys to dance with girls (and vice versa) in square dancing. She apparently did not consider children dancing with the same gender to be a possibility. I did not question her request because I wanted to follow her expertise in the matter.

One aspect of the SDP that changed in the process of implementation – and could change again in a future iteration of the project - was the choice of dances. As was noted in chapter one (" …What of the dainty French Minuet, the militarily precise three-step, and the joyous and bouncy Cabbage-dance direct from the Ukraine?" (Lyon 1999, 1) – quoted on page 25), one aspect of the schoolhouse dance was its multicultural nature. Part of the original plan for this project – it would have originally been in the week of June 7th-11th instead of a planned interview with a community member (see appendix 3) – was to invite parents to teach dances to the class from their own backgrounds. The "letter of initial contact" (appendix 3) says:

> If parents know dances from their own cultural backgrounds that they would be willing to share with the grade four class, that would be welcome. One of the features of dances in settler times was that people would bring dances to the community from their home cultures. Ukrainian, Métis, English, Scottish, and French people, to name a few, influenced the types of dances at the

---

[74] The "Red River Jig" is a tune often mentioned in source material. It is a Metis fiddle tune and dance.

[75]

> schoolhouse in settler times. If anyone has a dance that they can teach, please let me know. (Letter of Initial Contact, appendix 3)

None of the parents took up this offer, and so the SDP did not reflect the multicultural nature of its schoolhouse dance provenance or of the Westglen community. The Westglen grade four class parents come from various ethnic backgrounds: one mother is from the Republic of the Philippines, one family is from Ghana, and another mother is Manitoban Métis: it would have been wonderful to have dances from these places as part of our schoolhouse dance, and this is an avenue to pursue in a future SDP.

I also asked Hope if she knew of any callers (for the schoolhouse dance simulation on the afternoon of June 11th), and she gave me two names.

Ernie Power

One of the callers Hope knew, Ernie Power, was very interested in coming. (His wife, coincidentally, had been a student at Westglen School many years earlier – Westglen School opened as a high school in 1940). Ernie, in contrast to Hope, did have a fee – $100.00. Although I talked to Ernie about the idea of the project – to teach students old-time dancing that might have been done in settler times – I got the sense that he thought of dance calling professionally, and that I was offering him a square-dance "gig," as opposed to a teaching opportunity.

Hope called me back after I had talked to Ernie to say that she had forgotten that Ernie was also unavailable on the afternoon of June 11th because he was involved in the same dance at a seniors' home that she was going to. When I talked to Ernie to remind him that there was a conflict, he was more equivocal. He felt as though he could do both engagements, or that the one to which he was going with Hope was flexible. We left it unresolved, and I believe that this is when I changed the schoolhouse dance simulation to an evening event.

Rod Olstad

I got in touch with Rod Olstad by e-mail and he replied that he was available and willing to do the project. We arranged that he would come to talk with and

play for the students on two Friday afternoons, alternating with Hope's Wednesdays, and that he would raise a combo to play for the schoolhouse dance simulation on June 11th.

Teachers

Further changes to the project eventually came about because of the participation of teaching colleagues, my next step in project implementation. I arranged with Jody Lundell – Westglen School's principal – to have Patrick Caron, the grade three teacher (who taught the "Virginia Reel" to the project's students in gym class the previous year), free to join the grade fours when Hope and Rod were working with them. This was a way not only to have an extra teacher in the room, but also to explore the integration of dancing in gym class with dancing in music class, or at least to contrast the two.[76] I also spoke with the class's homeroom teacher Brenda Gunn to let her know that the project would be happening, and to suggest to her that we might collaborate on tying the project into the class's social studies work.

Parent Council – May 11th

My next step was to present a proposal and funding request to the Westglen School parent council at its May meeting.[77] Parent council members liked the idea of "Old-Time" dancing for the family dance theme – the dance always has a theme – and there was much brainstorming and joking about what people could wear (or ride) to the event. The council decided that the concession would be simpler because of the theme – just lemonade and cookies, no glow bracelets – and this seemed to be a welcome change. The parent council also listened with interest to the proposed grade four music sequence of learning leading up to the

---

[76] See appendix seven, "Dance in Music Answers" to see participants' perceptions about dance in music class versus dance in gym class.

[77] I had previously mentioned the idea of the schoolhouse dance project to my principal, the grade 3 teacher (who taught dance to the current grade fours the previous year), and the grade 4 teacher. I had also shared the idea with the chairman of the parent council and asked him if I could present at the council meeting.

dance, and they agreed to fund an $800.00 budget for guest presenters.[78] There was a palpable dimming of enthusiasm, however, when I mentioned that the schoolhouse dance simulation for grade 4's and families (one week before the family dance, June 11th) would be in the evening.[79] I wrote in my journal, "when I suggested to the parent council that the dance simulation might be at night, I was greeted by groans. Someone said, 'I was with you until you said that,' and I felt that sentiment almost tangibly in the room" (Stark 2010). Most people were too busy to be able to fit in another evening event. Consequently, the schoolhouse dance simulation (once again?) became a daytime event, for the afternoon of June 11th. The parent whose job it was to plan for the family dance (on the evening of June 18th, the week following the simulation) caught me after the meeting and asked if I could be the person to make the family dance posters and if I could also provide a cd of appropriate dance music for the DJ. I agreed to both requests. She handed over the family dance file-folder, and we exchanged phone numbers.

Lesson #1 – May 21st

The first lesson of the schoolhouse dance unit took place on Friday, May 21st, and was an "instructional set." Although Elliott says that the goal of "flow" is achieved in culturally situated learning opportunities,[80] I felt that students would not understand the cultural context of this learning opportunity without background information at the start. Therefore the following lesson is not praxial, but I cannot see how it could be unavoidable.

The format of the lesson was as follows:

---

[78] See appendix one.

[79] See appendix two.

[80] "…learning how to use this tool [musicianship for the purposes of acheiving flow] appropriately occurs only when it is engaged for authentic purposes in realistic situations: in relation to the working beliefs and values of the practices in which the tool has been developed and refined." (Elliott 1995, 176)

Students shared recollections of their trip to the 1881 Schoolhouse.[81] (They remembered things like: the teacher was mean; there were many grades in one room; students had to stand to recite; there were two students at one desk).

I then introduced four readings about community dancing in the past (see appendix 1), starting with a reading from a book "Why Shoot the Teacher" (Braithwaite 1965).[82] I told the story of how the teacher in this 1930s country school noticed that the boys on clean-up duty were doing a better job than usual without being asked, how he asked, "why?" and how they told him that there was going to be a dance. I then related how, that evening, people showed up on horses and carts from as far as 12 miles away, and that someone then pulled out a violin, and someone sat at the organ, and a man stood up and started saying, "we need one more pair …." And how he called dances and people danced all night, with a break for midnight lunch. I also introduced the MacDougall reading and the Erasmus reading.

I had photocopied ten copies of each reading, each one on a different colored paper. I asked students to choose a color and read the corresponding reading individually for 5 minutes.

Students then got into groups based on the color of their readings and recorded facts from their readings on chart paper.

Then students returned to their seats and one student from each group shared the group's information.

Lastly, I asked students to share as many features of the schoolhouse dance as they could, one at a time. Each valid feature received a point. Extending this, for additional points, students offered answers to the question, "why would people travel so far and dance all night?" Some of the answers were:

-because there was a fiddler

---

[81] This is a program sponsored by Edmonton Public School Board museums and archives. It takes place in the building that actually was the first public schoolhouse in Alberta. The building has been moved back to its original location and restored to look like it did as a school. The Westglen grade four class went to a half-day field trip to the school at which they experienced school as it would have been in 1881. An actress (and former teacher) plays the part of the teacher.

[82] This book actually takes place in Saskatchewan, but the schoolhouse dance it describes is typical of what also would have taken place in an Alberta location. The movie based on the book was filmed in Hanna, Alberta.

-because there was no TV.
-because people worked hard and they wanted to get together.
-because, one student said, “it was part of their culture.”

I wrote in my journal after this lesson, “I think that students have some idea of what the schoolhouse dance was.” I also wrote, “behavior is an issue…” and I listed six students (from a class of 22) who had trouble focusing on group work and individual work (Stark 2010). Getting the students to focus on this reading and writing information – even though there was discussion and change within the lesson – was a tough sell. Possibly this was because it was Friday afternoon, possibly it was because of the nature of the activities.

I also wrote that I heard students comment that, “this doesn’t have anything to do with music.” I wrote, “perceptive…teaching *praxially* would emphasize doing music, ... within each lesson.” I also wrote (in reflecting on the readings) “I wonder if we should hold the dance in the grade 4 classroom?” I was wondering if the closest approximation of a schoolhouse dance of settler times might be to dance in the students’ own homeroom and pile the desks against the wall. I also realized that I had not acted on Hope’s request that students be ready to dance with the opposite sex. I put that on my list to do before the next music class, which was to be Hope’s first visit.

Poster-making – May 25th

I met with Margaret[83] from the parent council to work on the family dance poster – she had offered to help with the poster since the meeting when I agreed to do it. Margaret is a landscape designer who grew up in Detroit and moved to western Canada for work. She brought drafting tools to our meeting and had the idea of hand drawing the poster instead of making it on the computer to make it look “old-timey.” We ended up using the computer for time’s sake, with only hand-drawn balloons. We tacked up the posters around the school when we were done. The project now had a presence with the wider school community.

---

[83] Margaret is the mother of twins who were in grade six at the time of this project.

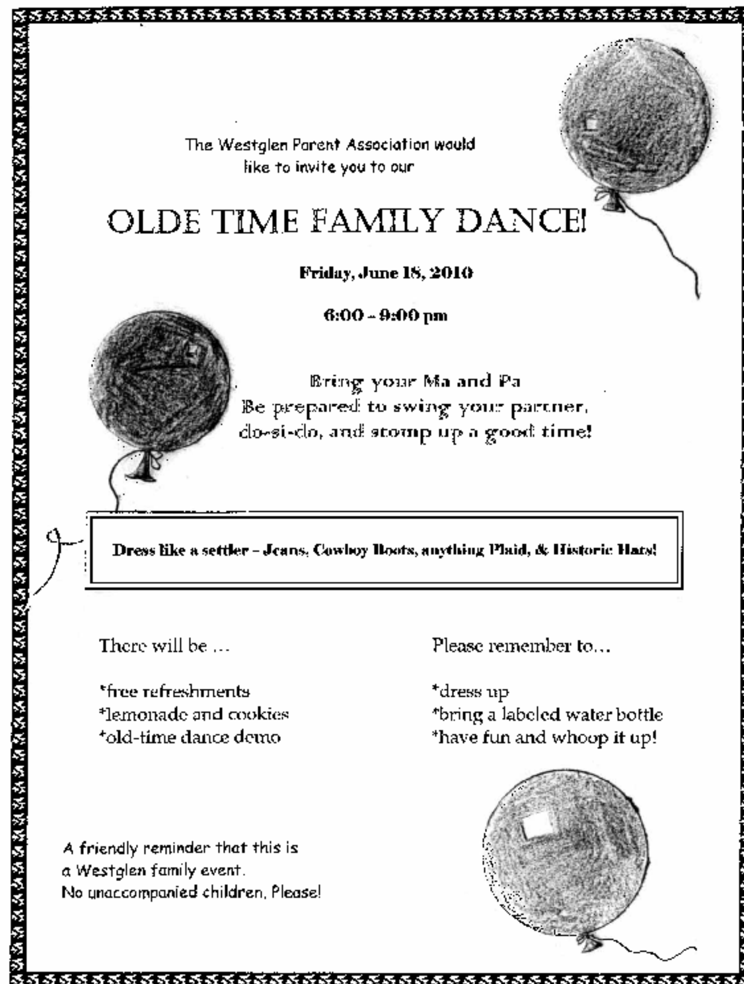


Figure 4 - Family Dance Poster

On May 25th Ernie Power called, saying that he really wanted to come on June 11th, but that he was available only until 2:30pm.

Lesson #2 – May 26th

Before Hope Pennock arrived for her first session, I asked permission of the grade 4 teacher to come to the class (at the end of the morning) in order to "set up" Hope's visit and to attempt to make it socially acceptable for boys to dance with girls (and vice versa). I tried to tie boy with girl dancing to "flow" by saying that, in the settler times, dancing presented a way for boys and girls to be together that was socially acceptable and not too embarrassing because the form of the

dance – and its popularity – provided a way for boys and girls to interact.[84]The implication I tried to make was that working with Hope would be an opportunity for them to learn a way to interact appropriately with members of the opposite sex, too.

Mrs. Patrick, one of the mothers I interviewed, identified this as a learning that her children (boy-girl twins) took away from the schoolhouse dance unit:

DAVE: So then ... what, from your perspective, do you think they learned about Alberta's past from doing that, [the schoolhouse dance]

MRS. PATRICK: Well, one of the things that ... they said that they felt that they learned was that ... previously it hadn't been such a big deal to touch a boy or a girl, 'cause ---- it was just a dance ---- and everyone understood that. And the fact that ---- people would travel so far ---- to be part of this dance. Like, that's how special it was to them. (Stark, 2010)

I met with Hope at lunch hour before grade four music class. She came equipped with her own record player, CD player, microphone, and amplifier. There were also indications that she was "buying into" the project: she presented me with a chart showing dance history, (responding to our discussion about old time dance in Alberta) and she was dressed in a square dance outfit – a modern one, she said. She would have worn her traditional outfit but it needed repair.

Figure 5 - Hope Pennock, May 26th, 2010

[84] Certainly, from my reading, dances within school time seemed to be a source of fun and not embarrassment.

On the subject of applied ethnomusicology, Hope indicated that she sees herself as part of a musical culture when she talked about her dress. At her next appearance she told me: “You expect to see Ukrainian dancers in Ukrainian outfits; you expect to see Hawaiian dancers in Hawaiian outfits; if you are a square dancer, you should wear a square-dance outfit” (Stark 2010). Hope identified her outfit as the style from the 1950s to the 1970s when she said square dancing started to gain worldwide popularity. The traditional outfit that needed repair must have been the style from before the 1950s.

Patrick Caron, the teacher who had taught this group the “Virginia Reel” the year before, joined us in the music room for this lesson. Students sat in a semicircle facing Hope, and they were attentive to what she was saying.

The first dance that she taught them was the “7th Step,” a dance with partners moving in a big circle. She had students do the dance on their own facing her, and she faced away from them modeling the movements.

Figure 6 - Hope teaching Students, May 26th, 2010

One of the students, Alex, was obviously worried by the thought of joining the dance. I had written in my University of Alberta ethics application for this project,

"students who remain uncomfortable with dancing [after going through steps to make them comfortable] will be allowed to watch the dancing until they are comfortable," and so I allowed Alex to sit out. (I also allowed him to take pictures when I wasn't using the camera). He found a spot to sit on the stage, behind the action. In his interview, he explained his reticence this way:

DAVE: … I've -- would you prefer the way music is regular or to have guests and do this dancing stuff?

ALEX: Regular.

DAVE: Regular? How come? What's -- what do you like better?

ALEX: It's just going through different things.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

ALEX: I'm going through enough already.

DAVE: Yeah, yeah.

ALEX: I -- I like some things to stay the -- the way they are.

DAVE: I see what you're saying. Yeah. So you like the stability, kind of, of it being normal?

ALEX: Yes.

(Stark, 2010)

After interviewing Alex, I was especially glad to have gone through the ethics process: the normal teacher response for me might have been to try to force him to participate and then to apply discipline if he did not comply. I think that my normal teacher process would have been antithetical to "flow." Dancing in music class for Alex was clearly not one of his "self -goals."

Hope then organized partners through something called "the Grand March," a system whereby the students made lines of boys and girls, and then – to the accompaniment of music – walked towards the south wall of the music room, and, at the end, turned towards each other and walked north, now in partners. She had the boy extend his right hand, palm up, and the girl place her left hand on his hand palm down. Some partners' hands touched, others allowed their hands to remain inches apart. Mrs. Miner called this strategy, still in evidence at the schoolhouse dance simulation two weeks later, "the healing touch:"

MRS. MINER: One thing I do have to mention was the -- the boy-girl interaction. We were kind of -- as the parents sitting there watching it, we were all -- we were kind of -- some people would hold hands, but other ones, it was like the healing touch. They would be like 2 --

DAVE: Yeah. Just above.

MRS. MINER: -- to 3 inches from each other --

DAVE: Yeah.

MRS. MINER: -- (inaudible). So we were kind of giggling at that –

(Stark, 2010)

The grand march worked very well: the music moved it along, and before students could reflect, they were in partners (even if their hands were not touching). Hope said that this system may be repeated to arrive in groups of four, and then eight, for dances that require groups of couples. I was pleased to have been made aware of this useful way of sorting dancers into partners and to have had this glimpse into Hope's grasp of square dancing culture.

Hope then had students dance the "7th Step" in a large circle to a tune called "7th Step." From my point of view, it looked as if engagement was achieved. Students were focused on the dance.

Figure 7 - Dancing the 7th Step in the Music Room, May 26th, 2010

The second dance that Hope taught – the "Virginia Reel" – showed again the potential distractions of working within a community. When she got to a place in her version of the dance that was different from the way that Patrick Caron had taught it previously,[85] he offered to show her how they had done it before, and she allowed him to do so.

---

[85] Different people having different versions of the dances became an issue in the teaching of the dances more than once.

May 28th – Rod and Ihor

The next lesson was the first with Rod Olstad and his guitar player, Ihor Nedoshytko. I wrote in my journal, "like savvy veterans, Rod and Ihor were already playing a tune in anticipation of the students' arrival"(Stark 2010). I had the students stop in the hallway outside of the room before class, and listen to the music. I waited until they had all arrived and were looking at me – it was the last class on Friday afternoon, and they arrived at the music room in unfocused clumps – before I reminded them that we were going to dance with Rod and Ihor. I asked students to sit "audience style" facing the steps (they usually start class sitting *on* the steps) and, as I wrote in my journal, "like a miracle, they came right in and sat down where I meant them to be" (Stark 2010).[86]

The lesson started with some information given by Rod about how districts in Alberta were arranged and how the dances would go,[87] and then went to a question and answer time. A student asked Rod if he was a professional musician, and that led us to the topic of his fiddling career, which took us away from the family dance, but perhaps served to allow the students to make a more personal connection with Rod. Patrick Caron arrived during this time, and so we decided to make our first dance the "Virginia Reel."

Patrick took charge of the set up of students and he told them that they could choose their partners, and, as I wrote in my journal, "My impression was that students then felt like they *had* to dance boys with boys and girls with girls. There were no exceptions to this pattern." (Stark 2010)

Patrick's perspective was different. He said:

PATRICK: Now, I know that when we had [Hope] in here -- … -- and she had them do boy/girl, boy/girl, that sort of turned them right off. And I know that as a -- as a teacher, one of the things I do is make sure that they choose their own partners. It doesn't matter whether it's boy/girl, boy/girl.

DAVE: Uh-huh.

---

[86] Coming into the music room in this way was a break from the normal routine, and thus potentially disruptive.

[87] Rod knows about this information from his historical work with the Northern Alberta Fiddle Project.

PATRICK: So long as they got somebody that they know and they can dance with, then it's a lot less threatening.

(Stark, 2010)

When they started to dance the "Virginia Reel" to the live fiddle music, it was magical. I called the office to invite the secretary – who is a musician – to come and watch. It was wonderful to see everyone moving in the same way to live music. After we had reeled through the whole pattern (4 couples per set), we stopped and clapped for the musicians. Several children asked for drinks or to go to the bathroom (it was physical activity: one can see why dance takes place in gym class), so I told the class to take a two-minute break, and then I just let them go.

Figure 8 - Rod Olstad, Ihor and students, May 28th, 2010

They *were* back in (close to) two minutes. Everybody was engaged: I felt no need to be a vigilant supervisor. After the break, we set up to dance the "7th Step."

I suggested that we go back to boy-girl partners because we would be doing that the next week with Hope, and I wrote in my journal, "there was no real argument" – but some students did make faces and tried to switch places in the lines when we did the "grand march." Furthermore, after the dance several girls asked if they could use my hand sanitizer: it took me a moment to realize that this was in reference to the recent contact with the hands of boy partners. Perhaps Patrick had a point.

Conceiving of the dance as culturally situated practice might create different expectations than conceiving of it as an activity for gym class. For the schoolhouse dance project, having boys experience dancing with girls is actually part of the cultural historical learning: for gym class, that aspect of the dance does not really matter.

The “7th Step” to live music was also fantastic to watch. Patrick called the moves for the first few times through the dance,[88] and then he said, “I’m going to stop calling now.” He did – and, as I wrote in my journal, “they kept doing it, just the live music and the dance. This went on almost until the dismissal bell. There seemed to be the presence of ‘flow.’” Then I wrote, “This is the way to spend Friday afternoon.” (Stark 2010) We clapped again for the musicians, and then the class was dismissed.

Figure 9 - Rod and Ihor playing for the dance: Alex sitting out.

Another indication of the presence of “flow,” I think, on this afternoon was in the students’ behavior. Rod and Ihor both commented on how attentive and respectful they were. I think that this quality of student attention had to have been there because they were genuinely involved in the experience of the dance. In my journal entry about this afternoon, in regards to “flow,” I noted that one of the

[88] I was glad that Patrick was there: I have no aptitude for dancing or for memorizing dances.

class leaders was participating in a positive way, and I speculated that this might be helping the class's engagement.

Interestingly, there also was an indication that in the learning of this dance, "music-as-music" learning also took place. Several students were counting as they danced – indicating a sense of beat, meter, "listenership," and form – and in her "schoolhouse dance" journal Jetta (one of the grade four students) wrote:

> "Hope's dances are very cool, for example the 7 step. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3, 4."

In regards to the evolution of the schoolhouse dance simulation plan, in the May 28th journal entry, I had decided to move it to Thursday, June 10th, so that Ernie would be able to come without conflicting with Hope's engagement. I had gone so far as to check with Rod and Igor to see if they could switch the date (Stark, 2010).

June 2nd and June 4th

The next two music classes were continuations of the previous two – Hope taught on Wednesday, and Rod and Ihor played on Friday.

One feature of these two lessons was that students were less focused then on the previous two. On both days, the boy-girl partner concept was a problem. On Hope's next lesson, June 2nd, Zoya's attempt not to be William's partner was distracting.[89] She managed to switch places with Brook after furious eye contact, but, because I was part of a different square trying to focus on the dance, I did not see what happened next. I wrote in my journal, "the next thing I knew, Hope had stepped in suavely and was dancing the part of the man with Brook, and William was sitting … in his ordinary spot."(Stark 2010) I was concerned that the project might have become ruined for William, who up until that time had demonstrated excellent engagement, because of this rejection.

---

[89] We were working on "Put Your Little Foot," a square dance. For this type of dance four partners face each other in the shape of a square, one couple to a side. A caller designates a head couple, and leads the dancers through various moves such as the "do-si-do" and the "swing."

On Rod and Ihor's day, compromising with Patrick, I designated one set of the "Virginia Reel" as a boy-girl set, and allowed students to volunteer. Four girls and five boys joined that set. While I was talking with Alex L. during the dance, a boy hit the boy who was the positive class leader from the previous week. He may have been provoked.

Alex L. wanted to take pictures, but the camera was unavailable. He asked me several times if there was anything he *could* do, and finally, with twenty minutes left in the class, he asked if he could join the dance. I (of course) said "yes," and joined too as his partner.

Rod and Ihor's second day demonstrated again how a project can go in different directions as a result of community involvement. Rod was prepared on his second visit to tell the students about community dances in Alberta *after* settler times – I think because he had told them about schoolhouse dances *of* settler times in the previous class – and I gave him the floor. Once again, however – as in the first lesson of the unit – I think that engagement suffered because we were not actually dancing. Rod's information and the tunes he played to illustrate, although fascinating, lost the attention of some students.

As has been previously mentioned, Elliott says that the goal of "self-growth" occurs when the learning opportunities are sufficiently challenging: He says, "Students can acquire musicianship and learn how to use it only through progressive musical problem solving in genuine musical practice situations." (Elliott 1995, 176); and "self-growth, self-knowledge, flow and self-esteem do not result from setting and meeting trivial goals"(Elliott 1995, 133). These two lessons, to be *praxial*, and to promote "flow," should have been carefully structured to increase the challenges presented by the previous two lessons. For example, students could have learned how to call the dance; they could have learned a new way to form partners; we could have covered more, different dances; Rod and Igor's second visit could have been a schoolhouse dance simulation in its own right, perhaps with parents or other teachers invited. It was my responsibility to give more focused direction and increase the challenges to keep the project moving in a *praxial* direction.

Because I had noticed that I had allowed the involvement of the community to diffuse the focus of the project, I wrote in my reflection after this lesson about the schoolhouse dance simulation, “I need to script it.”

In my journal entry after Hope’s second visit I recorded that the schoolhouse dance simulation was set for its original time and date, the afternoon of June 11th. Ernie Power was the deciding factor: he indicated several times that he wanted to be the caller, and he wanted to come on the date and time that we talked about first. I apologized to Hope for stealing him from her commitment.

Schoolhouse Dance Simulation, June 11th

The next lesson of the schoolhouse dance unit was the schoolhouse dance simulation. In the end, we held it in the downstairs lunchroom.

Before the dance I sent a note home inviting parents giving them a rationale for the activity and asking for snacks (see appendix 4). Also before the dance, I asked Brenda Gunn (the grade 4 teacher) if students could color large letters which spelled “Westglen Schoolhouse Dance 2010” during the morning, and if I could come and chat with the students about matters of engagement before the dance. For this, as I wrote in my journal,

I focused on the parent visit: I told them that they were not only going to show parents how mature they could be because they could dance the opposite sex, but also how polite they could be with each other and with their parents. I told them specifically ‘how to be polite’ examples: 1) clap for the band; 2) say ‘thank you to partners; …look into their eyes [when] saying ‘thank you for the dance.’ (Stark 2010)

Figure 10 - student-made sign at the schoolhouse dance simulation afternoon

I focused on parents because I felt that grade four students would have the "self goal" of wanting to show their parents their achievements. This seems to have been effective:

Deanna said that she wanted to impress the parent guests:

DAVE: Okay. What do you think of having parents join in?

DEANNA: I felt like, I have to do good; I have to do this; I want to impress the parents; I don't want to look like the bad person; I want to do this really good.

(June 24, 2010)

And Eve apparently really wanted her mom to come:

DAVE: So -- yeah. Very nice. Did you chat about -- did she chat to you about it?

MRS. OLSON: Yeah, she did before, and then she really wanted me to come and be part of that.

(Stark, 2010)

Before afternoon recess, furthermore, with Brenda's permission, I invited students to do various tasks to prepare for the dance. A group of students wrote a welcome on the chalkboard, a group hung up streamers, a group was selected to be roadies and greeters for the band, a group set out the snacks on a hallway table, and a group laid out a circle in masking tape on the floor. These activities were

also in the service of engagement, in that it was a way to give the students a sense of themselves as hosts of the dance.

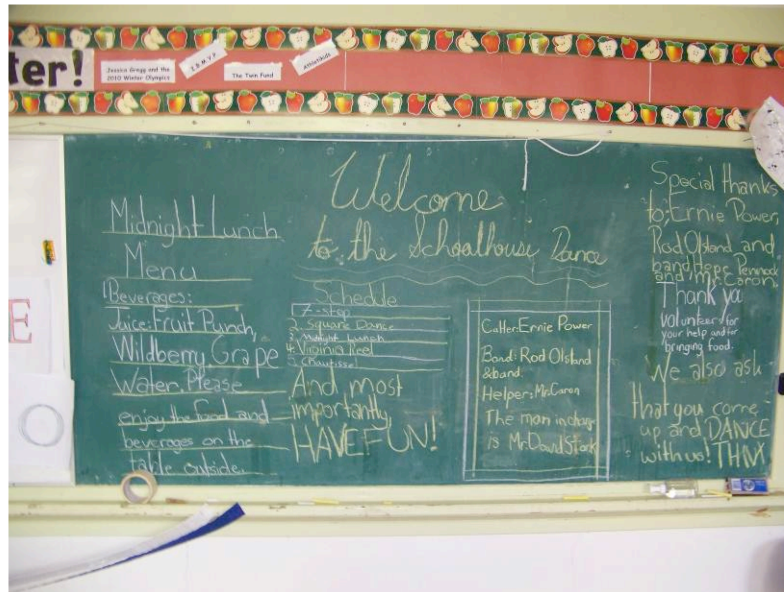


Figure 11 - student made chalkboard sign at the schoolhouse dance simulation afternoon

The band for the afternoon consisted of Rod, Ihor, and Brian Cherwyk (on keyboard).[90]

Figure 12 - Rod, Ihor and Brian warm-up before the schoolhouse dance simulation

---

[90] Brian Cherwyk plays in the band “Kubasonics” – a Ukrainian fusion band - with Rod. He is also a music historian who has written for the Canadian Journal for Traditional Music (1995) and contributed to the folkwaysalive! “canadian traditional music” exhibit on the Virtual Museum of Canada [bit.ly/vmctm].

The dance was to be from afternoon recess until the end of the day. Students (and I) changed into our dance clothes, if we had them (students were given the option; I "led by example" in a tie and suit jacket, like an old-time teacher) during recess. Several students wore old-timey clothes. William, to my relief, had not been discouraged to the point of withdrawing from the project by the incident of the week before, and he had prepared a great costume.

Figure 13 - William in his schoolhouse dance garb

William's mom also dressed in costume, and she spoke in her interview about an absence of information about the way people dressed in settler times in the west:

Q DAVE: And do you think William learned some social studies or, …history?

A MRS. MINER: Oh, definitely, yeah. … he was -- we were talking about what the settlers wear, and he was going, oh, they can't wear this. It's this that they have to wear. So -- he kind of knew that, and we were looking at it -- I Googled -- what people should wear, and that was hard, to find visual images, unless you wanted to be, you know, the high-class rich person.

DAVE: Right.

MRS. MINER: There was none of the regular, everyday working guy.

DAVE: Isn't that interesting? …

MRS. MINER: -- there was ones for -- you know, you could dress up for weddings -- -- and the fancy bonnets and -- and everything else, but there was none just --

DAVE: No history of the people --

MRS. MINER: No… And it was -- it was weird for me, 'cause you can look at the Loyalist and stuff on the East Coast --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. MINER: -- but I found it really hard to find anything here for the settlers that came. Had what they ate, what they lived in, but nothing really for what they would wear. It would be very brief.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. MINER: But it was hard finding -- I'm like, okay, we're gonna kind of wing it here too. And then William was telling me too what -- what he thought and what the time frame was. So he knew. (Stark 2010)

Figure 14 - William and Mrs. Miner at the schoolhouse dance simulation

Ernie Power, like Hope Pennock, had come dressed in square dance clothing. Also like Hope, he came with his own equipment - which included a turntable and an old-fashioned microphone.

Figure 15 - Ernie Power with microphone

Several parents came to the event. One of the students, Emma, mentioned in her interview how much it meant to her to have her mom there:

DAVE: -- … Your mom was able to come.

EMMA: Mm-hmm.

DAVE: Did you like it?

EMMA: Yeah, 'cause she's usually all the time at work, and it was really nice to see her coming to something involved with school.

DAVE: … Do you think she had fun?

EMMA: Yeah. It was funny because she didn't know what to do. She was doing everything wrong.

DAVE: Were you proud to be able to show her what you could do, or did that enter into it?

EMMA: I really was proud to show my mom what I could do. (Stark 2010)

Figure 16 - Emma and her mother.

Several parents also mentioned that they felt it was meaningful for them to be there, too.

There were a few preschool aged children at the dance, and the one younger brother joined in the dance at some points. This made the event more multi-generational, which was appropriate to the schoolhouse dance source material.

Figure 17 - multigenerational participation

I expected parents to just join in the dance, but they hung back: it was not the glorious coming together of the generations in dance that I had perhaps envisioned in the first iteration of the project proposal, but it was parental participation to some degree. I wrote in my journal about one parent's comments:

> …the parents, by and large, didn't jump into the dance. Most of them sat and watched. [one student's] parents both came, but they sat on the side. [The] mom said, "we had to do this when we were in school," and "…I've done my time." (Stark 2010)

These comments show, perhaps, an attitude towards school activities – that they are an obligation (which, I guess, technically they are) – that it was part of this project's ambition to overcome by promoting "flow" through a praxial approach to music education. It seems to me that participating out of obligation only is antithetical to successful engagement in music.

In order to try to keep the focus of the afternoon, I gave the band and Ernie copies of a dance agenda that I had tried to order for maximum flow.

SCHOOLHOUSE DANCE AGENDA

JUNE 11TH, 2010

2:05 – **INTRODUCTION**: MR STARK WILL WELCOME EVERYBODY AND INTRODUCE ERNIE POWERS, ROD AND THE BAND.

2:10 – **GRAND MARCH** – WE'LL DO THE "GRAND MARCH" TO GET PARTNERS. BAND WILL PLAY IN MARCH TIME WHILE THIS HAPPENS?

2:15 – **FIRST DANCE** – 7TH STEP

2:25 –2:45 – **SECOND DANCE** – SQUARE DANCING TAUGHT AND CALLED BY ERNIE

2:45–2:55 – BREAK

2:55– 3:05 – **THIRD DANCE** – VIRGINIA REEL

3:05–3:15 – **FOURTH DANCE** – SCHOTTISCHE

BIRD DANCE? – WE COULD JUST THROW IT IN THERE, UNANNOUNCED FOR FUN.

3:15–3:25 – **FIFTH DANCE** – VIRGINIA REEL AGAIN

Figure 18 - schoolhouse dance simulation agenda

When the dance started, the "7th Step" went well, as usual, with the only disturbance in the "flow" being that Ernie had a slightly different way of calling it then Hope did.

Eve's mom and William's mom both joined in the second dance, but not without being asked directly by Patrick and me. I started the second dance (the square dance) with a group that included Patrick and these two moms. We were getting the moves, and it was fun. Brenda Gunn then told me that I should switch with someone in the all-student group behind me because they were having trouble. I wrote in my journal about this group, "they looked bored and listless," and their condition did not improve with my presence. Part of the problem, I think, was that Ernie's calls were again different from Hope's. This is an issue for planning: every caller has their own way of doing things and perhaps part of the learning needs to be the idea that dancers have to be able to adjust to how different callers might run the floor.

Jetta commented on the difficulties that the different calls caused:

JETTA: -- it was kind of hard, 'cause we had to do something different.

DAVE: Yeah.

JETTA: We started with Hope --

DAVE: And she taught --

JETTA: Well, actually --

DAVE: -- you one way.

JETTA: -- we started with Mr. Caron and then --

DAVE: Yeah, yeah.

JETTA: -- he -- and then Hope did something a little different, and then Rod and his bud --

DAVE: Yeah.

JETTA: -- did something a little different and then -- then the caller at the schoolhouse dance, he did a lot different.

DAVE: Yes, he did.

JETTA: He, like, taught us a whole new dance, but we weren't sure what to do.

(Stark 2010)

On this afternoon Ernie really did run the floor. He came into the middle of the room to demonstrate moves, and he had a repertoire of funny things to say. He said to one of the moms, for example, "you're a big girl – you must be in grade 3." He also showed great respect for the schedule, which he kept to the minute.

Figure 19 - Ernie shows a step to Eve

Alex L. did not join the dancing (would there have been people in settler times who came but did not join the dancing?) but at the “midnight lunch” (which some students identified as their favorite part of the unit), he found his role looking after the snack table, ready to supply fresh cupcakes if called upon. This was his way of “musicking.”[91]

By and large, students acted politely and respectfully throughout the afternoon. For me, this behavior was an indication of engagement and the presence of “flow.” Ernie later told me that he could not believe how many students had come up and thanked him for coming to the school.

Jade and Alex Patrick’s mom talked about her children’s pride in showing her what they could do, and how that contributed to their engagement:

MRS. PATRICK: … they were very proud to show me what they had learned.

DAVE: Oh, cool.

MRS. PATRICK: I liked coming in for the small schoolhouse dance as well as it being a part of the family dance, 'cause then they really got to feel like they could have their -- their parents in there dancing with them and -- and playing and really showing them what they learned …

(Stark 2010)

Figure 20 - Deanna and William dancing

[91] As mentioned in chapter two, section one - “praxialism” -, Christopher Small expands the definition of ‘musicking” to include all of the activities surrounding a musical event (Small 1998, 9).

Figure 21 - Sam, Niayah and students ready to dance

I had invited the press, and a picture with a caption reflecting the conversation I had with an Edmonton Sun photographer was in the next day's paper.

The Edmonton Sun ■ SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 2010

PERRY MAH/EDMONTON SUN

Blowing the roof off the barn

Students and their families try their hand at square dancing while Rod Olstad plays the fiddle at Westglen Elementary School on Friday. The dance is part of the school's music and social studies class. In the old days, a school was one of the first buildings built in a new community and served as a meeting place for social events.

Figure 22 - Newspaper clipping of Rod and dancers at the schoolhouse dance simulation afternoon

Epilogue – The Family Dance, June 18th

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the family dance was initially intended to be the culmination of the SDP, and a celebration of community formed by dance as it might have been in settler times. At least for the grade four class, however, the family dance became, more of an epilogue. In the week between the schoolhouse dance simulation and the family dance, the students wrote in their dance journals, and practiced the "swing" – a move that seemed to be difficult for many.

One reason for this anticlimactic element to the family dance portion of the project was that not many grade four students could attend. When I asked the students if they were planning to come to the family dance (part of the proposal to the parent council included a traditional dance demonstration by the grade 4 class) only about half were able to. Fewer were able to come at the beginning of the dance, and there was no time during the dance when many students were coming at the same time.

In addition to this, I did not have a caller for the demonstration. I initially thought that Patrick or I could call the dances, but Patrick was unable to come, and I did not have enough confidence to try it.

Ernie Power had mentioned that he was available on the night of the family dance (June 18th), and since there was $100.00 left in the parent council budget, after checking with the treasurer and with Margaret, I booked Ernie from 6:00-6:30pm, the beginning of the dance. I phoned to invite Hope Pennock, and she said that she was already planning to come because students had invited her when she worked with them.

Figure 23 - Hope and Ernie at the Family Dance

On the night of the dance, at 6:00pm the only people in the gym were four grade 4 students, Ernie Power, the DJ and myself. Alex P. had made a point of being there, but he had to leave for rugby practice by 6:30pm.

Figure 24 - Alex, Jade, Zoya and Vicky at the Family dance

My journal entry says:

> At about 6:25 there were probably 30 people … and the grade 4's and I lined up for the Virginia Reel. Ernie invited other people to join, and eventually we had a line of 16 people, 8 per side. He divided us into two [sets] … a mixture of parents and students of various ages, many of whom had never danced the "Virginia Reel." (Stark 2010)

Figure 25 - starting the Virginia Reel at the Family Dance

Figure 26 - The Virginia Reel continues at the Family Dance

Ernie used his turntable for the music, piped through the DJ's sound system. Although the dancing was at times ragged, I wrote, "Already in the 'Virginia Reel,' the community was … having fun together." I noticed several examples of parents dancing with their children. (Stark 2010)

Zoya also noticed that there was engagement in spite of uncertainty:

DAVE: …what did you notice about doing the traditional dances at the family dance?

ZOYA: What I noticed was that everybody was joining in because it was important and it was different and it was special, and everybody wanted to join in and try something new.

DAVE: Cool.

ZOYA: And it was all fun, and I saw people smiling even though they got confused.

(Stark 2010)

When Ernie stopped calling the "Virginia Reel," he called us into a big circle, and I wrote:

> …when he did this…, virtually everyone else, including the grade 6's joined in. It was a big circle, 60 people?
> He taught us a simple dance we hadn't done before, and everyone got it. … it was fun and totally multi-generational. [A teaching colleague] was my partner at one point and she said, "this is fun."
> …So here it was – the whole community doing an activity together. We were dancing unity. There was a guest who's wife was a Westglen alumni, facilitating this [sense of] community which was being affirmed in the way that community was affirmed back in settler times. (Stark 2010)

Ernie's last dance was the "Bird Dance," and everyone stayed in the circle. I wrote, "still some confusion, but together and fun." I also wrote:

We could have danced all nigh with Ernie. I can see how these kinds of dances could have gone all night. [They're] fun, and time flies. (Stark 2010)

At 6:55pm I gave Ernie the "wrap it up" signal, the "Bird Dance" ended, and the DJ took over. A teacher who was on the ball ran over and turned out the lights, and everyone scattered as a 1980s rock tune filled the room. The grade sixes went in a clump to the front of the room and everyone else left the gym or stood on the edges.

Schoolhouse Dance Analysis

This project supports the call in the K-12 Arts Education Curriculum Report (2009 DRAFT) and Promising Practices and Core Learnings in Arts Education: Literature Review of K-12 Fine Arts Programs for "locally developed [arts] courses with an emphasis on dance." Several interviewees suggested that teaching dance in music class (as opposed to the physical education class) brought an enhancing dimension to the dance learning experience.[92]

Mrs. Miner (William's mother), for example, says that dance is more than just exercise:

---

[92] See appendix 7 for other responses.

MRS. MINER: -- but -- there is that physical aspect to it, and, I mean, you can watch the shows on TV, and the dancers are in amazing --

DAVE: Yes.

MRS. MINER: -- amazing shape, but there's also -- I think it goes more with music. They're -- both have the rhythm to them.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. MINER: And I think there's more of a spiritual feeling with music and dance than there is with, hey, let's go work out at the gym for an hour. (Stark 2010)

Mrs. Patrick says that the dance allows music class to be more participatory:

DAVE: So, now, I was asking the kids, what did they think. Is this music, or is it -- should it be in phys ed or -- like, is dance -- should dance be part of the music program and what -- how do you feel?

MRS. PATRICK: I -- I like the fact that it was part of music -- like, when we did social dance in school, it was part of phys ed.

DAVE: Okay.

MRS. PATRICK: But I like it being part of music because it brings the music more home to them.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. PATRICK: If you know what I -- if you know what I'm trying to say. Like, it made it more relevant, more tangible, more participatory –

(Stark 2010)

Jody Lundell said that the dance can fit in the music program because it gives students an opportunity to experience an old style of music.

JODY: Well they're learning about different kinds of music, music that would - the (sort of) music of the past – that's still, I mean, familiar today – lots of kids probably hear that music at, you know, family events, or weddings, or those kinds of things; having the fiddler, and the actual live music is teaching them a lot about music, about music appreciation, … and, it all fits together, right?

DAVE: Do you see dance as being a musical thing?

JODY: Well, I think most teachers probably see dance as part of the phys ed curriculum. It's like, "OK, now we have to do the dance" – you know "we have to meet the outcomes for dance," so – doing that through phys ed, but, I think it fits, yah. It's a very musical thing. (Stark 2010)

I think that this project also was a useful exploration of the community involvement recommendation in Shelley Robinson's *Promising Practices and*

Core Learnings in Arts Education: Literature Review of K-12 Fine Arts Programs. The students were enriched through working with our "culture-bearers" Hope, Rod, Igor and Ernie, and I think that Hope, Rod, Igor and Ernie were also enriched by being able to share their expertise with the students. And I hope that it is comforting for Hope and Ernie to know that the music that they have been involved with for half a century may have a new audience. It was also nice to see multi-generational friendships begin: several students invited Hope to the family dance, and – as noted – many students thanked Ernie for coming. The schoolhouse dance concept gave a natural opportunity for community involvement because it would have included the whole community in settler times. It was nice to see some of the benefits that accrue from celebrating community across generations.

Jody Lundell noticed the cross-generational community building potential of this type of dancing and this type of project:

JODY: And then, I think, just the extensions into the family dance – there's lots that could happen: that has lots and lots of potential. I noticed - as you did - that, at the family dance, when the traditional dancing was happening - and the caller was there, and the traditional music, and the circle dancing - how many more people were involved in dancing and having a good time together: rather than when the lights all went out, and the more contemporary music came on. The kids were dancing, but you didn't have the cross-generational kind of dancing. And I thought it was – although we only saw it on a small scale – for families from different cultural backgrounds – some of this might be quite reminiscent of what they came from in their home country, and a really good way for people to connect who might be from different cultures, or different socio-economic levels, or …I think it has tons of potential. (Stark 2010)

Mrs. Patrick talks about how good it was for the students to work with the guests for a sense of authenticity:

MRS. PATRICK: You know, I really liked -- Jade and I were just doing the slide show together.

DAVE: Oh, yeah.

MRS. PATRICK: And I can't remember what she said her name was, but Jade could tell me, like, the name of the lady who had come -- Ruth?

DAVE: Hope.

MRS. PATRICK: Hope.

DAVE: Yeah.

MRS. PATRICK: -- who had come, and, you know, we were looking at the photographs of that, and we thought it was very cool that Mr. Power (ph) could be there and having a live fiddler. I -- I think that's just fantastic. And they really enjoyed it because it felt more -- it felt more real than just having a tape or a CD playing in the background.

DAVE: Right.

MRS. PATRICK: It was more authentic and just felt more -- yeah, more real to them, I think. (Stark 2010)

From my perspective, it looked as though students' learning was enhanced tremendously by parental participation. The parents' presence seemed to help student engagement, and student engagement in turn seemed to encourage parental participation. Many interviewees related conversations that took place between students and parents, and several student interviewees mentioned that they participated with care because of the presence of the parents. With this self-perpetuating cycle in place, there is evidence that more learning took place, and that parents were more intimately involved in supporting that learning. William, Jetta, and Emma, as has been noted, all encouraged their parents to come to the schoolhouse dance simulation, and knowing that their parents were coming, likely would have heightened their engagement in the activities of the unit.

It is interesting to note that most of the parents who attended the SDP dance simulation were mothers – although one father also attended. Perhaps part of the reason for this gender discrepancy was logistical: perhaps the dads could not get free from work? Perhaps the preponderance of participation by mothers suggests that some combination of the dads, moms or students perceived the SDP to be a more female-oriented activity? These are questions that could be pursued in a future spiral of the SDP.

Mrs. Patrick talks about how her children were proud that she could watch them do the activity:

DAVE: What did you think of coming in and seeing what they were doing and --

…

MRS. PATRICK: … they were very proud to show me what they had learned.

DAVE: Oh, cool.

MRS. PATRICK: I liked coming in for the small schoolhouse dance as well as it being a part of the family dance, 'cause then they really got to feel like they could have their -- their parents in there dancing with them and -- and playing and really showing them what they learned … So it was cool.

(Stark 2010)

Mrs. Olson talked about the value of being involved at school was in modeling community involvement to her child:

DAVE: Do you think it's good for Eve's learning to have her parents here?

MRS. OLSON: Yes.

DAVE: In what ways -- what advantages do you see?

MRS. OLSON: Well, I think she realizes the importance we put --

DAVE: Uh-huh.

MRS. OLSON: -- on school and being part of the community -- you know, the school community and the larger community, and I think, you know, we don't -- can't just say, get involved. We have to --

DAVE: You show it.

MRS. OLSON: -- be involved. Yeah.

(Stark 2010)

Several of the parents talked about how they had discussed the project at home with their children, and all of the teachers felt that more parents came out to the schoolhouse dance afternoon than they expected, suggesting a symbiotic relationship between student engagement and parental involvement. Brenda Gunn, for example, said that although Westglen has a supportive parent community, this project brought parents out who might not normally come to school:

MS. GUNN: Yeah, community involvement. I mean, you know this school is already --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MS. GUNN: -- huge. You know, they're really already really involved in lots of stuff going on. And, you know, I think in a way for this kind of thing it's great, because they're already quite familiar with that sort of, come to the school. You know, a lot of people always seem to be able to come during the day for things like this, and they seemed so interested -- I mean, there were parents there -- like Jetta's mom, for example -- that I don't -- you know, I'm not -- they often don't come to stuff, so I think -- you know, only speculating, but I think it's 'cause the kids said, you know, come to see our dance type of thing --

Q DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MS. GUNN: -- right? 'Cause often in here she'll say, well, I can't come; I have to work. So it was really great to see a lot of those parents there that I haven't seen at other events. So hopefully it was 'cause the kids were excited about it and eager about it. And even they were -- you know, some of the parents had even sort of dressed in period costume, … (Stark 2010)

Brenda Gunn also noted that it was good to bring parents in for an event that was less of a "traditional" music event:[93]

MS. GUNN: Never -- can never be a bad thing. And when the parents are -- you know, they're just way more aware. Like, how often do parents really know what's going on in your music class, for example?

DAVE: Yeah.

MS. GUNN: Except for a Christmas concert or something --

DAVE: Yeah.

MS. GUNN: -- that's sort of really -- you know, really sort of traditional, sort of the same thing. So I thought that was really great, because it brought parents into the school and got kids talking to their parents about something that was going on in music other than just those really traditional things. So I thought that was kind of really cool, something different that we haven't really had here before. (Stark 2010)

This perhaps speaks to a benefit of praxial music education, too: if a music practice allows it, parents can be involved, potentially in their children's music education in ways other than as audience, performer or chaperone.

Principal Jody Lundell also mentions that the schoolhouse dance project allowed parents to be involved in a less "traditional,"[94] possibly less threatening way:

JODY: Well, we always say that parents are partners, that parents have to be partners, in their children's education. The first step is always getting them in the school, and so I think projects like these bring people into the school in kind of a friendly, positive, low-risk sort of way. It's not coming to talk about how your kids doing in school, or what your kid did - or didn't do, or all of those kinds of things – and so it builds that class community.

(Stark 2010)

---

[93] It has been pointed out to me that Brenda Gunn's use of the word "traditional" is somehow inverted: of course the SDP *was* a "really traditional" event in many senses, but not an event that normally takes place in the Westglen school music program.

[94] This is an inverted use of the word "taditional" again.

I think the most eloquent testimony to the benefits of parental involvement, however, may be the pictures from the project.

It became clear through the project that it is part of the teacher's role in a praxial music class to pay attention to engagement – not only through finding ways to help students to align personal goals with project goals (such as showing parents their achievements), but also through designing legitimate, appropriate, increasing challenges, and at the same "clearing the road" ahead of potential obstacles to "flow."

The second lessons with Hope and Rod and Igor would have been more successful, I feel, if they had been more challenging. The schoolhouse dance simulation would have been more successful if we knew all of the dance moves that Ernie called. The praxial music teacher's job would be to anticipate these pitfalls – including the meanderings caused by community guests and play the role of a tour guide and trail breaker.

In spite of not anticipating pitfalls, and being taken off-track, there were indications of student engagement. Vicky, for example, taught the dances at home to her little brother:

DAVE: So did you have a favourite dance of those ones?

VICKY: Yeah. Well, I pretty much like square dance, even though it's hard.

DAVE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

VICKY: I tried them. And also at home I tried them again. I showed my brother how to do it -- (Stark 2010)

As another indication of engagement, several of the students said that they enjoyed the dance unit more than regular music. Emma, for example, who does sing in a choir, said:

DAVE: … what did you like better: music as normal or music with dance?

EMMA: I liked it with the dance because we had -- we were more involved with the activity and --

DAVE: Okay.

EMMA: -- we -- most of the time in normal music class, we were just sitting, and I like --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

EMMA: -- getting up on my feet and dancing.

DAVE: You like to move and more involvement, then?

EMMA: Yeah. (Stark 2010)

Jody Lundell noticed a "high level of student engagement:"

DAVE: -- and I just wanted to ask you about student engagement – and, if you noticed anything – doing the schoolhouse dance project – about the engagement of the students.

JODY: – I thought there was a high level of engagement – higher than I was expecting there to be. I wasn't sure with the traditional dancing how the students would respond, but, I thought, overall the students were really interested in it, they were engaged, they had lots of fun. I was looking at pictures with a couple of them this morning and they were talking about how much fun they had. And I also liked the way that some of the students who weren't so comfortable with the dancing were engaged in other ways. (Stark 2010)

Of the elements that this project explored, however, curricular integration may have been the most successful. Possibly indicating areas of specialty, all of the teachers could easily identify aspects of the project that were ripe for integration.

Patrick identified subjects that could be integrated with the dance:

DAVE: -- I wanted to ask about -- like, subject integration. You've taught this in phys ed; right?

PATRICK: Yeah.

DAVE: And so, like, how do you think it worked in music? Do you think -- is there one more than --

PATRICK: Well, sure it does, and it works perfectly. I mean, it's not just working in music and phys ed. It also works in health –

(Stark 2010)

And he also could see how the dance could be integrated into music from physical education:

PATRICK: Well, it's the integration.

DAVE: Yeah.

PATRICK: I mean, dances by themselves are just -- just movement.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

PATRICK: When you -- when you apply it to a beat and you start getting that beat -- I mean, you don't have to know that it's 4/4 time or 5/ --

DAVE: Yeah.

PATRICK: -- you know, whatever time it is. You have to know, though, that you put your foot down at a certain time.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

PATRICK: You have to listen for that beat.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

PATRICK: And the kids have got to listen. They have to use their ears, and they have to listen to be able to do it.

DAVE: And those are musical skills; right?

PATRICK: Those are musical skills.

(Stark 2010)

Brenda Gunn said that she felt that the dance covered social studies outcomes:

DAVE: Does it hit the socials outcomes? I guess --

MS. GUNN: Yes, I think --

DAVE: -- a little bit.

MS. GUNN: -- so. I mean, they're just supposed to be able to talk about what it was like, how it's different from -- from now. So that certainly -- you know, they had a lot -- lots of differences, the -- the way they were dressing and the -- you know, the people that were playing the music, the type of instruments they were using. Yeah, I think that -- sure. Yeah, it went -- it kind of covered lots of those outcomes for social studies.

(Stark 2010)

And she also felt that student engagement was increased because of curricular integration:

MS. GUNN: -- sort of all together? I thought it was really -- I thought it was really interesting, and I thought the kids were really engaged in it. It -- it -- because we had already been to the 1881 schoolhouse …, so they'd had that experience. And we had been talking about that in social studies and had been reading a novel --

DAVE: Oh, a novel.

MS. GUNN: -- called Ticket to Curlew --

DAVE: Okay.

MS. GUNN: -- by Celia Lottridge. And it's actually about eastern Alberta, so it's kind of local.

DAVE: Cool.

MS. GUNN: And the kid is -- in the novel is these kids' age, so, you know, there was sort of all other -- you know, some other subject kind of integration there too.

DAVE: Great.

MS. GUNN: But -- yeah. And the timing of it was perfect, 'cause we were just reading that novel when you started doing that --

DAVE: Oh.

MS. GUNN: -- and sort of the -- the social studies about the history -- that part of it was still sort of really active in the classroom. So I thought they were really engaged in it and -- it was really cool to see some of the kids dressing up for, you know, part of the dance and to -- even to get them to write on the chalkboard, which they don't -- you know, luckily there was a chalkboard –

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MS. GUNN: -- in that one room where you're doing all the -- just to see the actual -- you know, the people involved in the square dancing and, you know, the caller, that type of thing. Kids would never have experience with that, probably, these days, so I thought it was really successful and they were really engaged in it.

(Stark 2010)

Amongst the parents, Mrs. Patrick felt that the project actually *should* be integrated with physical education and music so that it could be given more time:

MRS. PATRICK: I liked the fact that it was part of the music program.

DAVE: Cool.

MRS. PATRICK: It would be nice if it was part of both programs and therefore could be a longer --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. PATRICK: -- you know, a longer class session or --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. PATRICK: -- you know, spread over a longer period of time, whatever worked both -- best. But it would be nice if it was part of both programs.

(Stark 2010)

Chapter 5 – Conclusions, Recommendations

Future cycles of the SDP

Although a focus of this project has been on exploring aspects of music other than its expressive elements, in future cycles of the SDP, it would be appropriate also to explore the project's "music-as-music" connections.

One such obvious connection is in the concepts of beat, meter and metric accent – suggested by Jetta's journal entry in page seventy-five of this thesis. The SDP might be enhanced if a teacher brought learning about rhythm and meter to the attention of students explicitly at opportune times throughout the project.

Another "music-as-music" connection that could be explored in a future action research cycle of the SDP is suggested by Hope Pennock's "history of dance" chart (appendix five): the idea that many of the square dances and jigs of schoolhouse dance times actually have deep provenance in the contredanses, minuets and quadrilles of earlier European music. This reality is a possible link for the making of connections between schoolhouse dance learning and learning in these much older dance and music traditions. Many composers of the western canon composed in dance forms, and the schoolhouse dance music could be an opening into their music, especially in the parameters of meter, tempo and form. "Listenership" in these older forms could be enhanced by work with the dances of Alberta's settler times, and, actually dancing to classical composed music could lead to meaningful learning within the western music tradition.

Another direction for a future SDP would be to plan for hoped-for diversity in dance styles: instead of asking if parents could teach dances, I could make sure to set up experiences for students in other dance styles. The dances that I choose could be suggested by the backgrounds of the students in the class with which I am working.

A third direction for a future SDP action research cycle plan would be to better plan for the creation of authentic, progressive musical challenges within the project.

SDP: MEAE vs. praxial music education

On the first page of this thesis I identified part of my purpose in undertaking the SDP project as to pursue "music teaching that is maximally valid."

Bennett Reimer also uses the term "valid," and has the following to say about the characteristics of a (MEAE) music education curriculum that would have the characteristic of validity:

> A valid curriculum in music, then, needs to satisfy three long-held and often articulated conditions: it needs to be comprehensive, sequential and balanced. (Reimer 2003, 296)

If "Music can be described as sounds organized to be inherently meaningful." (Reimer 2003, 152), and if music education (aesthetic education) "attempts to enhance learnings related to the distinctive capacity of musical sounds … to create and share meanings only sounds structured to do so can yield," (Reimer 2003, 11) then the values of comprehensiveness, sequence and balance – arguably the values of Alberta's current elementary school program of studies – appear to be not only valid, but admirable.

As can be seen in this thesis, however, Elliott (among others) would find the MEAE conceptions of music and music education to be incomplete, and therefore would not be satisfied with Reimer's concept of "validity." Regelski, for example, finds practical problems with MEAE in the realm of its application to the actual music program. He writes:

> Aside from the philosophical problems pointed out by Elliott and others summarized here, conventional aesthetic theory has distinct practical liabilities in connection with schooling. For example, in MEAE isolated concepts tend to be taught as ready-made abstractions for presumed application to future aesthetic experience rather than developed as action skills from engaging students in holistic praxis at appropriate developmental levels. Secondly, because aesthetic experience is, by definition, not directly observable, neither teaching nor learning can be adequately assessed. Finally, it is abundantly clear to most teachers that it is the "doing" of music that is its prime attraction for most learners (and, for that matter, for most adults)—especially for most adolescents everywhere. Thus, attempts by well-meaning teachers to

> aesthetically convert students typically fall on deaf ears, whether in classes or ensembles. (Regelski 2009, 235)

Following Regelski, I would reiterate, in thinking about the SDP, that not every kind of music is suitable to be studied with the MEAE approach. Lori-Anne Dolloff makes this point (that approaches other than MEAE are sometimes more appropriate in specific musical cases) in relation to teaching and learning "mouth music" from Cape Breton:

> While studying mouth music in Cape Breton (Nova Scotia, Canada), my teacher would always stand up and dance a few steps to set the tempo before we began. Why? Ask yourself this: is it possible to sing mouth music well without knowing that it is a kind of dance music and without knowing how to dance (to some degree) the steps and style of this dance music? No. Without these kinds of knowing, teachers and children will miss the heartbeat of this musical style, practice, and tradition. (Dolloff 2009, 290)

In the case of the SDP, too, the music does not seem best suited to study as a collection of aesthetic objects. Would a person appreciate the music of "Put Your Little Foot" if she explored it as music sound only? With Dolloff (and Elliot), I would say that a person would know this music best by experiencing it praxially – in this case through dancing.

The praxial lens allows the study of musics (of the SDP, at least) in a way that surely must be valid, but in a way that extends Reimer's conception of "validity" to encompass matters beyond the music sound itself.

Praxial Teacher Roles

In addition to allowing for "validity" in dealing with certain musics, my experience with the Schoolhouse Dance Project has shown me specific ways in which the role of the teacher in the praxial philosophy is subtly different from the role of the teacher in the MEAE and Kodaly philosophies.

As Regelski writes, since MEAE posits a body of knowledge to be learned, it is ready to succumb to the pitfalls associated with other such educational philosophies such as "perenialism: or "neosholasticism." He writes:

> … perennialists argue that schooling should be uniform since human nature is uniform in being, at its best, rational. Therefore, rather than addressing students' individual needs or interests, or their evolving personal and social needs, perennialists believe that uniform and prescribed subject matter should be the focus of the curriculum. With such a standardized curriculum and its emphasis on the disciplining of standardized results, neoscholasticism readily fosters the present obsession for national standards, accountability and other objectives-oriented curricula. Furthermore, perennialist instruction is not just teacher-directed, as is the case with progressivism; it is teacher-dominated. (Regelski 2009, 224)

In a praxial reflective practicum, as it took place in the SDP, the role of the teacher appears to be first of all to secure subject expertise: if it does not reside in the teacher, she must look elsewhere. "Representing" musical practices "respectfully" (Szego 2009, 212) is crucial to the philosophy, and to students' experience of flow, and this may require outside help. Also from the SDP, it seems clear that the praxial teacher's role is to look to flow in other ways: she must build a bridge for students between the goals of the music practice being studied and students' self-goals; she must arrange activities that emphasize actual participation in music making; she must attempt to sequence activities into genuine, increasing challenges; and she must look ahead to try to remove obstacles to flow. In general, in comparison to "directing," as might be the teacher role in MEAE (or Kodaly) teaching, the praxial teaching role would involve more "facilitating." In this way, praxial music teaching seems akin to what Regelski reports about progressivism, an educational movement of the early twentieth century. He writes:

> Perrenialism arose early in this century [the twentieth century] as a reaction against progressivism, the child-centered theory that portrayed each learner's interests as central to the why and how of teaching and learning. In progressive schools, individual interest, a sense of personal relevance, and other unique and situated needs enable children to be active constructors of their own learning and meaning, not just passive repositories of received knowledge. The progressive teacher is authoritative in facilitating and guiding learning, not authoritarian in force-feeding it, as is the wont of neosholastics (and idealists and realists). Progressivism also stresses the practical value of learning for life use and social renewal and transformation; thus, problem-solving and cooperative forms of learning are stressed over rote memorization of inert facts

> and information. …[in non-progressive modes of teaching and learning] a subject is studied because the teacher and the school say it should be and they also dictate how and why it is studied, As a result, students need to be disciplined to study content and skills that often hold no intrinsic interest, no practical use, and no personal relevance for them. (Regelski 2009, 224-25)

Praxial music teaching – in its kinship with progressivism – seems to be in line with the student-centered approach recommended by Robinson (2008) in her literature review of current research for the Alberta Government's planned changes to Alberta's arts curriculum.

Elliott problematized

Although the benefits of a praxial approach to music teaching include that it allows for a more realistic exposure to some musics (such as the SDP music), and that it allows for teaching that is more student-centered, Regelski offers a critique of praxialism according to Elliott. He cautions that in turning away from music itself as a thing, it behooves a praxial music teacher to not then "thingify" a particular music practice. He writes:

> In a very real and important sense, any praxis—musical or otherwise—is not simply some thing that is out there, like a library or museum. Institutional theory and thinking tend to reify institutional dynamics into a thinglike facticity. However, by its very nature, a praxis, even a highly institutionalized one, is altogether more like a collection of mutual "doings" that, though afforded by the praxis, result in richly diverse meanings, values, and benefits. This is no less true of, say, the practice of religion (or of a given religion) or of those in attendance at a museum than of any musical praxis. Thus, a particular musical practice is more like a living organism that, while affording certain opportunities in common, is defined in effect by the intentionality brought to such occasions by different agents. The museum concept of music against which Dewey argued (1934), and the possibility that any musical praxis can become so reified or deified as to take on more importance than those it serves, are always a danger—even for praxial theories. (Regelski 2009, 233)

Even the name "Schoolhouse Dance," could tend to encourage a person to think of it in a way that would be too "fixed." In future iterations of the SDP, it would be appropriate to ask again, what are the features of the community dances of pioneer times that have to be emphasized for respectful representation? Does

the music have to be traditional in order to introduce students to the spirit of these historic dance events? Is the present experience of the dance study itself praxial – a living experience, not in any way merely a memorization of facts? Is historical reenactment appropriate, or is it tending toward the "deification" of a musical practice that Regelski warns about? Regelski points out that in Elliott's view of praxialism it is possible to essentialize a musical practice:

> The impression remains, nonetheless, that the situated needs and conditions Elliott has in mind concerning a praxis are those of certain established musical traditions, types, and genres, and that the artistic values and musicianship processes involved—which Elliott takes to be more stable and singular than seems to be the case, given the frequent disagreements on musical quality between equally competent experts[28]—have somehow floated free from their practical, personal, social, political, and cultural roots. … however, …the values and qualities of any praxis are not intrinsic, purely or essentially aesthetic or artistic, fixed forever, or for their own sake. (Regelski 2009, 231)

The SDP and the Musical Mother Tongue

The concept of "musical mother tongue" – which, through its position as an element of the Kodály philosophy is still very much current in North American music classrooms today (see Dolloff (2009)). As one approach to multicultural music education, the "musical mother tongue" idea could be interrogated through the SDP.

Leaving aside for the moment whether or not the idea of a "musical mother tongue" is a viable approach to multicultural music education generally, I will ask, is it even a *possible* approach to multicultural music education in Alberta, with its short history and diverse population? (I ask this question because as a Kodály educator I still claim this idea as part of my philosophy). For the sake of argument, I would says that if a musical mother tongue could be conceived to be a practice (praxis) as opposed to a thing (a collection of (folk) songs), perhaps thinking of Alberta as having a musical mother tongue is not *impossible*. The community dance – as a multicultural, musical means of making community – could perhaps be that musical mother tongue. At least – following Anderson – perhaps the community dance could be *imagined* to be the musical mother tongue

for the purposes of school music. If the *dance* were to be at the center of Alberta's musical praxis, the *music* for the dance would not have to be prescribed. The music (and the dance) could be a mixture of old, new, and traditions that happen to be present in a particular school. As has been mentioned, the community dances of pioneer times were themselves multicultural and syncretic: perhaps community dancing would be an elegant way to find common musical ground and build community in Alberta's contemporary multicultural milieux, and therefore become a "musical mother tongue" to Albertan elementary students.

One problem with considering the *dance* to be the musical mother tongue (in addition to the ontological challenges around the possible existence of a musical mother tongue), however, is that the populations of modern Albertan schools may include students from traditions that do not permit dancing. If this were to be the case, the community dance would be exclusionary and therefore not appropriate for consideration as a musical mother tongue.[95] Perhaps the scenario of a musical mother tongue is unlikely to be able to apply in Alberta even in the imagination of the most hopeful Kodály educator.

Elliott and "authenticity" in multicultural music practica

If the "musical mother tongue" is a problematic approach to multiculturalism in Alberta – even with the tantalizingly, widespread, almost-appropriate practice of community dancing in its past and the somewhat analogous elementary school family dance in its present – Elliott's praxial philosophy – including music education as "reflective practica" in various Musics – is an approach to multiculturalism that does show promise. As Szego points out, Elliott's work is

---

[95] On a similar topic, Szego cites Kushner's (1991): "…work among school children in Britain. Kushner reveals a situation in which Muslim children have to negotiate conflicting messages from home and school cultures about the merit of making music. At home, students are taught that singing and playing instruments is morally suspect, while their non-Muslim teachers naturally encourage musical participation and creation. Active interpreters and managers of their instructional world the children act this conflict out among themselves, but are adept at concealing it from their unwitting teachers." (Szego 2009, 202-203) It would not be good to imagine a "musical mother tongue" for Alberta that excluded groups within the population because of moral or religious grounds. Although perhaps this would be true to the historical schoolhouse dances, too: it would not be surprising if some community members refrained from attending community dances on moral or religious grounds.

very concerned with multiculturalism. He writes, “If, at a practical level, only one portion of the penultimate chapter of *Music Matters* is devoted directly to a discussion of multiculturalism in music education, at a theoretical level (where Elliott’s thinking is mostly aimed) *Music Matters* is devoted to the topic entirely: the claim that ‘MUSIC is inherently multicultural’ (1995, 207) is woven throughout the book.” (Szego 2009, 197)

Although Szego says that Elliott’s embrace of multiculturalism in music education is, “cause for celebration among advocates of culturally expanded curricula and ethnomusicologists alike,” (Szego 2009, 197) – he does problematize Elliott’s multiculturalism on several grounds, including his emphasis on performance, representation, cultural property, and authenticity. For the SDP, perhaps the most relevant of these topics is the concept of authenticity, which Szego takes to task in several applicable ways.

One way that Szego problematizes authenticity in praxial “Music” practica is in the area of context. As has been mentioned, Szego writes that, “Even in the best of all possible worlds, it is unlikely that music educators will be able to live up to the most stringent demands for recreating performance context.” (Szego 2009, 209) The SDP is perhaps fortunate in this regard because the context of the SDP – at least in its location (the school building) – is similar to the context of the original “schoolhouse dance” of settler times.

Another way that Szego problematizes authenticity in praxial music education is in the question “who’s authenticity?” He writes: **“**When talking about authenticity, it is also important to recognize that within any given culture there are probably no single authoritative musical representations of the group.” (Szego 2009, 213) This reality can be seen even in the case of the two members of the Edmonton square dancing culture – Hope and Ernie – represented in the SDP. They each had different ways of doing several of the dances, and possibly it is the case that every participant in Edmonton square dancing would have their own, unique ways of doing certain dances.

A third way that Szego problematizes authenticity is to characterize it as “fidelity to style.” (Szego 2009, 212) In regards to style matters, Szego cautions

that “the harm lies not in performances that only approximate ‘the real thing,’ but in the conviction that we are somehow doing ‘the real thing.’” (Szego 2009, 213) He writes that this leaves open the danger of stereotyping:

> …because performances have rhetorical power, it is easy to give a false, shallow or uninformed representation of unwarranted authority, especially in the case of performances that are appealing or demonstrate a high level of skill or mastery. Sometimes only a small gesture given in the absence of substance – like putting a sombrero on the recorder player who toots “Guantanamera” – has the capacity to fix a stereotypical image in students’ or audience members consciousness. (Szego 2009, 213)

This is a caution to be taken seriously in the case of the SDP because no matter how good the fiddling or the dancing, the School House Dance project is still a representation and not the practice itself. Szego emphasizes that matters of authenticity in performance do not have only to do with form, but with the entire underlying context, respectfully understood. He writes:

> The purpose of an anthropologically grounded ethnomusicology … has been to get at participants’ understandings of their own musical practices. Sounds taken by themselves, and especially those representing cultures other than one’s own, do not simply speak for themselves. To make any sense of them requires a commitment to teasing out the principles that guide social life (economics, politics, kinship, and religion) and their behavioral manifestations (modes of interaction forms of expressive culture, and so on). (Szego 2009, 209)

Regelski also writes about the importance of careful study of musical models in translating them to the school context:

> …the action ideals in question are approached in the manner of a practicum (Elliott 1995)—the holistic immersion of students in the “learning by authentic doing”—of praxis, not mere techne [technical skill]. The required authenticity refers to real-life models of musical praxis, and authentic evaluation of teaching and learning employs holistic assessment of the actual praxis adjusted for students’ developmental and age levels. (Regelski 2009, 236)

Perhaps in the light of these comments, for a future cycle of the SDP action research spiral, it would be appropriate to interview the culture bearers as part of the project design in order to understand their praxis as fully as possible.

Elliott and dance

In relation to the SDP and Elliott's praxial philosophy, it is interesting to note that Elliott does not consider dance to be part of *music* education. Szego notes that Elliot writes:

> …the development of musicianship depends on inducting children into musical practices and on targeting their conscious powers on progressively more subtle aspects and dimensions of musical works. Neither condition is present when the attention of learners is being directed to nonmusical matters such as balance and focus in painting or gesture in dance." (Elliott 1995, 249) (Szego 2009, 210)

The exclusion of dance in Elliott's praxial philosophy is not echoed in the work of other praxial philosophers. And, as Szego writes, this aspect of Elliott's work does not seem to fit with the rest of his anthropological approach to music education:

> Given Elliott's obvious attachment to anthropological perspectives and his rejection of mind-body dualism, his repudiation of integrated arts education is most surprising. (Szego 2009, 209)

Elliott rejects "mind-body dualism" in his discussion of musicianship when he says (as quoted earlier) that, "Musicianship (which always includes listenership) is a form of *working understanding*." (Elliott 1995, 68: italics added) Musicianship for Elliott, *is* musical understanding, and it takes place not just in the mind but also in the body.

Westerlund and Juntunen, in their discussion of Jaques-Dalcroze and praxial music education underline the idea that the body is integral to the practice of music:

> "The feeling, sensing, and experiencing body is engaged with musical sounds and their consequences in many ways, whether we are aware of it or not." (Westerlund and Juntunen 2009, 113)

And, in the same article, they tie dance and music together specifically:

> Jaques-Dalcroze … wrote that when the unity between matter and spirit was broken, rhythm could only find refuge in the architecture of cathedrals. Music forgot its origin-which is in the dance - and people lost the instinct for expressive and harmonious movements in art and everyday life. (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/1980, 188 cited in Westerland and Juntunen. 2009, 114)

Szego also notes that Elliott's rejection of arts integration as an aspect of music education is inconsistent with a multicultural approach to education in music, because many examples of musical praxis in the world are inseparable from other arts, including dance:

> "Singing, dancing, and painting bark cloth may or may not require independent, discrete cognitive operations, but understanding is surely more than the firing of synapses in any one of these cognitive domains. In summary, one cannot argue for multicultural music education—using "musical practice" as a baseline definition of music—and segregated arts too. The two concepts are simply anathema to each another." (Szego 2009, 211)

In discussing one such musical praxis, Szego says explicitly that music education needs to consider dance:

> The view that "to dance is to music," as is the case in West Africa, or that dance helps constitute a core musical concept, as in India, has to be reckoned with by music educators. (Szego 2009, 200)

In addition to these writers, many of the interviewees for the SDP (see appendix seven) seemed to think that dance belongs in music instruction.

Curricular Integration: Social Studies through *music*

Conceiving of music as an activity rooted in actual musical practice, has the potential, I argue in this paper, of allowing music to take a legitimate, central role in child's general education. When Jody Lundell talks about the difficulty of

teaching "discrete subject areas," it becomes clear to me that curricular integration is the true find of this project. Because praxial music education deals with a situated musical practice, it starts from what the practice provides – what Jody calls the "whole culture piece:" this makes it natural for subject integration because a music's "situated-ness" means that it should naturally touch on other subject areas.

A study of schoolhouse dance music, for example, would not really be complete without knowledge of the historical context of the people who went to the schoolhouse dance, and this history knowledge falls under the subject area of social studies. It would also not be complete without the dancing that goes with the music, and this kind of movement falls under the subject area of physical education. Therefore social studies and physical education learning is taking place in the SDP with music at the center. Teaching music *praxially* truly does present music teaching and learning opportunities that are authentically integral, curricularly speaking – truly learning *through* music.

Jody Lundell talks about how the schoolhouse dance could be the center of a curriculum piece that touches on a variety of other subject areas:

JODY: Lots of connections across the curriculum. It could almost be the centre of the curriculum – like the center of a unit, right? – the dance – or the schoolhouse dance – and then all of those other subject areas come out of that. --… And I think it's getting harder and harder to teach discrete subject areas – because of kids' background knowledge, and the way kids learn, and they're – you know – on the internet, and that whole sort of electronic media thing – they see things … they see the big picture. And they come to school and we want to break it all up and compartmentalize it.

DAVE: – We could probably work right across – like Brenda could be teaching social, and there could be a little phys ed teaching, and …

JODY: And Art … You could build in some Art and some Language Arts – If in Language Arts they're reading some stories, or poetry, or plays - or whatever – that either were written during pioneer times, or … and original documents, or source documents – those kinds of things – and they were doing that in Language Arts and Social Studies, at the same time as they're looking at the music and the dance, and the whole culture piece.

(Stark 2010)

As partipants pointed out, the dance as a musical praxis lends a dimension to the physical activity that would not be there if it was dance as merely physical education, focusing on the movement alone. Furthermore, the musical practice of the schoolhouse dance lends a depth to social studies that social studies would not otherwise have: students understand history in a visceral way because of participation in this actual historical practice.

Jody also touches on what teaching social studies (history) *through* music might bring to the study of history:

DAVE: Could you see any subject integration applications?

JODY: Oh, yeah. I mean, just the experiential learning – actually the kids putting themselves in the kind of "persona" of the settlers, in the school house and that social connections definitely meets outcomes in the Health and Phys. Ed. Curriculums as well as social studies. (Stark 2010)

In her paper on community dancing in southern Alberta prior to World War II,[96] Doolittle invokes the idea that all sources can be considered texts – a concept she refers to as "intertextuality:"

> While intertextual theorists normally work with completed texts, … fragmentary or embodied texts come to us loaded with traces of codes that form a kind of text from which the historian can proceed with a search for intertexts (Doolittle 2001, 12).

If the dances of the past can be considered as historical texts, dancing the dances becomes a way of reading history. In discussing folk songs, Crawford Seeger writes about a similar idea of a kind of history existing within music:

> It [folksong] knows and tells what people have thought about the ways of living and the things that happened. Through it one can grow in intimate appreciation of the railroads it helped build the cotton it helped pick, the ships it helped sail, the land-stretches it made less lonely. (Crawford Seeger 1948, 21)

In addition to the music becoming a kind of text, Westerlund and Juntunen suggest, in their discussion of Jaques-Dalcroze the idea that the body can also

[96] Cited in chapter one of this paper.

know social norms. Thus, if we dance the dances of settler times to the music of settler times, we know how settler bodies moved and felt, and in some way we perhaps know their social norms. We perhaps get embodied knowledge of their lived experience.

> Yet, our lived bodily experiences are not subjective and inward; they are developed in the social and material environment, in relation to various practices and other bodies. In experience, we are engaged in human habits that direct life, as Dewey and other pragmatists have maintained. In anthropology, as well as in music education, Blacking was one of the first to point out the cultural and social aspects of bodily experience. He held that feelings, and particularly fellow-feelings expressed as movements of bodies in space and time, often without verbal connotations, are the basis of mental life (Blacking 1977, 21). Blacking's point is that the human body is not only executing tasks that the autonomous individual mind gives to it. *The body is an instrument for being a social human being as well as an expression of it*. The body both generates and expresses imposed sociality.
> Also, Jaques-Dalcroze acknowledged the social aspect of the body. … According to him, "each nation has its own particular motor rhythms, expressed in everyday life by certain ways of carrying out the various tasks required by climate, environment, and social conditions" (223). Jaques-Dalcroze believed that every artistic action is a product of its time and culture (239). Music from a certain period of time reveals the entire mental state of the period and response of the bodily movements imposed at that period by social conventions and necessities (7). (Westerlund and Juntunen 2009, 116-117, italics added)

This is the historical/embodied process that I would like my students to undergo, and there seems to be evidence that they did.

Deanna talks about what the settlers might have felt.

DAVE: Do you think since -- like, I think you're probably right. They were moving around and building their homestead and stuff, and it might have been hard to do music. Do you think that made the schoolhouse dance more special for them or . . . ?

DEANNA: Yeah, I think it would be more special for them because it would be more exciting, and instead of moving every day and having to do all the work, you could just kind of go to here and get all that stress out by dancing and stuff. (Stark 2010)

Emily also seems to be able to imagine what it might have been like to be a settler:

DAVE: Okay. How do you think the settlers felt when they went to one of those dances?

EMILY: Happy that -- that they could meet new people --

DAVE: Uh-huh.

EMILY: -- and -- and not be by themselves and -- and kind of just, like, have fun.

DAVE: Yes.

EMILY: Like -- 'cause the settlers didn't really know anybody. They kind of just worked all day and all night.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: So when they heard about the -- the dancing, they kind of just dropped their stuff and they went.

(Stark 2010)

Likewise, Emma:

EMMA: Mm-hmm. Well, I really learned what it was like to -- what dances were like back then and how the music was back then. Nothing like today. And it was a really good experience.

DAVE: Great.

EMMA: And it -- it really, really related to the 18 -- whatever that --

DAVE: '81. 1881.

EMMA: -- 1881 schoolhouse, because I -- I really thought that -- that -- I really imagined what it would have been like to be back then.

DAVE: Nice answer. What do you think it was like for the settlers to have a schoolhouse dance?

EMMA: It must have been really fun because you would get to meet new people and stuff.

DAVE: Right on. Do you think that you could dance all night long?

EMMA: Yeah!

(Stark 2010)

And Jetta:

JETTA: -- songs, but in this class I learned about the past, like, what it felt to be, like -- I think, like, olden time.

DAVE: Do you think music -- well, was music important to settlers, pioneers?

JETTA: Well, I think so, 'cause maybe they would -- every Friday they would go to that schoolhouse and just dance, and that how -- that's how they would meet people and it -- they made friends.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

JETTA: It was fun. They listened to music. They danced. They did their own dance.

DAVE: Yeah.

JETTA: And then they would go back to their regular lives, but the next Friday they would do it all over again.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

JETTA: So they could meet new people. It was -- I bet it was really great for them.

(Stark 2010)

Zoya is also able to connecting the dance not only to social studies, but to her great-grandmother's experience:

DAVE: What -- you like history. Like, that came through in your answers in your writing and stuff, and I was wondering, what did you think you learned about settler times?

ZOYA: Probably just the way that they acted towards it --

DAVE: Uh-huh.

ZOYA: -- and the way they had the reaction to it. Like, it was so special.

DAVE: Uh-huh.

ZOYA: Because my great-grandmother actually used to go and walk miles just to go to a dance --

DAVE: Really?

ZOYA: -- and then come back. And it's --

DAVE: Did you talk with her about that?

ZOYA: -- it was so exciting for her --

DAVE: Okay.

ZOYA: -- that -- and they just reacted to it like it was the biggest thing.

(Stark 2010)

Eli characterizes the dances (and times) in his "schoolhouse dance" journal:

"Hope taught us a lot of simple but friendly dances, ..." (Stark 2010).

Conclusion

Volk asks:

> Could music education, by virtue of its subject matter, be in a unique position to lead the education profession in incorporating a multicultural approach in the classroom? (Volk 1998, 16)

If it is a stretch to think of the community dance as a musical mother tongue for Alberta, the historical schoolhouse dance could be a way, I think, of teaching social studies in Alberta *through* music. And this is related to the concept – evident in Elliott and related to the idea of "embodied texts" – of musicianship as an "embodied" phenomenon.[97]

I believe that by dancing the dances of settler times, students understand the settler experience in an embodied way, and therefore in a deeper way.

As Jody Lundell says, perhaps the future of education will be in the breaking down of the subject silos through units of study such as the SDP. In such a scenario, music could truly occupy a central role in elementary school learning.

---

[97] For Elliott, "musicianship is a to act thoughtfully and knowingly as a musical performer" (Elliott 1995, 55) This "working understanding" (Elliott 1995, 68) takes place within the body.

Bibliography

Action research journal. (accessed November 2nd, 2010)

Alberta Education. 2006. *Grade 4: Alberta: The land, histories and stories*. Alberta: Alberta Education.

Alberta Education. 2005. *Social studies kindergarten to grade 12*. Alberta: Alberta Education.

Alberta Learning. 2000. *Physical education kindergarten to grade* 12. Alberta: Alberta Learning.

Alperson, Philip. 1991. What should one expect from a philosophy of music education? *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25, no. 3 (Autumn 1991): 215-242.

Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. 2006. Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism. Rev. ed. New York: Verso.

Atlas of Alberta Railways. The Canadian Pacific Railway in Canada. http://railways.library.ualberta.ca/Chapters-7-1/ (accessed October 30, 2010).

Baildam, John D. 1999. *Paradisal love: Johann Gottfried Herder and the Song of Songs*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd.

Bartlett II, James E., Joe W. Kotrlik, and Chadwick C. Higgins. 2001. Organizational Research: Determining Appropriate Sample Size in Survey Research. *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 1, (Spring 2001): 43-50.

Blacking, John. 1985. A false trail for the arts? "Multicultural" music education and the denial of individual creativity. In M. Ross, ed., *The Aesthetic in Education*, 1-27. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Blacking, John. 1973. *How Musical is Man?* Seattle,Washington: University of Washington Press.

Bowman, Wayne, editor. 2009. About the Author. *Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education: the refereed journal of the Mayday Group: Action for Change in Music Education* 8, no. 1 (March 2009): 84.

Braithwaite, Max. 1965. *Why shoot the teacher?* Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart.

Cameron, Catherine M. and John B. Gatewood. 2003. Seeking numinous experiences in the unremembered past. *Ethnology*, 42, No. 1: 55-71.

Campbell, Patricia Shehan. 2004. *Teaching music globally: Experiencing music, expressing culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Carson, Terrance R. and Dennis Sumara, eds. 1997. *Action research as a living practice*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Center for collaborative action research. Pepperdine University, California. http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/. (accessed November 2nd, 2010).

Choksy, Lois. 1981. The Kodály Context: Creating an Environment for Musical Learning. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Choksy, Lois. 1988. The Kodály method: Comprehensive music education from infant to adult. 2nd ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Choksy, Lois. 1999. *The Kodály method II: Folksong to masterwork*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Choksy, Lois and David Brummitt. 1987. *120 singing games and dances for elementary schools*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Cresswell, John W. 2002. Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Csebfalvi, Eva and Wendy Sims. 1992. Personalities in World Music Education No 15 - Katalin Forrai. *International Journal of Music Education* 20, No. 1 (November 1992): 35-38.

Dalen, Brenda. 2006. Notes to *Classic Canadian songs.* Smithsonian Folkways Recordings CD SFW40539.

Dolloff, Lori-Anne. 2009. "Elementary Music Education: Building Cultures and Practices," in *Praxial Music Education*, ed. David J. Elliott. New York: Oxford University Press: 281-296.

Doolittle, Lisa. 2001. The trianon and on: Reading mass social dancing in the 1930s and 1940s in Alberta, Canada. *Dance Research Journal* 33, No. 2 (Winter 2001): 11-28.

Edmonton Public Schools Archives and Museum. *Edmonton's oldest schoolhouse*. http://archives.epsb.net/history.htm (accessed October 30, 2010).

Edmonton Public School Board Three Year Education Plan 2010-2013. http://www.epsb.ca/datafiles/Combined3YearPlanAERR.pdf (accessed February 9, 2011).

Eisner, Elliot W. 2002. *The arts and the creation of mind*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Elliott, David J. 1995. *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Elliott, David J., ed. 2005. *Praxial music education: Reflections and dialogues*. New York: Oxford University Press.

The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan: A Living Legacy. *Erasmus, Peter (1833-1931)*. http://esask.uregina.ca/entry/erasmus_peter_1833-1931.html (accessed January 7, 2011).

Erasmus, Peter. 1999. *Buffalo days and nights*. Calgary, AB: Fifth House Publishers.

Forrai, Katalin. 1988. *Music in preschool.* 2nd ed. Budapest: Corvina.

Fowke, Edith. 1962. American cowboy and western pioneer songs in Canada. *Western Folklore* 21, no. 4 (October 1962): 247-256.

Fowke, Edith. 1972. Anglo-Canadian folksong: A Ssrvey. *Ethnomusicology* 16, no. 3 (1972): 335-350.

Fowke, Edith. 1973. Introduction. In *The penguin book of Canadian folk songs*, ed. Edith Fowke, . Markham, ON: Penguin Books Ltd.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Glenbow Museum. CFCN Old Timers fonds. http://ww2.glenbow.org/search/archivesMainResults.aspx?XC=/search/archivesMainResults.aspx&TN=MAINCAT&AC=QBE_QUERY&RF=WebResults&DL=0&RL=0&NP=255&MF=WPEngMsg.ini&MR=5&QB0=AND&QF0=Main%20entry%2B|%2BTitle&QI0=CFCN%20Old%20Timers%20fonds (accessed October 30, 2010).

Goble, J. Scott. 2003. Perspectives on practice: a pragmatic comparison of the praxial philosophies of David Elliott and Thomas Regelski. *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 11, no. 1 (Spring, 2003): 23-44.

Government of Alberta. 1989. *Program of study: Elementary music*. Alberta: Government of Alberta.

Government of Alberta. 2009. K-12 arts education curriculum framework (June 2009 draft): A vision and a plan for future arts education curriculum. Alberta: Government of Alberta.

Hellier-Tinoco, Ruth. Power needs names: Hegemony, folklarization, and the viejitos dance of Michoacán, Mexico. In *Music, power, and politics*, ed. Annie Janeiro Randall, 47-64. New York: Routledge.

Houlahan Micheal and Philip Tacka. 2008. *Kodaly today: a cognitie approach to elementary music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.

ibo.org. http://www.ibo.org/myp/ (accessed February 10, 2011).

Impey, Angela. 2002. Culture, conservation and community reconstruction: Explorations in advocacy ethnomusicology and participatory action research in northern Kwazulu Natal. *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 34, (2002): 9-24.

Itoh, Hiromi. 2003. *Aesthetics of music therapy in a praxial framework: A philosophical study*. Master's thesis, Michigan State University. In Proquest Dissertations and Theses, http://proquest.umi.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/pqdweb?index=17&did=766675191&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1288459329&clientId=12301 (accessed October 30, 2010).

Jackson, Christine. 2002. Body talk: Teaching dance as a language. *Orbit* 32, no. 3 (2002): 19. Quoted in Shelley Robinson, 2008. *Promising practices and core learnings in arts education: Literature review of K-12 fine arts programs* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education, 2008).

Jaques-Dalcroze, E. 1921/1980. *Rhythm, music and educaton.* Trans. H. Rubinstein. London: Dalcroze Society.

Klein, Mary, ed. 1977. *Ten dollars and a dream*. Dixonville, AB: L.I.F.E History Committee.

Kodály, Zoltán. 1967. Folk song in pedagogy. *Music Educators Journal* 53, no. 7 (March 1967): 59 & 61.

Kodály, Zoltán. 1974. *The selected writings of Zoltán Kodály*. London: Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Limited.

Kurkela, Vesa. 1992. The Historical Approach and Applied Ethnomusicology. *Ethnomusicology,* 38:3; 402-405.

Lewin, Kurt. 1945. The research center for group dynamics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. *Sociometry* 8, no. 2 (May 1945): 126-136.

Lewin, Kurt. 1946. Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues* 2, no. 4 (November 1946): 34–46.

Lyon, George W. 1999. *Community music in Alberta: Some good school house stuff!* Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press.

McCarthy, Marie and J. Scott Goble. 2002. Music education philosophy: changing times. *Music Educators Journal* 89, no. 1 (September, 2002): 19-26.

Mills, Geoffrey E. 2003. *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Mitchell, Gillian. 2007. *The North American folk music revival: nation and identity in the United States and Canada, 1945-1980*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Morin, Matthew McNamara. 2008. *Facilitating praxial music education at the East Boston youth centre, Zumix*. Master's thesis, Tufts University. In Proquest Dissertations and Theses, http://proquest.umi.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/pqdweb?index=0&did=1609283341&SrchMode=2&sid=2&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1288459631&clientId=12301 (accessed October 30, 2010).

Mudiman, Freda Smith. 1942-46. "Old timer's pow wow – Pemmican Club dance" in *Alberta Folklore and Local History Collection*. Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta Libraries.

National Resources of Canada. The atlas of Canada: Origin of the population, 1901 [western Canada]. http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/auth/english/maps/archives/1stedition/peopleandsociety/population/page29c_d?maxwidth=1600&maxheight=1400&mode=navigator&upperleftx=0&upperlefty=0&lowerrightx=2560&lowerrighty=3616&mag=0.0625 (accessed October 30, 2010).

Nettle, Bruno. 2002. *Encounters in ethnomusicology: A memoir*. Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press.

Parakilas, James. 1995. Folk song as musical wet nurse: The prehistory of Bartók's "For Children". *The Musical Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (1995): 476-499.

Pitman, Walter G. 1998. Learning the arts in an age of uncertainty. North York, ON: Arts Education Council of Ontario. Quoted in Shelley Robinson, 2008. Promising practices and core learnings in arts education: Literature review of K-12 fine arts programs (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education, 2008).

Regelski, Thomas A. 1994. Action research and critical theory: Empowering music teachers to professional praxis. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education,* no. 123 (Winter 1994/1995): 63-89.

Regelski, Thomas A. 2009. "Conclusion: an end is a beginning" in *Music education for changing times: guiding visions for practice*, ed. Thomas A. Regelski and J. Terry Gates. New York: Springer. 187-197.

Regelski, Thomas A. 2009. "Implications of aesthetic versus praxial philosophies," in *Praxial Music Education*, ed. David J. Elliott. New York: Oxford University Press: 219-248.

Reimer, Bennett. 1980. Building an aesthetic education curriculum: A model and its application. *The High School Journal* 64, no. 2 (1980): 36-49.

Reimer, Bennett. 1991. Essential and nonessential characteristics of aesthetic education. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 25, no. 3 (Autumn 1991): 193-214.

Reimer, Bennett. 2003. *A Philosophy of Music Education, Advancing the Vision* 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Robinson, Shelley. 2008. Promising practices and core learnings in arts education: Literature review of K-12 fine arts programs. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education.

Rogers, T.B. 1978. Is there an Alberta folk music? *Canadian Folk Music Journal* 6 (1978): 23-29.

Seeger, Ruth Crawford. 1948. American folk songs for children in home, school and nursery school: A book for children, parents and teachers. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co.

Sheehy, Daniel. 1992. A few notions about philosophy and strategy in applied ethnomusicology. *Ethnomusicology* 36, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 323-336.

Small, Christopher. 1998. *Musicking: The Meaning of Performing and Listening*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Stark, David. 2010. Schoolhouse Dance Project journal.

Stark, David. June 24, 2010. Interviews with students Alex, Deanna, Emily, Emma, Jetta, Vicky and Zoya; with teachers Brenda Gunn and Patrick Caron; with principal Jody Lundell; and with parents Mrs. Miner, and Mrs. Patrick.

Statistics Canada. Population by selected ethnic origins, by province and territory (2006 census). http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/demo26j-eng.htm (accessed October 30, 2010).

Swanick, Keith. 1992. Music education and ethnomusicology. *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 1 (1992): 137-144.

Sweers, Britta. 2005. The power to influence minds: German folk music during the Nazi era and after. In *Music, power, and politics*, ed. Annie Janeiro Randall, 65-86. New York: Routledge.

Szego, C. K. 2009. "Praxial Foundations of Multicultural Music Education," in *Praxial Music Education*, ed. David J. Elliott. New York: Oxford University Press: 196-218.

Veblen, Kari K. 2009. "Community music and praxialism: narratives and reflections," in *Praxial Music Education*, ed. David J. Elliott. New York: Oxford University Press: 308-327.

Volk, Terese M. 1998. Music, Education, and Multiculturalism: Foundations and Principles. New York: Oxford University Press.

Westerland, Heidi and Marja-Leena Juntunen. 2009. "Music and knowledge in bodily experience," in *Praxial Music Education*, ed. David J. Elliott. New York: Oxford University Press: 112-122.

Why shoot the teacher? DVD, directed by Silvio Narizzano. 1977; Filmwest Associates, 2005.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – grade 4 readings

Fort Edmonton Days – 1850s

Peter Erasmus was a Metis guide who talks about a dance at Fort Edmonton in 1856. The excerpts below give a sense of fort, one aspect of which is also the meeting of various cultures at a dance:

> Fort Edmonton was the supply station for many of the northern stations, and bought considerable buffalo meat supplies from the Indians as well as from retired Metis servants who hunted and fished for the fort. There was a well established settlement at Lac St. Anne and the beginning of another at St. Albert.
> …we were approaching the Christmas holidays and there was a growing excitement noticeable among the inmates of the fort …
> …It was the custom of Hudson's Bay officials to meet at Fort Edmonton during Christmas week, staying for New Year's Day….The conference had developed into a week of social activities commemorating the Christmas period.
> Fort Pitt, Slave Lake, Chipewyan, Fort Asiniboine, Jasper House, Rocky Mountain House, and Lac La Biche were all represented. The two days before Christmas was a bedlam of noise as each new dog team arrived. Every arrival was a signal for all the dogs of the fort and those of the Crees camped nearby to raise their voices in a deafening uproar of welcome or defiance as their tempers dictated.
> On Christmas Eve, Father Lacombe drove in to conduct Midnight Mass…
> …The dance that night I thought upheld Bill's claims; in fact he had slightly underrated it. Borwick, being an old-timer in the area, seemed to know every person there and soon made me acquainted …
> A big lunch was served at midnight in the homes of the married couples, where the guests had previously left their contributions of food at the homes of their friends and acquaintances…
> There was very little rest for the musicians between dances, and there were plenty of fiddlers among the French Metis people from Lac Ste. Anne. Having too good a time dancing I did not offer my services that night, but later on I happened to mention to Bill that I liked playing the fiddle, and thereafter on Borwick's insistence I had to do my share.

> The settlement guests all left for their homes at broad daylight. After dancing all night they had to run behind dogs for another forty miles before they would have any rest or sleep. (Erasmus 1999, 36-43).

The above quote also indicates several features of the early Albertan community dance – in addition to its multicultural make up - that come up in many accounts: dances would often last all night; dances often broke for a midnight lunch; and dances often had music provided by a fiddler, or a band including a fiddler.

Alberta Railway History 1862 and following

> In 1862, one might travel for many days on horseback or by dog train and outside of his own party never see a human being. The country was large. The people were scarce …
> In 1873, the only white woman in all Alberta, from Edmonton to the boundary line, was Mrs. McDougall, the wife of the writer, and not until the early part of 1874 did the second white woman come south of Edmonton, and she was Mrs. David McDougall, my brother's wife.
> …There was not a single school in all this big region at that time. …Still in 1873 you would travel from the mountains in southern Alberta to Edmonton and again make the return journey and not see a human being, other than your own little company.
> …In 1883, there were two schools in southern Alberta, one at Morley and another at Macleod.
> …We now are jumping a quarter of a century, from 1883 to 1908. What are the changes. First, as to population. A liberal estimate would give Alberta in 1883, 20,000 of a population, in 1906 Alberta had 185,000 people within her limits. Possibly the present population is close to a quarter of a million. With the advent of the railroad the quality of immigration began to take on a cosmopolitan character. This continued to advance until in 1906 fifty-four different nationalities and countries were represented…Should the past ratio of increase keep up, by the year 1911, Alberta will have 1,000,000 or more in population. (Alberta Folklore and Local History Collection, accession #96-93-540)

The settlers – from various places, eastern Canada, America and Europe – were thrown together, and, as the Lyon suggests, the community dance became a site for them to meet one another, intermingle and become a community.

The Schoolhouse 1881 and following

Alberta became a Canadian province just over 100 years ago, on September 1st, 2005. Major settlement by non-indigenous people began in Alberta only in the 1880s with the coming of the railway first to Calgary (1883), then to Edmonton (1892). The first free, public school in Edmonton was a one-room schoolhouse that opened in 1881 (.

As George W. Lyon says in the opening sentence of the first chapter of *Community Music in Alberta: Some Good Schoolhouse Stuff!*, the local schoolhouse was often a center for community activities:

> One of the first orders of the day for settlers on the prairies was the creation of the school district. There was a board to be elected, land to be set aside, taxes to allocate, a schoolhouse to be constructed, and a teacher to be hired. The schoolhouse became the location for a variety of essential social, cultural, and spiritual activities. (Lyon 1999, 1).

And one of the "essential social, cultural" activities was the community, (schoolhouse) dance, as can be seen from the Caroline Relf, *Building and Working Together* quote that follows the sentence above:

> Our schoolhouse was certainly the centre of community life for many years. I remember with what special excitement the older pupils would say on a Friday afternoon, 'there is going to be a dance here tonight!' Teacher would tell us to take our books and pencils out of our desks and put them in one special corner with the teacher's desk. Then if I was lucky enough to come to the dance, what a thrill to walk in and see an unfamiliar room, all empty of furniture, the desks piled row on row against the window side of the school and crude benches along the other walls …
> The dances were so different from what they are today. Which of our children have seen the grace and beauty of a roomful of couples, all in regular line, dancing the beautiful four-step? What of the dainty French Minuet, the militarily precise three-step, and the joyous and bouncy Cabbage-dance direct from the Ukraine? (ibid., 1).

This excerpt shows not only the possible provenance of the modern elementary school family dance (the dance at my daughter's school is advertised as an "old-fashioned family dance"), but also the multicultural nature of the dances that were

often part of the dance – Ukrainian, French, English in this excerpt. The schoolhouse dance served to make one community out of many.

Why Shoot the Teacher – 1930s

Over the course of the years I've attended dances in posh wardrooms, army messes, and ballrooms twenty times as big as Willowgreen School. I've waltzed, rhumba'd and cha cha'd to small combos and big bands whose members are world-renowned musicians. But the dance that sticks in my mind for all time is the one in Willowgreen School when Orville Jackson played the fiddle and Grandma Wilson chorded on the organ.

I first got wind of it after school on Friday when, instead of slouching down the aisles making sesultory passes at dust, Charlie McDougall and his band of helpers bean by energetically pushing all the desks to the sides, back and front of the room.

"What's the idea?" I asked.

"Dance tonight."

"Here?"

"Yep."

"Who's coming?"

"Just about everybody in the district, I guess."

…So they came, the old and the young, each with their bundles, many with babies. Some had come from as far as twelve miles, a three-hour journey over a winding snow trail. In the bottoms of their sleigh boxes they'd put stones, heated in the stove and wrapped in newspaper, for foot-warmers. Some of the sleigh boxes were half filled with straw so that the children could snuggle down out of the wind like mice in a stack.

Why did they come? It was a break in the drag of the winter months…

Soon the schoolhouse was full.

…Upstairs were all the people in the district over the age of three. The very young squirmed on the laps of the very old. The little girls, with fresh hair ribbons and pressed print dresses, dashed about between their elders, chatted breathlessly,

giggled, excited beyond comprehending by they knew not what. The little boys, on the other hand, hands shoved embarrassingly deep into knicker pockets, stood about not knowing quite what to do.

…With a smattering of applause, the fiddler, Orfville Jackson, took his place beside the organ in the corner. A short, bandy-legged man of about sixty-five, he wore a khaki peaked cap indoors and out.

…Then I noticed that the music was almost completely unfamiliar and, instead of the dancers embracing each other and shuffling around the floor as I was accustomed to do, they arranged themselves in groups of eight, facing each other. A big florid man had taken his place beside the organ and bellowed, "two more couples wanted": then, when a grinning farmer and his six-year-old daughter had responded, "one more couple wanted."

…On and on, faster and faster went the dance until each couple had its turn doing whatever we were doing and then the music stopped. …So it went on… and on… and on…square dance after square dance, with an occasional quadrille or schottische thrown in.

Appendix 2 – annotated budget

Budget

In Class sessions:

Rod Olstad and Guitar player, two 45 minute sessions:	$200.00
Hope Pennock, two 45 minute sessions:	$100.00
Evening rehearsal session – June 11th:	
Gym rental	n/a
Sound system	n/a – school system
"Midnight lunch"	n/a - supplied by families
Rod Olstad, Hope Pennock, and band, June 11th	$500.00

Dylan & Erika's mom

Margaret 488-1753 | re. dance requirements & song titles.

June 11th – school-time or night after school.

Appendix 3– Letter of Initial Contact with timeline number one

May 26th, 2010

Dear parents of grade 4 students:

I am writing to let you know about a pilot project that the grade fours will be involved with in music class from this week until the end of the school year.

The grade fours were able to visit the 1881 School House this year, and from next week until the end of the year, they will be studying the "schoolhouse dance" in music class. The "schoolhouse dance" is a name for the community dances that took place at local schoolhouses - often the first public buildings erected in new communities - in pioneer times in Alberta. Students will learn about this historical Albertan musical practice through learning some of the old dances and then through participating in a schoolhouse dance in the Westglen School gym, on the afternoon of June 11th. As a culmination to their learning, the grade fours will then have the opportunity to demonstrate their new dancing skills at the family dance, where twenty minutes will be set aside for traditional dancing.

For this unit of instruction, I have several pieces of information, and a few requests:

> **Parents are welcome, in fact *invited* to participate!** Parents may come to any of the music classes with guest presenters – listed below – and parents are definitely invited to the schoolhouse dance simulation on the afternoon of Friday, June 11th. The schoolhouse dance, like the family dance, was usually a family affair, and it would be great if families could come and participate in the grade fours' version of the dance. At this dance, grade four students, with the help of a caller, will teach their parents how to do the traditional dances that they have learned. There will be a live "old-time" band and a caller, and in addition to the old dances we will do a few of the newer dances that everyone knows. (Adding the new to the old was also typical of community dances in Alberta, in post-settlement times).

If parents know dances from their own cultural backgrounds that they would be willing to share with the grade four class, that would be welcome. One of the features of dances in settler times was that people would bring dances to the community from their home cultures. Ukrainian, Métis, English, Scottish, and French people, to name a few, influenced the types of dances at the schoolhouse in settler times. If anyone has a dance that they can teach, please let me know. Two possible dates for parents to share would be Wednesday, June 9th, and Wednesday, June 16th – the times on both dates would be from 12:20 – 1:05pm.

This schoolhouse dance unit, in addition to being a pilot project, is potentially a piece of my master's thesis in ethnomusicology. For the university aspect of this unit, **I would like to interview several grade four students and a few parents in the week following the family dance (June 21st-25th).** I will be contacting parents a second time in the next few weeks about this aspect of the unit. Also, as part of the university project of this dance study, I will be asking permission to use photographs that may be taken during the schoolhouse dance afternoon on June 11th. I will send home permission forms about this aspect of the study - also in the next few weeks.

Lastly, the schoolhouse dance often had a "midnight lunch" halfway through the evening. **I would like to simulate the midnight lunch at our dance on June 11th, too – (it will be a 2:45pm lunch).** Please let me know if you would be able to contribute a snack for the midnight lunch.

Thank you for your support of this project – it should be a lot of fun. Please let me know if you have questions or suggestions.

Do-si-do!

Sincerely,

David Stark

Project Timeline

Wednesday, May 26th 12:20 - 1:05pm

Dance Session with traditional dance instructor Hope Pennock - Patrick

Friday, May 28th 2:40 - 3:25pm

Fiddling and information session with fiddler and fiddling historian Rod Ostad

Wednesday, June 2nd - 12:20 - 1:05pm

Dance Session #2 with Hope Pennock

Friday, June 4th - 2:40 - 3:25pm

Dance Session #2 with Rod Olstad

Wednesday, June 9th - 12:20 - 1:05pm

Student interview session with community guest – possible parent teaching time.

Friday, June 11th, 2:05 - 3:25pm (time subject to change – it may be earlier in the afternoon)

Simulation of schoolhouse dance - parents of grade four students, grade four students, and interested members of the Westglen School Community are invited. **Live fiddle band and caller.**

Appendix 4– Time-line number two for parent council

Timeline

Week 1 – May 17th-21st

1) Class time – "Instructional set" sessions with grade fours. (Watching film, looking at archival material, doing play-party dances, listening to fiddle tunes).

Week 2 – May 25th-28th

Wednesday, May 26th
Dance Session with traditional dance instructor Hope Pennock

Friday, May 28th
Fiddling and information session with fiddler and fiddling historian Rod Ostad

Week 3 – May 31st – June 4th
Wednesday, June 2nd
Dance Session #2 with Hope Pennock

Friday, June 4th
Dance Session #2 with Rod Olstad

Week 4 – June 7th-11th
Wednesday, June 9th
Student interview session with community guest - (a member of the first graduating class of Westglen School, if possible: this is Linda Hut's contact.)

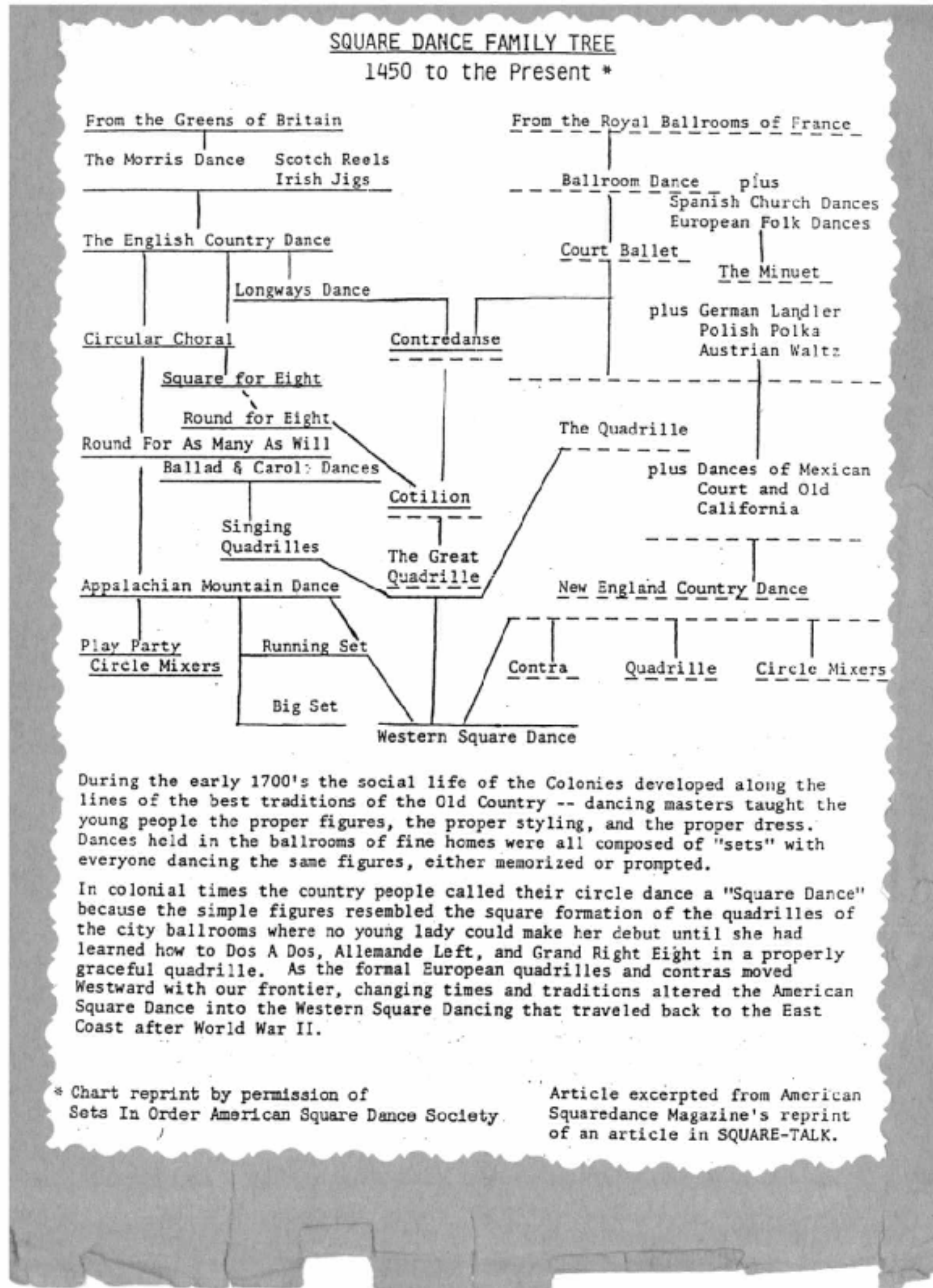
Friday, June 11th
Practice session for the evening dance with Mr. Caron and Mr. Stark: *Parents are invited to attend if they are available.* This practice will be to "canned music."

Evening: simulation of schoolhouse dance - parents of grade four students, grade four students, and interested members of the Westglen School Community are invited. **Live fiddle band and caller (Rod Olstad, Hope Pennock and friends)**

Week 5
Interviews – of students, teachers and parents for project.
Wednesday, June 16th - "Traditional" Listening test / "Praxial" listening test
Friday, June 18th - Student reflection on unit

Friday, June 18th
Family Dance - 20 minutes of the dance set aside for grade 4 and parent demonstration of traditional dances (to canned music)

Appendix 5 – Hope Pennock's Dance History Chart



During the early 1700's the social life of the Colonies developed along the lines of the best traditions of the Old Country -- dancing masters taught the young people the proper figures, the proper styling, and the proper dress. Dances held in the ballrooms of fine homes were all composed of "sets" with everyone dancing the same figures, either memorized or prompted.

In colonial times the country people called their circle dance a "Square Dance" because the simple figures resembled the square formation of the quadrilles of the city ballrooms where no young lady could make her debut until she had learned how to Dos A Dos, Allemande Left, and Grand Right Eight in a properly graceful quadrille. As the formal European quadrilles and contras moved Westward with our frontier, changing times and traditions altered the American Square Dance into the Western Square Dancing that traveled back to the East Coast after World War II.

* Chart reprint by permission of Sets In Order American Square Dance Society

Article excerpted from American Squaredance Magazine's reprint of an article in SQUARE-TALK.

Appendix 6 – Schoolhouse Dance Invitation

You are invited to a Schoolhouse Dance!

June 1st, 2010

Dear grade four parent:

The grade four class would like to invite you to our schoolhouse dance on the afternoon of June 11th from 2:05- 3:25pm.

The grade fours have been learning dances with Hope Pennock and practicing them with Rod Olstad. It has been a lot of fun to see the students dance together, especially to live music. It is easy to see why the old-timers loved community dances so much. On June 11th the grade fours will hold a dance with live music and an old-time caller, and parents are invited. There will be a mixture of old dances and new – grade fours will help parents know what to do - and a snack time half way through.

Part of the new thinking in arts education (as Shelley Robinson (2008) notes in her *Promising Practices and Core Learnings in Arts Education: Literature Review of K-12 Fine Arts Programs*. Alberta: Alberta Education) is that the arts can provide "a valuable link between the school and community by providing a vehicle for which the educational community, e.g., parents, community members, school and other educational stakeholders, can enter into the lives of the students through their fine arts school experiences." I would like to explore the "community-connection" aspect of music education through this project. Also, the schoolhouse dance of settler times was usually a family affair, and so I would like to simulate the schoolhouse dance by inviting families to participate.

Please r.s.v.p. as soon as possible by returning the form below if you are able to attend. It should be fun and an opportunity for positive family time.

Sincerely,
David Stark

I will be able to attend the schoolhouse dance on June 11th

I will not be able to attend the schoolhouse dance on June 11th

The number of people from my family who will be attending the dance is_____________.

I can bring a snack to the dance
(drinks will be provided)

Signed _______________________________________.

Parent of _____________________________________.

Appendix 7 – Dance in Music answers

Mrs. Olson talks about how you can be involved musically, perhaps, even if you are not playing or dancing.

DAVE: What do you think Eve might have learned about music through doing this, if anything?

MRS. OLSON:… -- this project? Well, I think that it kind of involved everyone, right? I think that that's -- you know, there was the caller. There were the dancers. There were musicians. There were the people watching and with big smiles on their faces, right?

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. OLSON: That it can really include people. It's very -- it's super-inclusive, because if -- you're not doing the singing --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. OLSON: -- or the dancing, but you can enjoy it just as much, right, and still have --

DAVE: It's cool.

MRS. OLSON: Yeah.

DAVE: So everyone in the room was kind of participating in the music event?

MRS. OLSON: Yes. And whether they're actively participating or not, I think that --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MRS. OLSON: -- you become involved by hearing and watching and feeling what's going on, right?

(June 29, 2010)

Mrs. Patrick says that the dance makes music more accessible:

MRS. PATRICK: But I like -- the fact that it made the music more accessible to them, and having the live musicians, really seeing, you know, what's out there, what they don't always get to see --

DAVE: Right.

MRS. PATRICK: -- you know, in day-to-day life,

(June 24, 2010)

Patrick Caron also talks about how music brings another dimension to the dance:

PATRICK: -- and -- and exercise and how that all works in. You don't realize exactly how much exercise a dance is until you've stand [sic] at the end and you're sweating like crazy --

DAVE: Yeah.

PATRICK: -- thinking, well, all of a sudden I'm tired.

DAVE: Yeah.

PATRICK: How come you're tired? It's only dancing.

DAVE: Yeah.

PATRICK: Ha, ha. Now you begin to understand why dancers really have a time. And adding it in with music -- with the real music gave those guys, I think, a totally different viewpoint on it.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

PATRICK: I mean, when you do it with a tape or even a CD, it's one thing. It's just music and calls, and somebody's (inaudible), and you go through it. But when you actually have fiddlers and guitarists and all this type of stuff going on and somebody doing the calling, now all of a sudden it's a dance. (June 24, 2010)

Brenda Gunn had a similar perspective:

DAVE: There we go. From your perspective, dance in music -- like, they do it in phys ed. Do you think it belongs in the music program?

MS. GUNN: Yeah, probably more so. I mean, I think it -- you know, in this particular school, it's sort of evolved that we've had some connection with dance and phys ed just -- just for whatever reasons.

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MS. GUNN: You know, realistically, people didn't, you know, have that knowledge to teach it or something. You know, however -- but it's sort of evolved that way. But, yeah, I think it's sort of -- my opinion is it kind of is more connected with sort of the music program, you know, dance, music, instruments, you know --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MS. GUNN: -- that kind of thing. So, yeah, I guess it's -- 'cause to me it's more like -- it's like a -- it's the fine arts, right --

DAVE: Mm-hmm.

MS. GUNN: -- you know, music and dance and all that kind of stuff. It just seems to be more of a natural connection kind of a thing.

DAVE: Yeah.

MS. GUNN: So I think this is really great, 'cause the kids were hear- -- they were dancing, but they were hearing old-time music --

(June 24, 2010)

Appendix 8 – Interview Scripts

Interview Script –teacher

I will touch on these four areas, and ask some questions from each.

1) Student Engagement:

How would you characterize the level of student engagement in the schoolhouse dance unit?

What aspects of the unit, in your view, contributed or took away from student engagement?

2) Subject Integration:

Do you think that students understand more about the experience of settlers in Alberta because of participating in the Schoolhouse Dance?

How successful is the music/social studies integration around the schoolhouse dance? How successful is the music/ physical education integration around the schoolhouse dance? Are there things that could make this integration stronger? What are they?

In your opinion, is music class an appropriate place to teach social studies outcomes? Physical education outcomes?

3) Community Involvement:

Do you see advantages to students do you see in having their families participate in their music learning? What advantages do you see? Disadvantages?

Do you see advantages to the School community with parental involvement in student learning? What advantages to the School community? Disadvantages?

4) Music Learning:

Do you perceive this unit of music education as being valid *music* learning? Why? Why not?

What aspects of music do you think students may have learned from participating in this project?

Interview Script –parent

I will touch on these four areas, and ask some questions from each.

1) Student Engagement:

Do you think that your child was engaged in music learning during the unit about the Schoolhouse dance?

Do you have any stories or examples to illustrate your child's engagement in learning during this unit?

Did you talk about the schoolhouse dance with your child? Did they volunteer to chat about it with you?

2) Subject Integration:

Do you think you understand more about the experience of settlers in Alberta because of participating in the Schoolhouse Dance?

Did participating in the Schoolhouse Dance make you feel more Albertan?

Do you think that your child learned about Alberta's history through participating in this music unit? What are some things that you think they learned, or could have learned?

3) Community Involvement:

Do you see advantages for your family in participating in your child's music experience? What advantages do you see?

Do you see advantages to the School community with parental involvement in student learning? What advantages to the School community?

4) Music Learning:

Do you perceive this unit of music education as being valid *music* learning? Why? Why not?

What aspects of music do you think your child may have learned from participating in this project?

Interview Script – Grade 4 students

I will touch on these four areas, and ask some questions from each.

1) Student Engagement:

How did music class over the past four weeks of the Schoolhouse Dance unit compare with regular music class?

Did you enjoy it more than usual? Less than usual?

What about this unit did you like? Not like?

2) Subject Integration:

Do you think you understand more about the experience of settlers because of participating in the Schoolhouse Dance?

What more do you know about them by participating in the Schoolhouse dance?

3) Community Involvement:

Did you like having guest experts work with you in music class?

What did you like / not like about having guest teachers?

What are advantages/disadvantages you can see to having guest teachers in music class?

What differences did you notice in your music class experience because your parents were involved?

Do you think that having your parents involved helped you to learn more? Less?

How did having parents in a music project affect your learning in music class?

Do you think doing this Schoolhouse dance made the Westglen community stronger?

4) Music Learning:

What did you learn about music through participating in this project?

How did the settlers in Alberta use music? Was music important in their lives?

What are some benefits of music in our lives that this dance unit showed you?

Appendix 9 – Ethics Approval

Research Methods and Procedures

5.1 Research Methods and Procedures

* **This study will involve the following** *(select all that apply)*
The list only includes categories that trigger additional page(s) for an online application. For any other methods or procedures, please indicate and describe in your research proposal in the Study Summary, or provide in an attachment:

1.0 Interviews (eg. in-person, telephone, email, chat rooms, etc)

Sound or image data involving participants (other than audio or video-recorded interviews or focus groups)

Materials created by participants (eg. artwork, writing samples, etc)

Participant Information

4.1 Participant Information

Describe and justify the inclusion criteria for participants (eg. age range, health status, gender, etc):
The inclusion criteria for participants in this study is that they be related to the grade four class at Westglen School.
I've chosen Westglen School as the location of this study because I teach there, and, since I am doing action research, and part of my action research will be to interrogate my own teaching practice, locating the study at the school at which I teach is appropriate.
At Westglen, I have chosen to center the study around grade four students
1.0 because not only are they old enough to learn the traditional dances, but also they study Alberta history in grade four social studies - and this makes for a subject integration opportunity with a music unit on the historic Albertan schoolhouse dance.
I have chosen to interview parents because I would like to examine parent parent involvement in childrens' music education, and I would like to explore this issue from a parental perspective.
I have chosen to interview teachers because I would like to explore subject integration, and I would like teachers' perspectives on the relative success of the music-social studies-physical education subject integration in this study.
Describe and justify the exclusion criteria for participants:
2.0 I have chosen to exclude all elementary schools but Westglen because Westglen is where I teach, and this is an appropriate choice given the reflexive nature of action research.

I excluded grades other than grade four because:

the other grades do not have Alberta History social studies outcomes.

older students would find it more uncomfortable to dance and to dance with the members of their cohort of the opposite sex.

: younger students would find it more difficult to learn the dances.

3.0

4.0

Justification for sample size:

I have chosen to interview six students (of 23 - I will look at writing from all

5.0 23 students), three parents, and three teachers because this should be an adequate sample, but not too large of a sample given the time-frame of the study.

If possible, provide expected start and end date of the recruitment/enrollment period:

6.0 **Expected Start Date: 5/19/2010**

Expected End Date: 6/18/2010

Help

4.2 Recruit Potential Participants

Recruitment

1.1 Will potential participants be recruited through pre-existing relationships with researchers *(eg. employees, students, or patients of research team, acquaintances, own children or family members, etc)***?**

1.2 If YES, identify the relationship between the researchers and participants that could compromise the freedom to decline (eg. professor-student). How will you ensure that there is no undue pressure on the potential participants to agree to the study?

The "relationships between the researcher and participants that could compromise the freedom to decline" are teacher-student and teacher-parent. For these relationships, I will ensure that "there is no undue pressure" to agree to participate in interviews by inviting students and parents to volunteer in a

1.0 "letter of initial contact." This letter will make it clear that participation in the research - inclusion of photographs and written work in research reports, video-taping, and interviews - is voluntary and that there is no obligation to participate. The letter will also make it clear that students (and parents) can participate in the unit of instruction about the schoolhouse dance without also participating in the research project.

For the purposes of the interviews related to this study, I am willing to take any volunteers. Since I hope to interview only 6 students and 3 parents, I am confident that there will be enough volunteers and that they will feel that they honestly have the "freedom to decline."