Musicking for Social Change:

Music Educators' Perceptions of Social Justice Education

by

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Abstract

Social justice education (SJE) is broadly understood as the pedagogical work of challenging the systems, structures, and discourses that oppress, exploit, and exclude. Importantly, SJE vis-à-vis music education offers students unique opportunities to critically connect with and respond to the world by engaging musically with issues of (in)equity and (in)justice. However, despite its transformative potential, there is limited research on how the concept of SJE is perceived by secondary music educators. This matters because music educators' perceptions of SJE inevitably shape their orientations toward and relationships with students, pedagogy, music, and social justice. Therefore, grounded in a bricolage approach to methodology that draws on critical, poststructural, and anti-colonial perspectives, this qualitative research study employs semi-structured interviews to critically examine how 10 Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators: (a) conceptualize SJE, (b) understand the importance of SJE in relation to their roles as music educators, and (c) understand the connections between social justice, music education, and the Manitoba music curriculum framework. This study reveals that research participants' perceptions of SJE are both constructed within and constrained by the dominant discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm, thereby perpetuating the hegemony of Western art music and colonial musical epistemologies while simultaneously marginalizing the work of social justice. Findings also reveal that study participants' perceptions of SJE are largely informed by liberal conceptions of social justice which have the potential to invisibilize unequal power relations and normalize coloniality. This study is significant in coming to know how, despite music educators' best intentions, efforts to enact social change through music education may inadvertently embody oppressive potential.

Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgement

Music education in Manitoba is directly implicated in settler colonialism. This is made salient through the imposition of Western art music on Indigenous students as well as the epistemic violence wrought by the dominance of Western musical ways of knowing, teaching, and learning in music classrooms across the province (Robinson, 2020). In turn, Indigenous musics, ways of musicking, and musical cultures are erased and their value construed solely within their capacity to be extracted and consumed through a Western musical lens (Stark, 2023). Therefore, because my research focuses explicitly on social justice as it is perceived and understood by music educators on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Ojibwe-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples as well as on the homeland of the Red River Métis, it is my responsibility as a white settler to work toward reconciliation by acknowledging the longstanding relationships that they have with this land and the ways in which settler colonialism continues to dispossess, erase, and dehumanize Indigenous peoples. Ultimately, this thesis is an attempt to work against the erasure and dehumanization of Indigenous peoples, musics, and ways of musicking; it is an attempt to challenge the Eurocentric and colonial underpinnings of music education in the Manitoba context. Thus, it is my hope that my writing can illuminate alternative ways of engaging in music education not accountable to the colonial status quo, but to Indigenous peoples and the land.

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Table of Contents

Abstract .... **ii**

Acknowledgements .... **iii**

Land Acknowledgement iii

Personal Acknowledgements iv

Table of Contents .... **v**

Chapter 1 – Introduction **1**

Overview of the Study 1

Research Purpose 3

Research Questions 4

Research Context 4

Chapter 2 – Literature Review **10**

Social Justice 10

Social Justice Education 12

Theories and Practices of SJE 14

Social Justice Education vis-à-vis Music Education 19

Social Justice as Musical Praxis 23

Cultural Responsivity 27

Extending the Literature 29

Chapter 3 – Research Design **33**

Methodology 33

Researcher Positionality 36

Philosophical Assumptions 38

Ontological and Epistemological Underpinnings 38

Theoretical Framework 40

Study Procedures 43

Data Analysis 48

Ethical Considerations 51

Potential Limitations 53

Chapter 4 – Analysis and Findings 55

The Hegemony of the Western Classical Ensemble Paradigm 55

Primacy of Skill Development 59

Pursuit of Performance Excellence 68

Time Constraints 73

The Salience of Liberal Discourses of Social Justice Education 82

Ethical Responsibilities 83

Instrument Access 88

Diversifying Repertoire 94

Chapter 5 – Discussion 104

Conceptualizations of Social Justice Education 104

Importance of Social Justice Education 106

Curricular Connections to Social Justice Education 107

Musicking for Social Change? Or Social Reproduction? 108

Chapter 6 – Conclusion 112

Moving Beyond Liberalism 112

Moving Toward Praxialism 113

Suggestions for Future Research 115

In Closing 116

References 118

Appendices 143

Appendix A: MMEA Conditional Study Approval 143

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter 144

Appendix C: Interview Protocol 145

Appendix D: TCPS2 Core 2022 Certificate of Completion 146

Appendix E: Ethics Approval 147

Appendix F: Ethics Amendment Approval 148

Appendix G: Consent Form 149

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Overview of the Study

Our world is mired in multiple crises that have touched every aspect of public life. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the deaths of millions of people, long-lasting negative physical and mental health outcomes for millions more, and the collapse of health-care systems worldwide (Ryan, 2023). The pandemic also exposed the crisis of social and economic inequality previously veiled by the meritocratic logics of neoliberal capitalism (Giroux, 2021). Evidenced through increasingly disparate health outcomes, death rates, unemployment rates, and wealth gaps, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequality along lines of race, class, gender, age, and ability (Gould & Wilson, 2020). Further, witnessed through the recent murders of Eishia Hudson, Afolabi Opaso, and many other Indigenous, Black, and racialized persons at the hands of the Winnipeg Police Service, the enduring nature of police brutality is but one marker of the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism, institutional racism, and white supremacy that plagues Manitoba (Ennab, 2022; Maynard, 2017). Moreover, hateful and dehumanizing educational policies are currently being enacted in several provinces across the country in an effort to erase 2SLGBTQIA+ students. Finally, often overlooked in the midst of these crises is the looming spectre of the climate crisis. Increasing temperatures, melting glaciers, warming oceans, rising sea levels, and extreme weather events pose an existential threat to our future on this planet (Klein, 2014).

At this critical juncture, I turn to the power of music as both a critical mirror of society as well as a window through which a more socially just future is possible. As a critical mirror, music can expose inequitable power relations, unmask oppression and injustice, and speak truth to power (Jorgensen, 2015; Kertz-Welzel, 2022). As a window, music can provide a hopeful and

imaginative vision of a future built on equity, justice, and the pursuit of a better life for all (Hess, 2019a). As Schreiber (2019) argues, "music, when it is crafted to address the ills of the world, becomes a special kind of force" (p. 1). Enacted in these ways, music can empower, unsettle, and transform us (Silverman, 2013; Urbain, 2008).

Through the transformative power of music, music education is uniquely situated to afford students opportunities to connect with and respond to the world. By fostering belonging, joy, meaning, and purpose in students' lives, students come to know themselves, their communities, and the world through music (Elliott & Silverman, 2015). Moreover, critical and radical music education paradigms embody the transformative potential to facilitate both creative expression and critical thinking for the purpose of constructing a more equitable and just future (Hess, 2014, 2017). Therefore, employing and enacting justice-oriented pedagogies and practices in the music classroom affords students the opportunity to challenge, critique, and transform the various systems of oppression, sociohistoric relations of power, and material conditions that shape their lives and communities. However, despite the transformative potential of social justice education (SJE) through music education, there is little research on how SJE is perceived by secondary music educators. This matters because music educators' perceptions of SJE as well as the multi-sensory, contextually-situated ways that these educators make meaning of justice-oriented music education practices inevitably shape their orientations toward and relationships with students, pedagogy, music, and social justice (Spruce, 2017). As such, this qualitative study—grounded in a multi-perspectival bricolage approach to methodology (Kincheloe et al., 2017) that draws on critical (Giroux, 1983), poststructural (Paechter, 2001), and anti-colonial (Dei, 2006) perspectives—critically explores Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators' perceptions of SJE through 10 semi-structured interviews.

Research Purpose

Social justice has traditionally been of peripheral concern within music education (Bowman, 2007). This matters because when enacted uncritically, music education has the potential to perpetuate the inequitable and unjust status quo (Gaztambide-Fernández et al., 2018; Wright, 2015). For example, as explored in more detail below, music education in Manitoba is typically characterized by the Western classical ensemble paradigm. This hegemonic paradigm risks marginalizing non-dominant and underrepresented peoples and ways of musicking through its embodiment of the Western classical music tradition and its emphasis on learning music composed by white men via hierarchical and colonial pedagogies (Hess, 2019a). Further, various conceptions of SJE have the potential to reproduce inequity through perceptions and practices that tokenize diversity and stereotype students across categories of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and other identity characteristics (Stark, 2023; Vaugeois, 2007).

Therefore, in the spirit of conscientization (Freire, 1968/2000)—the process of coming to know the social conditions in which we live for the purpose of transforming these conditions—the purpose of this study is to critically explore music educators' perceptions of SJE in the pursuit of more inclusive, equitable, and just ways of engaging in music education. By deconstructing and interrogating the discourses of and relationships between music educators' perceptions of SJE, music education, and the Manitoba music curriculum framework, this study aims to ignite critical conversations as it concerns the importance of enacting socially just music education experiences. As Spruce (2017) contends, "interrogating the normative discourses of music, music education and social justice is a key part of such conscientization for music educators" (p. 721). Thus, it is my intention that this research can play a key role in the

conscientization of music educators and researchers as we collectively pursue more equitable and just ways of teaching.

Research Questions

This research study is designed to explore one main research question and three associated sub-questions:

1. How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators perceive SJE?
    a. How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators conceptualize SJE?
    b. How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators understand the importance of SJE in relation to their roles as music educators?
    c. How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators understand the connections between social justice, music education, and the Kindergarten to Grade 8 Music or Grades 9 to 12 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework?

Research Context

This research study is set within Manitoba, Canada. Manitoba has a rich—albeit complicated—history of music education dating back to the late 19th century (Bowman, 2012). Traditionally, Grades 7 to 12 music education in Manitoba, like much of North America, has emphasized concert band programs focused on developing musical excellence and performance skills (Bartel, 2004; Bylica & Wright, 2019). Additionally, beginning in the 1870s and continuing throughout the 20th century, the arrival of Mennonites and their choral traditions to Manitoba has shaped school choir programs throughout the province (Hanley, 2012). With few exceptions, both band and choir programs are structured similarly within schools. These programs most often emphasize large ensembles within a performance paradigm (Hess, 2019b; Williams, 2019). In other words, secondary school music education within these programs is

fundamentally concerned with students developing performance skills and abilities within the context of a large ensemble. Notably, this Western classical ensemble paradigm typically privileges Western classical music as well as Western notation (Hess, 2014). This traditional form of music education has become synonymous with music education in North America and is the dominant secondary school music education paradigm in Manitoba (Williams, 2014).

Particular music educator training environments have played a significant role in both constructing and maintaining the dominance of the performance paradigm (Hess, 2013; Isbell, 2008). In Manitoba, music educators typically complete two separate degrees to become certified teachers. The first is a four-year Bachelor of Music degree followed by a two-year Bachelor of Education degree. Depending on the post-secondary institution, the amount of course work in music *education* varies greatly during the first degree. Historically, it has been possible to enter a Bachelor of Education program with little in the way of the philosophical, psychological, sociological, methodological, instructional, and curricular concerns of music education (Bolden, 2012). Further, because Bachelor of Music programs are governed by music faculties and admission is conditional upon a successful audition, these programs typically value performance skills as well as mastery of conventional or "classical" areas such as music history and music theory. This format has historically resulted in the marginalization of music *education*, thereby constructing music school graduates as performers instead of educators. This emphasis has a lasting effect on the ways in which practicing music educators situate themselves and their programs, pedagogies, and practices. Although there has been a recent shift toward emphasizing music education within Bachelor of Music programs—evidenced in the development of music education concentrations, including early/middle years, choral, instrumental, and guitar/strings—institutional gatekeeping by university faculties of music still embodies the potential to

perpetuate performance models of music education at the expense of other musicking forms and paradigms (Bartel, 2004).

However, it should be noted that there has been a substantial increase in non-traditional music education paradigms being offered in Manitoba. For example, the number of classroom guitar programs in Manitoba has more than quadrupled since 1995 (Macintosh, 2022). Owing to the guitar's ubiquity in various popular music styles and genres, classroom guitar programs typically embody popular music education practices and pedagogies, including student-centered learning, informal learning, creative songwriting/composition, process over product, and culturally relevant pedagogy (Countryman, 2012; Green, 2002; Powell, 2021). Moreover, digital music production courses embody a music education paradigm centered on musician autonomy, small ensemble sizes, and aural/oral learning processes (Williams, 2014). Although the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on music education throughout the province is yet to be fully understood (Laidlaw, 2023), Manitoba enjoys significant student participation in a diverse variety of music education classes (Bolden, 2012).

Curricularly, arts education—including the four areas of dance, dramatic arts, music, and visual arts—is compulsory for Grade 7 and 8 students in Manitoba (Manitoba Education, 2021). Specifically, eight percent of all instructional time, or an average of 150 minutes per six-day school cycle, is recommended for arts education in Grades 7 and 8. Notably, it is at Grade 7 in most Manitoba schools that students are streamed into specific music classes such as band, choir, or guitar, whereas K-6 music is often a general music class taught by elementary music educators. Due to the strong music education traditions of the province, music education has historically been the only form of arts education placed within the school schedule for Grade 7 and 8 students whereas other arts education areas are either integrated into general classroom

teaching or situated as extra-curricular (Bowman, 2012). As a result, most schools in Manitoba, and the urban centers of Winnipeg and Brandon in particular, employ music education specialists. However, the extent and quality of music instruction is not evenly distributed across the province. For example, schools in small, rural Manitoba communities often have difficulty attracting and retaining music educators as well as offering fully funded music education programs (Bowman, 2012). Music educators in these settings are often part-time, having to supplement their positions by teaching non-music areas.

Conversely, no form of arts education is compulsory at the Grade 9 to 12 level. Students within these grades must then enroll in music education classes at their own discretion. Despite the non-compulsory nature of music education in secondary schools, many schools offer a variety of music education classes. Examples include, but are not limited to, concert band, choir, digital music production, general music, guitar, jazz band, piano, strings, music appreciation, music theory, rock band, songwriting/composition, ukulele, and vocal jazz. This myriad of music education options embodies a variety of musical styles, traditions, pedagogical practices, and philosophical perspectives, resulting in a vast array of options for prospective music students to choose from. This diversity of music education classes is also exemplified within the multiple professional associations representing music teachers throughout the province. The Manitoba Music Educators' Association (MMEA)—the umbrella organization that represents and advocates on behalf of all Manitoba music educators—currently includes four partner organizations: the Manitoba Band Association (MBA), Manitoba Choral Association (MCA), Manitoba Classroom Guitar Association (MCGA), and Manitoba Orff Chapter (MOC).

Manitoba's diverse music education landscape benefits students in a variety of intellectual, social, and personal ways (Hallam & Himonides, 2022). Music education is

important because it promotes a sense of belonging, unity, and acceptance through identity construction (Campbell et al., 2007). Moreover, as made explicit in both the Kindergarten to Grade 8 Music and Grades 9 to 12 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework (Manitoba Education, 2021; Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015), music education fosters critical, creative, and ethical thinking which is necessary for engaging in a complex world. Further, because music education is an inherently human endeavor—enacted in specific historical times within the contexts of specific cultures—it is fundamentally concerned with the development and embodiment of personhood, manifest both individually and communally (Elliott & Silverman, 2015). In this way, music education embodies the potential to bring "joy to self and others; it illuminates, deepens, and enriches learning and life" (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015, p. 6). Ultimately, music education aims to foster human flourishing.

It is worth noting that music education—like SJE, as will be explored in Chapter 2—has come under threat in recent years (Hallam, 2017). Neoliberal governments around the world are placing an increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy, "back-to-basics curricula," and "core practices" in pursuit of transforming education to serve purely economic interests (Giroux, 2013, 2021). In Manitoba, this neoliberal influence is currently manifest through an ongoing curriculum renewal and alignment (Janzen & Heringer, 2023). As stated in a January 24, 2023 news release from Manitoba Education (2023), "The Manitoba government is shifting to a global competencies approach with literacy and numeracy at the core." Through the proliferation of a "competency discourse"—framed by the development of skills and competencies necessary for students to contribute to a 21st century economy (Ruitenberg, 2019)—music education within this neoliberal discourse is, at best, frivolous and unnecessary (Aróstegui, 2020; Karlsen, 2019).

At worst, it is dangerous and counter to the development of citizens whose main roles are production and consumption (Westheimer, 2015).

Although neoliberal attacks on music education have increased in the past two decades, often manifest through cuts to funding, programs, and music teacher positions (Bath et al., 2020; Burrack et al., 2014; Goble, 2021; Slaton, 2012), music education advocacy is not a nascent endeavor. Over a century ago, Yorke Trotter (1914) wrote the following in defense of music education:

> If by our manner of education we can cultivate and develop the inner nature of our citizens, we will be raising up a nation full of vitality, striving after ideals, and ever pressing on to higher and higher stages. Even the weariness of life, which is felt so deeply by many of us, will disappear with our new ideals, for the art of music will give the means for self expression, and will provide a new interest in life. (p. 136)

Pitts (2017), expanding on the above quote, argues that "an education with music at its heart will transform society, by equipping citizens to live fulfilling and creative lives, and so banishing the despair which is also strongly evident in his statement" (p. 160). Although the despair that Yorke Trotter references is World War I, our contemporary society also has the potential to beget despair (Giroux, 2021). Witnessed through the rise of fascism, ultranationalism, post-truth politics, increasing wealth inequality, police brutality, and constant assaults on the public good, music education is situated within contentious and contested times.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

SJE and music education are unique fields of study, each with diverse ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives and assumptions. Their unique traditions, theoretical perspectives, pedagogies, and values are simultaneously celebrated and contested depending on the sociocultural context in which they are enacted. Therefore, in this chapter, I will explore the literature on SJE as well as its positioning within music education. In addition to defining and interrogating the terms, concepts, theories, and pedagogies found within the literature, I will explore the gaps and omissions for the purpose of describing how my research study contributes to the literature.

Social Justice

It is necessary to first analyze various definitions and conceptualizations of social justice before exploring SJE. The term "justice" is generally defined as "fairness" (Bialystok, 2014; Denti & Whang, 2012). Notably, there are divergent conceptualizations of what fairness means within the literature. For example, the notion of fairness has the potential to mean both equality and equal distribution or equity and potentially different distribution based on need (Hytten & Bettez, 2011). Thus, there are multiple conceptualizations of justice. These include, but are not limited to, distributive justice, recognition justice, procedural justice, retributive justice, restorative justice, and even poetic justice or divine justice (Jorgensen, 2015). However, throughout the literature, two forms of justice become especially salient: distributive justice and recognition justice.

Drawing on the work of Rawls (1971), Bell (2023) describes distributive justice as inherently concerned with ameliorating the injustice of maldistribution through the fair and equitable distribution of resources. For example, wealth inequality is a fundamental concern

within a distributive justice paradigm. However, distributive justice is not limited purely to the economic arena, but also includes fair and equitable distribution of social, political, and cultural assets. Due to its historical grounding in liberal individualist perspectives, distributive justice is challenged and critiqued throughout the literature for obscuring and invisibilizing systemic and structural inequities (Hytten & Bettez, 2011; Spruce, 2017; Young, 1990). It is at this juncture that recognition justice becomes salient.

Recognition justice, sometimes characterized as cultural or relational justice, is fundamentally concerned with recognizing and respecting all groups and peoples, including those sociohistorically marginalized, oppressed, and subjugated (Honneth, 2004). For example, valuing, honoring, and respecting diversity on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, ability, and other identity characteristics is central to recognition justice. However, recognition justice is also not without criticism. Because recognition is not a resource than can be redistributed, but rather a phenomenological experience, recognition justice is more abstract and ambiguous than distributive justice (Schweiger, 2019). Further, Fraser argues that, in the context of the rise of neoliberalism, crucial matters of wealth inequality are ignored by over-emphasizing recognition justice and identity politics (Dahl et al., 2004). Instead, Fraser (2005) argues for a combination of both distributive and recognition justice. This argument to combine theories of justice is present throughout the literature by authors who simultaneously articulate distributive and recognition justice frameworks (L. A. Bell, 2023; Hytten & Bettez, 2011). Therefore, synthesized, social justice includes eliminating inequality and injustice, abolishing all forms of oppression, and eradicating human suffering, thereby resulting in the equitable and ecologically sustainable distribution of resources alongside the full and equitable participation of all individuals within a democratic society (Adams et al., 2023; Honneth, 2004; Murrell, 2006).

Social Justice Education

Bialystok (2014) argues that "there is no single concept of SJE but rather a constellation of discursive and pedagogical practices that emerge from various intellectual and political traditions" (p. 418). Therefore, drawing on the above definition of social justice, SJE can broadly be categorized as the critical pedagogical work of challenging the systems, structures, and discourses that oppress, exploit, and exclude. Focused on improving the social, cultural, and economic conditions of students' lives, communities, and world, SJE is concerned with a myriad of topics such as racism, sexism, classism, capitalism, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, poverty, wealth inequality, war, and ecojustice. Importantly, this pedagogical work occurs by fostering learning environments through both justice-oriented pedagogical practices and curriculum content. In other words, SJE is fundamentally concerned with both the *how* and the *what* of teaching (Bialystok, 2014; Hess, 2017).

Despite its pursuit of a more just society, SJE is both vehemently revered and resisted (Picower, 2012a). Denti and Whang (2012), whose following words ring ever true in the post-Trump era, discuss the ideological divide that has taken hold of social justice within public discourse:

> Social justice for the extreme right has now become synonymous with anti-Americanism sentiments, government take over, and anti-capitalism while the modern left hangs on to organized labor, public welfare, free public education, and services for the most vulnerable in our society. Both sides seem to have polar opposites views and the ideological divide has become so wide, that rants and shouts have replaced dialogue and any hope of understanding or compromise. (p. xvi)

Currently, SJE and its myriad manifestations are under immense scrutiny. For example, the state of Florida is at the forefront of enacting "anti-woke" legislation that limits or restricts teaching that deals with themes of systemic racism, gender identity, and sexual orientation (Pendharkar, 2022). In Manitoba schools, efforts are underway to silence and erase queer students, teachers, books, and any teaching that deals with sexual orientation or gender identity (Moore et al., 2023). In this vein, a common criticism of SJE is that it is brainwashing or indoctrinating students (Bialystok, 2014). However, despite the increased attacks on and mischaracterizations of SJE in recent years, educating toward social justice is not a new phenomenon.

Addams (1908), teaching and writing at the turn of the 20th century, emphasizes an approach to education that welcomes, honors, and values the lived experiences and prior knowledge of immigrant children in the United States. Dewey (1929), one of the most prominent educational theorists of the 20th century, emphasizes experiential education to engage students in real-world social issues. It was Dewey's notion of pluralistic, democratic education that led to the intercultural and cross-cultural pedagogies developed in light of Brown vs. Board of Education (Adams et al., 2023). Counts (1932), an early progressivist educational theorist, argues explicitly for the social, cultural, and political purposes of education. Advocating for teachers to work toward a new social order in response to the devastating economic, social, and political turmoil of the Great Depression, Counts (1932) claims that "teachers, if they could increase sufficiently their stock of courage, intelligence, and vision, might become a social force of some magnitude" (p. 29). Beginning in earnest in the 1960s, a variety of sociohistorically marginalized and oppressed groups, including women, Indigenous peoples, racialized peoples, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities, as well as critical pedagogues and educators, employed education as a tool for consciousness-raising, liberation, and emancipation

(Hytten & Bettez, 2011). Ultimately, SJE has a rich history alongside and within public education in North America.

Despite the aforementioned ideological divide fomented by ongoing culture wars, those from all political perspectives and orientations are united in recognizing that education is at the forefront of the struggle in defining and enacting a vision of the future. From this recognition, the question then becomes: what kind of future do we want to pursue? In our current neoliberal era—defined by the market-based values and discourses of efficiency, competition, and individualism that in turn promote privatization, deregulation, and the erosion of the public good—social, cultural, and economic inequalities and injustices are exacerbated (Brown, 2015; Ross & Gibson, 2006; Tuck, 2013). It is in this precarious moment of educational tug-of-war, with schooling becoming increasingly bound to both the demands of the free market as well as right wing ideologies, that proponents of SJE argue that any meaningful and worthwhile form of education must be centered around the notion of imagining and constructing a more equitable and just future (Down & Smyth, 2012; Downey, 2022).

Theories and Practices of SJE

SJE is significantly influenced by various critical theories and pedagogies (Breuing, 2011). Specifically, critical pedagogy—drawing on critical theory and Marxist traditions—is an educational paradigm that aims to transform oppressive, inequitable, and unjust social systems and structures (Apple & Au, 2009). By centering the political nature of how knowledge is constructed and contested within the context of power relations, critical pedagogy is concerned with offering students new ways to think critically and act with authority as independent political agents (Giroux, 2004; McLaren, 2015). Freire's (1968/2000) book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, functions as a seminal text in the critical pedagogy tradition. In this text, Freire rejects the

oppressive and dehumanizing "banking model of education"—where teachers are positioned as bank clerks who "deposit" knowledge into students—in favor of an education paradigm centered on raising students' critical consciousness through problem-posing. In this way, critical pedagogy attempts to develop students' critical consciousness through conscientization which is the ability to "perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1968/2000, p. 35). Ultimately, critical pedagogy works to construct the knowledge, skills, and social relations that enable students to explore the possibilities of what it means to be critical citizens while expanding and deepening their participation in the promise of a substantive democracy (Giroux, 2010).

Driven by the critique that critical pedagogy privileges issues of class because of its Marxist influence, several scholars have worked to implement critical race theories and pedagogies within SJE (Lynn, 2004). Critical race theory, with its roots in critical legal studies, is fundamentally critical of sociohistoric relations of power and situates race at the center of social analyses (D. Bell, 1995; Delgado et al., 2017). Critical race scholars argue that race and racism are so deeply entrenched within North American society (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995) that racial subordination and exclusion are maintained through dysconsciousness, the "uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting . . . dominant White norms and privileges" (King, 1991, p. 135). In education, Ladson-Billings (1998) identifies critical race theory as an intellectual and social tool for the "deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power" (p. 9).

Fusing the tenets of critical pedagogy and critical race theory, Ladson-Billings (1995) thus argues in favor of culturally relevant pedagogy (Hamilton, 2021). Instead of embodying the

additive and potentially tokenistic nature of multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy aspires to make curriculum, teaching, and learning relevant to students who embody diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. By centering and celebrating sociohistorically marginalized students' prior experiences, knowledge, and skills in the classroom, culturally responsive teaching aims to construct more relevant and authentic learning experiences for ethnically diverse students that are empowering, transformative, validating, and emancipatory (Gay, 2010). As such, it aims to do three things: "produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 474). As Adams et al. (2023) argue at length:

> Situating students' lives within the social justice content not only makes the learning relevant, it helps illuminate the reality of oppression in their lives. It provides lenses to understand what they see and experience. Theories of oppression and social justice issues become not just abstract ideas but ways to understand oneself, others, and the world in order to create change. (p. 42)

Importantly, the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy has been extended in recent years into the notion of culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy critiques the usefulness of the term "relevant" for not going far enough regarding the crucial work of fostering and sustaining "linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 1). Instead, culturally sustaining pedagogy "explicitly calls for schooling to be a site for sustaining the cultural ways of being of communities of color" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 5).

Additionally, SJE has been shaped by intersectional feminist approaches to pedagogy wherein gender is considered in relation to overlapping social identities such as race and class (Crenshaw, 1989). hooks (1994) writes extensively about how oppression manifests along multiple axes within educational settings and argues that "when we, as educators, allow our pedagogy to be radically changed by our recognition of a multicultural world, we can give students the education they desire and deserve" (p. 44). Critical feminist pedagogy posits that both curriculum content and pedagogical methods employed are inherently educative. In other words, to work against sexist and patriarchal systems within and through education requires critical analysis of both the "what" and "how" of schooling (Breuing, 2011). Ultimately, all of these various critical approaches work to embody education as the practice of freedom from the many systems and structures that oppress (hooks, 1994).

Moreover, various practical emphases on criticality emerge throughout the SJE literature. In sum, to enact SJE, teachers are encouraged to promote critical reflection and action (praxis) (Freire, 1968/2000) with their students (Au et al., 2007; Giroux, 2011; hooks, 1994; Michelli & Keiser, 2005). This occurs in a myriad of ways, including explicitly discussing oppression with students (Bettez, 2008; Picower, 2012a), critically exploring power, positionality, and privilege (Adams et al., 2023), embodying a stance of critical reflexivity (Grant & Gillette, 2006), and fostering student activists and activism to create change (Picower, 2012b). Au et al. (2007) argue that curriculum should equip students with the critical skills necessary to hold power accountable and push back against inequity and injustice: "students must learn to pose essential critical questions: Who makes decisions and who is left out? Who benefits and who suffers? . . . Students should have opportunities to question social reality" (p. x). As Bell (2023) summarizes, "the goal of SJE is to enable individuals to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to

understand the structural features of oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems" (p. 4). Ultimately, praxis is situated as a key component of SJE.

Building intentional relationships and community with students is also a fundamental aspect of SJE. Not only should educators promote critical thinking in the classroom, but they should build "critical communities" (Bettez, 2008, p. 291) for the purpose of engendering support, encouragement, creativity, and solidarity. Put differently, inclusive and equitable learning communities built on mutual respect, reciprocity, participation, and care are necessary for enacting SJE (Adams et al., 2023). The embodiment of these critical communities is essential in dismantling social injustices and inequities because it rejects liberal framings that individualize both students and systemic issues (Dutta et al., 2016). Importantly, intentional community and classrooms where all students are seen, heard, valued, and belong do not passively occur. Instead, they are actively constructed through explicit relationship building, teaching, and modeling. As Au et al. (2007) contend, any substantive notion of SJE must be premised on learning communities that are explicitly multicultural, anti-racist, and pro-justice.

Finally, recognizing that the prescriptive teaching of "tips and tricks" and the fetishization of methods invisibilizes the asymmetrical power relations manifest through schooling (Bartolome, 1994), decontextualizing SJE carries with it the potential to exacerbate inequity, injustice, and oppression. Through this emphasis on contextualization, SJE must be viewed "as a reflexive frame through which broad communities can critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of their environments relative to social justice" (Carlisle et al., 2006, p. 62). Moreover, "there is a critical difference between teaching students to think about the world in such a way that may motivate independent political involvement, and requiring students to defend or oppose particular political parties or policies" (Bialystok, 2014, p. 430). Therefore, it is

essential that SJE is contextually situated, critically theorized, hope-fully implemented, explicitly practiced, and reflexively enacted if the aims of social justice are to be pursued (Kelly, 2012; Kumashiro, 2009; Picower, 2012a).

Social Justice Education vis-à-vis Music Education

Regrettably, social justice within the music education context has traditionally been of peripheral concern (Bowman, 2007). A survey by Salvador and Kelly-McHale (2017) reveals that upwards of 15% of music teacher educators "rejected the need to address social justice topics . . . and/or described social justice as a waste of instructional time" (p. 13). In the same survey, 50% of music teacher educators claim to approach social justice from a "difference-blind" (i.e., "colorblind") and therefore liberal perspective "centered around the idea that all people should be treated the same, regardless of any difference, or that opportunities should be the same for all people, regardless of any difference" (Salvador & Kelly-McHale, 2017, p. 6). A resident belief in a colorblind perspective demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding and mischaracterization of social justice through its ignorance of oppressive systemic inequities and injustices (Kumashiro, 2000; Spruce, 2017). Specifically in the secondary school music education classroom, the emphasis and centrality of music performance within traditional music education paradigms—manifest through the Western classical tradition—has further marginalized discourses of equity and justice in both process and product (Hamilton, 2021; Shaw, 2014; Spruce, 2017). As a result of these pedagogies and practices, oppression, discrimination, exclusion, and other forms of injustice are not only unchallenged within the music classroom, but the unexamined classroom itself becomes a potential site of harm through its perpetuation of injustice and inequity (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015; Southerland, 2018; Väkevä et al., 2017; Wright, 2013, 2015). For example, as noted in the Chapter 1

discussion on Manitoba's music education context, the Western classical ensemble paradigm is one that is inherently colonial through its privileging of:

> Western music over different ways of knowing music, of Western standard notation over aural transmission, of the replication of "classics" largely composed by white men over creativity, of teacher-centred models over student-centred models, and of the privileging of performance ensembles and notions of teaching to the "talented" above all else. (Hess, 2013, p. 14)

Therefore, in light of the dominance of this colonial model of music education, this section of the literature review will survey relevant scholarship regarding SJE vis-à-vis music education.

As detailed above, because of the broad, provisional, and multidimensional nature of social justice, there is no agreed upon definition of the term within the context of music education. As Bowman (2007) states, "perhaps the only thing straightforward about social justice in music education is that it is not straightforward" (p. 3). However, together, multiple descriptions and accounts of what constitutes social justice in music education inform a more robust, nuanced, and holistic understanding. Jorgensen (2015) states that social justice in music education is generally thought of and referred to as a form of distributive justice concerned with sharing the wealth and benefits fairly among all members of society. In line with the description of distributive justice explored above, Spruce (2017) posits that distributive justice is "primarily concerned with the relative access that individuals or particular social groups have to the material resources of society" (p. 724). However, Spruce argues that this form of justice is insufficient because concerns with equality of outcome and equality of opportunity fail to critique hegemonic power relations, privilege, and other systemic injustices.

In response to the potentially problematic nature of distributive justice, various music education scholars—drawing from the traditions of critical theory and critical pedagogy—articulate a vision of social justice premised on relationality and recognition (Bates, 2016; Hamilton, 2021; Hess, 2017, 2019a; Regelski, 2020; Vaugeois, 2007). Recognition justice within music education is fundamentally critical of the sociohistoric relations of power, hegemonic systems and structures, and dominant discourses that both construct and sustain inequity and injustice (Spruce, 2017; Vaugeois, 2007). Because this relational paradigm of justice is inherently concerned with the "many crucial matters of identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and the many forms of oppression that often attend them" (Elliott, 2007, p. 65), enacting social justice in this way includes focusing on the "different ways of being and expressing oneself and one's desires, as well as different modes of participating in society based on the unique particularities that characterize groups and individuals" (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015). Within this recognition justice paradigm, the meaning of social justice is ultimately concerned with critiquing, challenging, and undoing systems and structures that oppress, exploit, and exclude (Hess, 2017).

In addition to asking how social justice is conceptualized in music education, it is necessary to examine why social justice in and through music education may be necessary. Because musical experiences are situated, enacted, and negotiated within social relationships and cultural contexts, music educators have the responsibility, privilege, and duty to care. Warren (2014) postulates that "if musical experience brings us into relationships with others, and relationships with others create ethical responsibilities, then music involves ethical responsibility" (p. 12). In the music classroom, this ethical responsibility is manifest in both the minutiae of everyday personal and musical interactions as well as in the broader sociological,

political, economic, and cultural critiques of oppression, injustice, inequity, and sociohistoric relations of power. In response, Allsup and Shieh (2012) argue that "at the heart of teaching others is the moral imperative to care. It is the imperative to perceive and act, and not look away. Calling upon our best selves, we know ethically that we cannot ignore these things" (p. 48). Ultimately, "the problem of justice [is] central to the ethical responsibilities of teachers" (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015, p. 12). Therefore, any and all forms of musicking must account for the ethical responsibilities of music educators to enact social justice in and through their teaching.

Arising from the ethical responsibilities of music educators to enact socially just and equitable teaching practices, a common thread throughout the literature is the necessity for music educators to critically reflect on their positionality and implicatedness in injustice (Lewis & Christophersen, 2011; Vaugeois, 2007; Woodford, 2014). Silverman (2013) argues that music educators are "ethically bound to remain cognisant of [their] 'positionality,' to be continuously and critically aware of [their] power, intentions, biases and moral responsibilities" (p. 22). Therefore, working toward social justice in music education is impossible without educators first deeply and critically reflecting on their musical and pedagogical values (Hess, 2017; Horsley & Woodford, 2015; Spruce, 2017). However, it is imperative that, while continually reflecting on the ethical responsibilities borne by music educators, the process of music educators becoming critically aware of their positionality does not only include knowledge of the "social and political factors governing their daily practice but also exercising their power to challenge and unsettle dominant conceptions of music and musical learning and to advance emancipation and social mobility of all of their students" (Wright, 2013, p. 36). This process of shifting from critical

reflection to action, or "praxis," is an ongoing, recursive, and necessary interplay with implications regarding the transformation of self, community, and world (Freire, 1968/2000).

Social Justice as Musical Praxis

Because of the salient nature of critical pedagogy within the literature of SJE and music education, alongside its inherent focus on critiquing power relations within sociocultural contexts, a praxial philosophy of music education is heavily emphasized throughout the literature. Praxialism rejects an aesthetic philosophy of music education wherein the value and meaning of music is intrinsic within the sonic patterns and sounds themselves. Instead, as Alperson (1991) explains at length regarding a praxial philosophy of music education:

> The praxial view of art resists the suggestion that art can best be understood on the basis of some universal or absolute feature or set of features such as . . . aesthetic formalism, whether of the strict or enhanced variety. The attempt is made rather to understand art in terms of the variety of meaning and values evidenced in actual practice in particular cultures. . . . On the praxial view, a music education program which aims to educate students about musical practice in its fullest sense must take into account, not only the history and kind of appreciation appropriate to the musical work of art, but also nature and significance of the skills and productive human activity that bring musical works into being, if for no other reason than the fact that the results of human action cannot be adequately understood apart from the motives, intentions, and productive considerations of the agents who bring them into being. (pp. 233, 235-236).

In other words, music is not conceived of as an object in this praxial framework, but rather as a relational process of human interaction with and through organized sound and silence, termed "musicking" (Elliott & Silverman, 2015; Small, 1999). As Small (1999) discusses:

> Musicking is part of that iconic, gestural process of giving and receiving information about relationships which unites the living world, and it is in fact a ritual by means of which the participants not only learn about, but directly experience, their concepts of how they relate, and how they ought to relate, to other human beings and to the rest of the world. (p. 9)

Put differently, music is something that students *do* and is therefore always rooted in relationships within specific political, economic, social, and cultural contexts. Therefore, "social relationships are not extra-musical but connected to the relationships created between people, sounds and places" (Odendaal et al., 2014, p. 173). As such, justice-oriented music education practices are premised on enacting music as a verb because it affords music education communities the opportunity to critically engage with and through music as a vehicle for relating to the self, others, and the world in more just ways. Moreover, through its action-oriented stance inclusive of various forms of engaging with music, musicking is not merely focused on what has traditionally been categorized as "music-making" in the music classroom (i.e. technical skill development within an aesthetic philosophy of music education). Instead, musicking also encompasses, but is not limited to, critically reflexive activities such as creating, composing, improvising, discussing, recording, arranging, appreciating, critiquing, performing, and conducting (Elliott & Silverman, 2015; Hess, 2013).

From this praxial stance, several authors emphasize the political, economic, social, and cultural context of music experiences (Allsup & Shieh, 2012; Elliott, 2007; Elliott & Silverman, 2015; Hess, 2019a; Horsley & Woodford, 2015; Spruce, 2017). Vaugeois (2007) states that assumptions of neutrality, apoliticality, and the decontextualization of music and music education results in the erasure of the sociocultural underpinnings that give meaning to musical

experiences. Vaugeois further argues that it is through this erasure that music's diverse sociocultural contexts are invisibilized. As a result, dominant ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives are reinscribed, resulting in the perpetuation of oppression and the continued marginalization of non-dominant peoples, communities, and musics. According to this praxial framework, music education must be viewed within its sociocultural context if music educators are to actively engage in matters of politics, citizenship, and social justice (Horsley & Woodford, 2015).

This praxial situating of music within its sociocultural context ultimately points to the potential for students to embody a critical stance toward systemic inequities and injustice. Within this paradigm, "conscientization" through dialogue, problem-posing, and discussion becomes a central feature of working towards social justice (Freire, 1968/2000; Hamilton, 2021; Hess, 2017; Wright, 2013). Specifically within the music classroom, much of the potential for consciousness-raising is achieved through analyzing, critiquing, and deconstructing song lyrics that either express oppressive themes or advocate for equity and justice (Elliott, 2007; Hess, 2019a; Ladson-Billings, 2015; Levy & Byrd, 2011). Wright (2015) argues that a transformative paradigm of music education "embraces problem posing, a connection of word to world, and a goal that leads to conscientization. It challenges teachers to engage in dialogues that conceptualize music not as an object but as a conduit for understanding" (p. 35). Within the music classroom, there are multiple "opportunities to use existing musical products to examine how musicians both participate and resist the political and economic context that surrounds them and engage in a social-cultural critique of power relations in music" (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015, p. 11). From this noticing, analyzing, examining, critiquing, challenging, and deconstructing, facilitated by music educators through intentional discussions and problem-

posing, students are afforded the opportunity to come to know both the injustices that they may personally and communally encounter as well as the systemic inequities and injustices that impact others (Hamilton, 2021; Hess, 2017). However, drawing on a fuller realization of Freirean praxis, simply raising students' consciousness about matters of oppression through critical reflection is not enough. Instead, critical reflection must be entwined with action toward social justice.

It is within this shift from critical reflection to action that creating musical products becomes salient within the literature. Elliott (2007) argues that not only should music educators use pre-existing musical products to critique and challenge injustices, but they also "need to enable [their] students to develop *musical replies* to the social/moral/political dilemmas" (p. 87). Through musical activities and experiences that are creative in nature, students are afforded the opportunity to express themselves in unique, authentic, and potentially liberating ways (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015). This move marks a pedagogical shift towards a creative music education paradigm that affords students power, agency, and voice within their own creative musical development (Hess, 2019a; Shevock & Bates, 2019; Wright, 2015).

Accompanying the shift towards a creative music education paradigm is the transfer of attention within some, but not all, of the literature from the cognitive domain to the affective domain. Elliott (2007) argues that "we need to create and perform music that helps audiences *hear and feel the sounds* of pervasive oppression" (p. 87). This move from an inherently cognitive approach of critiquing oppression towards an approach that emphasizes the power of emotions and feelings both illustrates and celebrates that musical-emotional experiences through sound have the potential to shape, impact, and transform those participating in the musical experience (Elliott & Silverman, 2015; Wright, 2015). As argued by Levy and Byrd (2011),

"listening to music is an emotional and educational experience that potentially shapes a person's values, actions, and worldview" (p. 64). By nurturing and engaging the affective domain through musical experiences, students develop compassion and empathy which is inextricably connected to the development and fulfillment of personhood. As Elliott and Silverman (2015) articulate, "personhood emerges, grows, and blossoms to the extent that a person enters into dynamic, interpersonal, empathetic interactions with others" (p. 328). Therefore, fostering emotions through music within the classroom has the potential to develop socially responsible citizens who are better positioned and enabled to empathize with their peers, communities, and world (Kertz-Welzel, 2022). As Silverman (2013) summarizes, "music has the power to move, empower and unsettle performers and listeners. In democratic music classrooms, musical participations invite varied interpretations, changes, and innovations. Listeners and music makers converse actively with/through music" (p. 22). Wright (2013) contends that music educators have both the responsibility and privilege to engage in socially just music experiences that are "also critically feelingful. Since music reflects thought and emotion, it is as empowering as it is powerful. . . . Music provides the tools of language whereby emotion can be expressed in non-verbal ways" (p. 35). Ultimately, social justice as musical praxis situates the concept of social justice as a verb rather than a noun due to its ongoing and continually unfinished nature (Hess, 2017; Vaugeois, 2007).

Cultural Responsivity

Central to the surveyed literature is a student-centered paradigm of music teaching and learning. Drawing on critical frameworks and pedagogies that center students as agentic actors within the drama of education, student-centered learning is inherently concerned with affording students power, voice, and agency within the educational setting (Allsup & Shieh, 2012; Hess,

2014; Spruce, 2015). This paradigm is most often witnessed through the tailoring of musical products within students' preferred musics, styles, and genres (Paris, 2012). Horsley and Woodford (2015) argue that "music teaching can become more student-centered and focused . . . [through] the inclusion of musics from the community and students' cultural backgrounds so that the music program reflects cultures relevant to the students and community" (p. 11). This concept of reflecting students' cultural identities by focusing repertoire within their interests and experiences is embodied within culturally relevant pedagogy, a framework which is salient throughout the surveyed literature (Hamilton, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2015; Lind & McKoy, 2016).

Being a culturally responsive teacher is central to working toward equity and justice (Grant & Gillette, 2006). This entails implementing music curriculum based on students' needs and interests which requires a fundamental understanding of the students in the classroom. As a result, music repertoire and curriculum content should change from year to year as the student body also changes. Within a culturally relevant pedagogy framework, "students are empowered when their cultural identities are reflected in the classroom" (Hamilton, 2021, p. 23). Therefore, student-centered teaching "requires seeing students as creators of musical knowledge by centering the experiences, points of views, and identifications that are often 'checked at the door' or left outside the school context" (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015, p. 13). However, it should be noted that student-centered pedagogies have the potential to embody liberal framings of social justice. For example, "student-centred education can also foster the sense of individualistic meritocratic competition so fundamental to liberalism" (Hess, 2014, p. 240) and to the Western classical ensemble paradigm. Accordingly, music educators are uniquely situated to honor and value—to sustain (Paris, 2012)—students' cultural backgrounds, lived experiences,

prior knowledge, interests, and preferences by engaging with the diverse musics of the students in the classroom not merely in an additive manner, but as integrative and fundamental to their music teaching (Hess, 2014).

Although centering the diverse musics of students represented in the music learning community is a central tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy, exposing students to music that is new and unfamiliar also presents opportunities for consciousness-raising and social justice (Lind & McKoy, 2016). Levy and Byrd (2011) state that "at all levels of education teachers can utilize music to expose students to diverse cultures" (p. 64). Elliott (2007) argues that by first centering students' preferred forms of music followed by moving to other styles, students' identities, beliefs, and values are simultaneously affirmed and challenged. Elliott (2007) continues by arguing that "in these ways, students' cultural knowledge is redistributed, allowing them to step back and problematize their own musics, and the musics of others, *in relation to all forms of social justice*" (p. 88). Hess (2019a) echoes this sentiment and uses the analogy of encouraging students to first look in the mirror (which represents honoring and valuing students by centering their musical experiences, prior knowledge, interests, and preferences within the classroom) followed by looking through the window (which represents experiencing other musical perspectives, styles, genres, values, ideas, and paradigms).

Extending the Literature

It should be noted that not all music education experiences are transformative, lifegiving, nor uplifting (Hallam, 2015). Music education and its myriad manifestations are imbued with particular values, logics, and biases that embody oppressive potential. Confronting this reality matters because music education plays a role in perpetuating and reproducing hegemonic relations of power and cycles of injustice (Wright, 2015). For example, the Western classical

ensemble paradigm typically values the role of performance excellence within music education (Williams, 2019). The result of this emphasis is oftentimes the rejection—if not outright shunning and shaming—of other forms of musicking centered on critical, creative, and ethical thinking. Pedagogically, this paradigm centers director-led ensembles that emphasize producing the best musical product rather than embodying a holistic learning process. Furthermore, because of the prominence of white male composers within the Western classical tradition, repertoire within this paradigm often excludes, marginalizes, and erases non-dominant musics and musicians (Gould, 2012). Therefore, critically exploring music educators' perceptions of SJE allows for better understandings of the discourses of and relationships between social justice and music education in pursuit of more socially just music education experiences.

Yet as evidenced within the surveyed literature, there are multiple guiding principles that have the potential to inform, reform, and transform the practice of SJE and music education. These guiding principles include the foundational nature of ethics in sociocultural musical experiences, the emancipatory potential of critical pedagogy as a framework to critique and challenge sociohistoric relations of power both within and outside of musical experiences, music as a modality with the potential to develop empathy and compassion through the affective domain, as well as the centrality of culturally relevant pedagogy within music teaching and learning.

Although there have been multiple studies exploring how individual music educators implement SJE within their music teaching (Hess, 2014, 2019a; Lewis & Christophersen, 2011; Silverman, 2013), as well as one study that explored music teacher educators' perspectives on social justice (Salvador & Kelly-McHale, 2017), much of the literature at the intersection of SJE and music education is either theoretical or individualized accounts of practice (Picower, 2012b).

The theoretical literature—although helpful in shaping discourse, outlining perceived "best practices," and offering hopeful visions of the future in music education—does not attend to practicing music educators' perceptions of SJE. As Hess (2014) argues, "within this theorising of social justice and music education, there appears to be little research on how teachers take up these ideas in the classroom" (p. 229). Relatedly, research in the arts has historically focused "on how that which is called 'the arts' presumably challenges racism and encourages social justice, with very little attention to how the opposite is also the case" (Gaztambide-Fernández et al., 2018, p. 3). Therefore, critically exploring music educators' perceptions of SJE matters because, when enacted uncritically, SJE has the potential to reproduce the same inequities and injustices that it attempts to ameliorate. As such, this research study aims to extend the scholarly literature in an attempt to challenge music education's oppressive potential.

Curricularly, the Kindergarten to Grade 8 Music and Grades 9 to 12 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework both consist of four essential learning areas, including Making, Creating, Connecting, and Responding (Manitoba Education, 2021; Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015). These essential learning areas are focused on learners: 1) developing the languages and practices necessary for making music; 2) generating, developing, and communicating ideas for creating music; 3) developing contextual understandings about the social, cultural, and historical significance of music; and 4) critically reflecting to inform music learning and develop agency and identity. Therefore, important questions relating to how the unique Manitoba music education context and curriculum shapes perceptions of SJE, especially as secondary school music education has historically been dominated by the performance tradition, are salient. Because there is no previous research regarding the connections between SJE and the Manitoba music education context and curriculum, this study seeks to fill this gap.

Finally, as discussed in Chapter 1, the increasing neoliberalization of education and its devaluation of music education shapes and informs how music educators position their work, especially in relation to social justice. For example, if music education is valued only for developing content mastery and excellence in performance according to both the Western classical music paradigm as well as neoliberal logics and frameworks, then SJE is at risk of being perceived as a waste of time (as explored by Salvador and Kelly-McHale (2017)). Thus, discussions of potential challenges and barriers to implementing SJE in the music classroom become salient. Engaging in these discussions of challenges and barriers will ideally lead to new understandings regarding the experiences of music educators as well as potential ways to support their justice-oriented work.

Ultimately, if music educators are committed to transforming the music education experience in pursuit of equity and justice for all, they must develop approaches to social justice not beholden to prior conceptualizations and paradigms of both social justice and music education. This study centers the importance of enacting socially just music education experiences as we strive to value, honor, and celebrate all students according to their diverse backgrounds, cultures, musics, and lived experiences. Music educators have an ethical responsibly to work toward radical, justice-oriented frameworks and paradigms premised on the struggle for social change (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015; Hess, 2014). Through this study, it is my hope that the above research questions can be explored in pursuit of a more equitable and just future in and through music education in Manitoba, Canada, and beyond.

Chapter 3 – Research Design

Methodology

Foundationally, because this research study aims to explore Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators' perceptions, this study is qualitative in nature. As Cropley (2021) states, the goal of qualitative research is to "describe and analyse the world as it is experienced, interpreted, and understood by people in the course of their everyday lives" (p. 35). Qualitative research is an appropriate overarching research paradigm because my study is concerned with gaining insights into music educators' conceptualizations and understandings of SJE as perceived within their specific sociocultural contexts.

Inspired by both Lather's (2006) discussion of paradigm proliferation and Wolgemuth's (2016) call for methodological creativity, flexibility, and fluidity when enacting qualitative research, I draw on the notion of the *bricolage* to "move beyond the blinders of particular disciplines and peer through a conceptual window to a new world of research and knowledge production" (Kincheloe et al., 2017, p. 244). Ultimately, my bricolage approach to methodology embodies a variety of perspectives that provide both unique possibilities for knowledge generation and opportunities for social change (Rogers, 2012; Wyatt & Zaidi, 2022).

The metaphor of the bricolage derives from a French expression which refers to artisans who creatively and imaginatively use left-over materials from other projects to construct something new (Rogers, 2012). Unlike engineers who follow set procedures and use specific tools, bricoleurs use the tools and materials at hand to complete their work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Lévi-Strauss, 1962/1966). Within the domain of qualitative research, the metaphor of the bricolage "signifies approaches that examine phenomena from multiple, and sometimes competing, theoretical and methodological perspectives" (Rogers, 2012, p. 1). Writing within the

context of critical qualitative research, Kincheloe et al. (2017) situate the bricolage as a multidisciplinary and emancipatory research construct that "is understood to involve the process of employing [multiple] methodological processes as they are needed in the unfolding context of the research situation" (p. 244). Likewise, White and Cooper (2022) argue that a bricolage research design "is concerned with divergent methods of inquiry, as well as diverse theoretical and philosophical understandings of various aspects of research" (p. 455). Ultimately, the researcher within a bricolage approach to methodology employs a variety of tools available to best address the research questions (Ben-Asher, 2022; Pratt et al., 2022).

More specifically, my bricolage approach to methodology is inspired by Denzin and Lincoln (2018), Rogers (2012), and White and Cooper's (2022) discussion of the qualitative researcher as a theoretical bricoleur. The tools and materials that theoretical bricoleurs have at hand include a multitude of theoretical perspectives that guide and inform the research process, especially as this influences data analysis. Notably, I initially situated this study solely through the lens of critical theory. However, when engaging in reflexive thematic analysis of research participants' perceptions of SJE, it quickly became evident that this single theoretical perspective did not afford me the theoretical flexibility necessary to adequately attend to how discourse constructs knowledge, meaning, and reality. Therefore, in addition to a critical theory lens which is essential to understand how systems and structures shape participants' perceptions of SJE, I also adopted a poststructural theoretical perspective to attend to how participants discursively construct students, pedagogy, music, and social justice. Additionally, it became evident at the beginning of the data analysis process that an anti-colonial theoretical lens would be useful in confronting the Eurocentric and colonial underpinnings of music education in the Manitoba context.

Therefore, I situate myself as a theoretical bricoleur because I am "dedicated to a form of rigor that is conversant with numerous modes of meaning making and knowledge production" (Kincheloe et al., 2017, p. 247). This multi-perspectival bricolage approach to methodology affords me the flexibility to interpret and interrogate music educators' perceptions of SJE from multiple theoretical angles. A bricolage approach demands a commitment to research eclecticism, emergent design, flexibility, and plurality by allowing context and circumstances to shape the study procedures. My employment of varied, and sometimes conflicting, theoretical perspectives demonstrates this commitment which ensures depth, nuance, and rigor throughout the study (Rogers, 2012).

Ultimately, Wolgemuth (2016) argues that rather than being driven by research paradigms—which both limits and restricts the ability to engage in the inherent tensions and complexities of qualitative research—researchers must drive the paradigm through creative, flexible, nuanced, and potentially boundary-defying research design. As Wolgemuth (2016) states:

> Rather than paradigm driven (Wolgemuth et al., 2015), we drive the paradigms, playing with them like my five-year-old plays with toy cars, observing what happens when they crash, fall apart, and recombine with other toys to make something different—a purple-flying-cat-car—the possibility of doing research differently. (p. 518)

It is within the multi-perspectival bricolage approach to methodology and the possibility of doing research differently that the following discussions of my research design, positionality, philosophical assumptions, and study procedures are situated[1].

Researcher Positionality

Recognizing that a variety of social, cultural, political, and historical forces influence and interact with both my personal and professional beliefs and identities, I embody a stance of critical reflexivity through an analysis of my positionality (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Buchanan, 2015). As Malterud (2001) states when discussing how to ensure rigor within qualitative research, "a researcher's background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions" (pp. 483-484). Therefore, understanding, analyzing, and critiquing my positionality within the research context is essential to account for biases, power, and privilege (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Collins & Stockton, 2018; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Because education is a struggle over agency and what kind of future we hope to create, manifest through multiple relations of power acting within, upon, and through various subjects, there is no such thing as a neutral or apolitical education (Bialystok, 2014; Giroux, 2011; Ross, 2017). As a result, in addition to my stance as a theoretical bricoleur, I also situate myself as a political bricoleur (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) because my work as a researcher and educator is explicitly political and for a specific purpose: social transformation in constant pursuit of equity

[1] Notably, and in harmony with my bricolage research design, I am not drawing on a single set of evaluative criteria concerning notions of rigor. Instead, because ensuring rigor and engendering trust is paramount in all facets of this study, I draw on multiple authors regarding discussions of rigor and trustworthiness and have intentionally embedded these conversations throughout all aspects of my research design (Pratt et al., 2022).

and justice (Apple & Au, 2009; Horkheimer, 1937/1972). However, as a white, cis-gender, able-bodied, straight, settler male, I bring a plethora of privileges to my roles as a researcher and educator which have the potential to counter this aim. Consequently, I actively work to account for these privileges in my research and teaching by amplifying sociohistorically marginalized voices alongside discourses of equity and justice within and through the field of music education. Specifically, as an educator, my teaching primarily employs a critical pedagogy approach as I work to challenge and interrupt oppression in and through my music teaching (Giroux, 2010; hooks, 1994). For example, my teaching is fundamentally concerned with critiquing sociohistoric relations of power and working towards social change by developing students' critical consciousness and willingness to engage in transformative action (Freire, 1968/2000). In this way, it is my goal to foster students as critical and creative citizens who can contribute to a substantive democracy in our shared pursuit of equity and justice.

Presently, I am in my fourth year as a music educator teaching Grade 7 to 12 guitar in an urban setting in the Manitoba public school system after having taught private music lessons for 13 years. In addition to my critical pedagogy approach, my teaching within the popular music education paradigm does not represent the dominant music education tradition of Manitoba, as explored in Chapter 1. Rather, stemming from my experiences as a self-taught guitarist and a professional musician in the popular music tradition, my teaching is characterized by popular music education pedagogies and their emphases on informal and student-centered learning, process over product, and culturally relevant musicking (Green, 2002; Hess, 2019b; Powell, 2021). Further, I am involved in several politically minded community advocacy groups relating to my beliefs about the importance of public education in constructing a more equitable and just society. Finally, in service to the Manitoba music education community, I am an executive

member of both the MCGA and the MMEA. I recognize that my positioning within these various communities has the potential to shape all facets of the research study, especially as study participants potentially construct their responses in relation to their perceptions of me, my teaching, and my leadership positions.

Ultimately, the entanglement of my researcher, activist, and educator identities cannot be teased apart as they all simultaneously inform, shape, and construct how I approach this research study. More specifically, my positionality is undeniably shaped by my pursuit of more equitable and just forms of music education. I have accounted for this with participants by making my assumptions about the transformative power of SJE in music education explicit throughout all facets of the research study, including the recruitment letter, consent form, and during the interview itself. As a result, participants understand that I do not approach this study "objectively" and that, as encapsulated through the title of this study, I bring a specific agenda to this study: social change.

Philosophical Assumptions

Ontological and Epistemological Underpinnings

I posit that reality and truth are relative, subjective, and multiple because reality cannot be distinguished from the subjective experience of it (Levers, 2013). From this relativist ontological stance, I contend that knowledge is constructed through people's engagement with the world and is therefore inherently subjective, partial, and contingent (Levers, 2013; Vagle, 2018). From this subjectivist stance, I perceive of knowledge as always being filtered through unique lenses and ever-changing contexts (Rogers, 2012). As such, all knowledge is inherently value-laden because it is always constructed within and through social relations mediated by

power (Foucault, 1976/1978; Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). As elucidated by Kincheloe and McLaren (2011) when discussing criticalist assumptions of education research:

> All thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted; that facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription; that the relationship between concept and object and between signifier and signified is never stable or fixed and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist production and consumption; [and] that language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness). (pp. 299-300)

Moreover, drawing on the belief that language has the power to (de)construct meaning and our understandings of the world, critically attending to linguistic constructions and discourse inevitably shapes knowledge production, and therefore, the research process (Giroux, 1986; Lather, 1992; Paechter, 2001). Because this study generates data through participants' linguistic constructions via interviews, I recognize that these personal accounts of music educators' perceptions will never fully account for their experiences (Pitt & Britzman, 2003). I simultaneously acknowledge that my understanding, analysis, and interpretation of these qualitative accounts is inherently subjective, value-laden, and exists in a network of power relations (Foucault, 1976/1978; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011). In other words, I reject the ontological claim that there is a reality that can be fully understood and apprehended through this study (Levers, 2013). As Talburt (2004) argues, attempting to do so "elides the ways in which subjectivity, experience, and the meanings of actions and events are contradictorily constructed in ways often not accessible to researchers, or to participants themselves" (p. 82). Ultimately, these philosophical assumptions give shape to my entire research design—and especially to my

research questions with their explicit emphasis on perceptions which are subjectively experienced and constructed. This intentionally subjective stance affords me the flexibility to not only explore music educators' perceptions, but to critique and interrogate the many power-driven sociohistorical forces at play in the Manitoba music education context (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

Owing to my stance as theoretical bricoleur, this research study draws on critical, poststructural, and anti-colonial theoretical perspectives to explore, critique, and interrogate music educators' myriad perceptions of SJE. Foundationally, critical theory embodies a "concern for the abolition of social injustice" (Horkheimer, 1937/1972, p. 242). It is through this fundamental pursuit of equity and justice within and through music education that the concept of critique becomes necessary in exposing and challenging sociohistoric relations of power and the social conditions through which oppression, inequity, and injustice are fostered. Put differently, critical theory allows me to critique the normalized and "taken-for-granted" world of objectified appearances by exposing the unequal social relationships they often conceal (Giroux, 1983). Further, critique functions as an emancipatory device that can be exercised for the purpose of transformation (Freire, 1968/2000). As Kellner (1990) summarizes, "critical theory is thus rooted in 'critical activity' which is oppositional and which is involved in a struggle for social change. . . . 'Critique,' in this context, therefore involves criticism of oppression and exploitation and the struggle for a better society" (p. 22). In the context of music education, Bates (2016) furthers this critical stance by contending that "in applying critical theory to music education, the central concern has been the development of increasingly humane music education practice" (p. 2). In sum, this critical perspective is fundamentally concerned with challenging unequal power

relations and hegemonic systems and structures that both construct and sustain inequity and injustice.

Additionally, this study employs a poststructural perspective to interrogate music educators' perceptions of SJE. Specifically, the Foucauldian (1976/1978) concept of discourse plays a key analytical role within this study. A discourse is a way of speaking, writing, or communicating that structures and gives meaning to the way that people think, act, and behave (Paechter, 2001). Put differently, discourse is the iterative processes, practices, and socially organized frameworks that subjectively construct knowledge, meaning, and reality. Language is particularly important to the poststructural concept of discourse because language has the power to define, explain, and potentially contest both subjectivity and how society is organized (Davies, 1999). As such, language helps construct certain discourses as natural and self-evident, thereby resulting in these discourses achieving hegemonic status (Spruce, 2017). In this way, discourse generates and transmits power because it "[specifies] what can be said and done. That is, discourses are socially constituted frameworks of meaning that order objects and relationships, and those frameworks both reflect and perform relationships of power" (Burman, 2017, p. 3). As Janzen and Heringer (2023) discuss at length on the regulating power of discourse:

> Discourse is an iterative process that constructs knowledge, normalizes, and homogenizes bodies and subjectivities, and thus, becomes a technique of control and discipline. . . . Discourses regulate thoughts and behaviours, normalizing particular ways of thinking, so that to be outside of the discourse that is rendered normal, means to be considered abnormal and deviant. In this way, discourse becomes regulatory. Thus, dominant discourses act as disciplinary knowledge, producing unequal power relations. (pp. 550-551)

Because the ways that study participants think and speak about SJE are regulated by discourse, interrogating how these discourses construct the status quo is essential to the work of social justice. As Vaugeois (2009) argues, "discourses establish the status quo by framing some ideas as legitimate or central while framing other ideas as marginal" (p. 4). Therefore, this poststructural perspective affords me the ability to critique how music educators' perceptions of SJE are both constructed and constrained by dominant music education discourses which has a significant impact on students' music education experiences.

Finally, I superimpose an anti-colonial lens throughout my multi-perspectival theoretical framework. Anti-colonialism is defined as "an approach to theorizing colonial and re-colonial relations and the implications of imperial structures on the processes of knowledge production and validation, the understanding of indigeneity, and the pursuit of agency, resistance and subjective politics" (Dei, 2006, p. 2). Importantly, anti-colonialism represents an active stance of resistance as evidenced through the emphasis on "anti" (Angod, 2006; Fanon, 1961/1963). I employ this "anti" stance to directly address and challenge the Eurocentric and colonial underpinnings of music education in the Manitoba context. As Hess (2013) posits, "given that the Eurocentric nature of the dominant paradigms in music education and the imposition of Western classical music and Western musical epistemologies on systems around the world is a direct effect of colonialism, an anti-colonial approach is crucial" (p. 15). Furthering the practice of critical reflexivity as discussed above regarding my positionality, I have an ethical responsibility as a white settler to expose and challenge how racial and colonial power relations are manifest in Canada. An anti-colonial lens affords me the opportunity to interrogate the hegemonic Eurocentric and liberal discourses that are often manifest through SJE vis-à-vis music education (Spruce, 2017; Vaugeois, 2007). Ultimately, drawing on both critical and

poststructural perspectives through an anti-colonial lens "helps to ensure that music education discourses intending social change do not, in fact, reinforce dominant paradigms" (Hess, 2013, p. 13).

Study Procedures

This study employed 10 semi-structured interviews as the sole research method. Defined by Billups (2021), interviews "capture an individual's perspectives, experiences, feelings, and stories with the guidance and facilitation of an interviewer" (p. 2). Given my philosophical assumptions, interviews are well situated within this study because they produce valuable narrative data through the interviewee's own words (Gideon & Moskos, 2012). In this way, rather than being limited to standardized questions, employing semi-structured interviews allows me to engage participants in questions of SJE from multiple angles which encouraged thorough and rich responses. Interviewees are simultaneously afforded the opportunity to narratively construct their perceptions in detail (Brinkmann, 2018; Roulston, 2014). Further, because they are centered on dialogue, interviews afford flexibility in attending to topics of interest to both the participant and researcher (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Ultimately, the purpose of interviews is twofold: to produce rich, robust, and rigorous narrative accounts of music educators' perceptions of SJE (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000) and to afford space for study participants to share their voice as the practice of power and agency (Cropley, 2021).

One of the core tenets of the MMEA is the belief that research can positively contribute to the music education experiences of students. As stated on the MMEA website (2023): "We believe that students are best served through research based practices that support Music Educators' instructional decision-making, as well as historical and philosophical research that provides perspective in designing curriculum to meet the needs of students and communities."

Based on this commitment, the MMEA agreed to support and help facilitate this research study (see Appendix A). As the umbrella organization for all Manitoba music educators, the MMEA has access to contact information for all registered Manitoba music educators. To ensure that I did not gain access to this private information, the MMEA acted as a third-party and recruited participants for this study. Practically, this entailed inviting—through two emails sent five weeks apart in September and October 2023—Grade 7 to 12 school music educators in Manitoba to participate in this study (see Appendix B)

Participants for this study are all currently practicing Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators who—after receiving an invitation to participate from the MMEA—expressed a willingness to be interviewed. Notably, the study was initially limited to a maximum of eight participants to ensure the study is rigorous yet manageable (Edwards & Holland, 2013; Hinton & Ryan, 2020). However, after the second recruitment email was sent by the MMEA, more than eight individuals expressed interest in participating. Not wanting to silence interested and willing individuals' voices and perspectives, I applied for and received an ethics amendment to increase the maximum number of participants to 12.

Ultimately, employing a convenience sampling approach, because the email invitation to participate was sent to all Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators, a total of 10 participants were selected on a first come first served basis (Stratton, 2021). As shown in Table 1, the 10 participants teach in a variety of grade levels, music areas, and contexts. Owing to my subjectivist epistemological and relativist ontological assumptions, I eschew the pursuit of "saturation" as well as the notion of achieving full representation in my sampling approach (Morris, 2015). Therefore, interviewing 10 participants allowed for the in-depth and focused data analysis necessary to address my research questions in robust and meaningful ways (Salmons,

2014). Further, 10 participants increased the potential for a range of perspectives based on participants' teaching contexts, years of teaching experience, and positionality. This diversity of voices ensured that—although the study makes no claim to full representation or generalizability—the data that was generated is in-depth, rich, and robust as it concerns exploring music educators' perceptions of SJE (Morris, 2015).

Table 1

Participant Teaching Contexts

Name[2]	Currently teaches:	School setting	Years teaching
Alex	Grade 7-9 concert band	Urban	15-19
Blake	Grade 7-8 choir	Urban	20-24
Cam	Grade 9-12 concert band	Urban	25-29
Jamie	Grade 9-12 concert band, jazz band	Urban	15-19
Kris	Grade 9-12 concert band, jazz band, choir	Urban	15-19
Morgan	Grade 7-12 guitar	Urban	10-14
Robin	Grade 7-8 concert band	Urban	35-39
Sam	Grade 7-8 concert band	Rural	25-29
Taylor	Grade 7-8 concert band, jazz band, choir	Urban	10-14
Quinn	Grade 7-12 choir, strings	Urban	5-9

The interviews employed in this study were semi-structured and an interview protocol was developed and used (see Appendix C). Semi-structured interviews involve a number of direct questions while allowing flexibility to prompt interviewees to share more about their unique and specific perceptions of SJE (Gideon & Moskos, 2012). Drawing on Billups's (2021) semi-structured interview guidelines, the interview protocol encompassed pre-interview

[2] Gender-neutral pseudonyms have been assigned to all research participants and singular they/them pronouns will be used throughout to protect participant confidentiality.

procedures as well as questions organized into a specific sequence. The questioning sequence began with an introductory question to establish rapport with the interviewee. From this introductory question, the central section of the interview comprised of several questions relating to the overall research questions. These deliberate and purposeful questions were structured to first explore the interviewee's general conceptualizations of SJE. From this broad questioning, follow-up questions became more focused on the meanings, feelings, experiences, and opinions of the interviewee as shared throughout the interview (Galletta, 2013). Finally, a concluding question ensured interviewees could share any of their final thoughts, comments, clarifications, or questions (Billups, 2021).

Reflecting on the nature of the relationship between myself and interview participants, the process of moving through these various interview questions necessarily involves reflexivity (Galletta, 2013). Again recognizing that my positionality—as well as my demeanor, body language, word choices, tone, and behavior—inevitably shapes the interview experience, creating an appropriate atmosphere in this context meant constructing a space of reciprocity and collegiality (Roulston, 2014). Interviewees are fellow music educators, and if they teach in the public school system, then we are both members of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. Therefore, we are both bound by the Society's Code of Professional Practice which emphasizes respect and integrity (Manitoba Teachers' Society, 2023).

Accordingly, Galletta (2013) posits that there are three dimensions of qualitative interviewing that foster reciprocity and increase the depth and complexity of the data, including engaging participants in clarification, meaning making, and critical reflection. Achieving clarity, accuracy, and understanding within interviews requires engaging participants in clarification. This was manifest in follow-up questions and clarifying questions which afforded space for

further elaboration from the interviewee. Engaging participants in meaning making involved uncovering the meanings of words, expression, and metaphors used by participants at a deeper level than mere clarification. This involved creating space for the interview participant to challenge, question, and discuss the multiple dimensions of SJE vis-à-vis music education which increased the trustworthiness of the data (Billups, 2021). Finally, and in line with my theoretical framework, inviting the interview participant to critically reflect afforded space for attending to participants' lived experiences and subjectivities as they are mediated in and through sociohistoric relations of power. As Galletta (2013) argues, "the use of the semi-structured interview [in the critical tradition] . . . reflects an aspiration to not only study social problems but also play a role in disentangling the threads contributing to the problems" (p. 2). Although engaging participants in critical reflection is fraught with risk because it may increase defensiveness or shift responses toward what participants may perceive I am "looking for," this critical dialogue is essential when "exploring the participants' experiences in relation to broader social and systemic patterns. This dialogue creates space for the participant and research to reflect on the emerging narrative as lodged within layers of complex structural, historical, and relational dimensions" (Galletta, 2013, p. 93). Ultimately, for Lather (1986), "reciprocity implies give-and-take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power" (p. 263), and it was in the spirit of reciprocity that these interviews occurred.

Because potential interviewees are dispersed throughout Manitoba, this study employed virtual interviews on Microsoft Teams so as to not exclude potential participants based on geography (Salmons, 2014). Virtual interviews respect and value the resources that participants are already sacrificing to the study by not requiring further time and costs for commuting.

Further, all interviews were between 30 and 60 minutes in length. Finally, all interviews were audio-recorded and manually transcribed verbatim into Microsoft Word.

Data Analysis

This study employed reflexive thematic analysis for the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). In general, thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analyzing, and reporting recurring themes within data. These identified themes "capture something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). In this way, thematic analysis is not necessarily concerned with quantifiable measures such as counting explicit words or phrases used by study participants, but rather on the prevalence of potential themes within both individual data items and data sets according to their relevance to the research question (Guest et al., 2012). Recognizing that thematic analysis is an umbrella term for a variety of analytical approaches, this study specifically employs *reflexive* thematic analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis is a form of thematic analysis that "emphasises the importance of the researcher's subjectivity as analytic *resource*, and their reflexive engagement with theory, data and interpretation" (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 330). As such, this form of data analysis aligns with my epistemological and ontological assumptions and their emphases on the subjective and relativist nature of knowledge and being.

Moreover, in line with my multi-perspectival theoretical framework and positionality, my use of reflexive thematic analysis is inherently critical. In other words, my analysis tends to the interconnectedness of power relations, discourse, ideology, and the various systems and structures of oppression (Lawless & Chen, 2019). When defining critical perspectives in qualitative research, Cannella and Lincoln (2015) state: "we mean any research that recognizes

power—that seeks in its analyses to plumb the archaeology of taken-for-granted perspectives to understand how unjust and oppressive social conditions came to be reified as historical 'givens'" (p. 244). Embodying this critical positioning, foundational questions that guided my thematic analysis included: who or what is privileged, helped, or legitimated? Who or what is harmed, oppressed, or marginalized? Attending to these questions helped ensure that my analysis ultimately works toward more equitable and just music education discourses in the pursuit of social change (Lawless & Chen, 2019).

Analytically, I employed Braun and Clarke's (2021) six phases of reflexive thematic analysis (first introduced in Braun and Clarke (2006)). These six phases include:

1. Becoming familiar with the data
2. Systematic data coding
3. Generating initial themes from coded data
4. Developing and reviewing themes
5. Refining, defining, and naming themes
6. Producing the report

Notably, reflexive thematic analysis is a recursive and iterative process. Therefore, these six phases are not perfectly clear and distinct, but necessarily overlap and repetitively flow into, through, and from one another.

For phase one, I familiarized myself with the interview data by manually transcribing the audio recordings verbatim. After transcribing the interviews, I checked the transcripts back against the audio recordings to ensure accuracy. To ensure my data analysis is rigorous, I employed the strategy of persistent observation throughout this first phase. As defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), "the purpose of persistent observation is to identify those

characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail" (p. 304). Further, recognizing that all aspects of research are inherently analytical, I also took notes and sketched initial thoughts throughout the first phase.

For phase two, I generated initial codes based on the textual data. As defined by Saldana (2021), a code is "most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute. . . . A code is a researcher-generated interpretation that symbolizes or 'translates' data" (pp. 2-3). More specifically within the coding phase, I employed Lawless and Chen's (2019) two-step coding process. Regarding the first step of open coding, Lawless and Chen (2019) explain: "Guided by repetition, recurrence, and/or forcefulness, we paid close attention to what the interview discourses revealed, indicated, or identified as discursive patterns important, salient, or meaningful to our participants either individually or collectively" (p. 98). In other words, this coding step attempts to understand, privilege, and honor what the study participants are communicating and revealing about their perceptions. Regarding the second step of closed coding, Lawless and Chen (2019) argue in favor of "asking questions about what the [generated] theme might be doing or how it is functioning. . . . we also took into account what interview discourses might be concealed and/or what might be absent in the interview discourses" (p. 98). Put differently, embodying a critical perspective, closed coding afforded me the opportunity to interrogate how participants' perceptions of SJE embody particular values or discourses with the potential to either work toward equity and justice or the perpetuation of the inequitable and unjust status quo.

Phase three included generating themes across the constructed codes. By sorting codes into themes, the analysis assumed a broader focus. Notably, I eschew the notion of themes

"emerging" from the data because this phrasing discursively constructs the themes as passive and waiting for "discovery" (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Thus, owing to my use of *reflexive* thematic analysis, I acknowledge my active and subjective role in the generation and interpretation of themes. Phase four included reviewing and refining themes at two distinct levels. The first level included reviewing coded data extracts to evaluate whether they form a coherent pattern. If not, the theme was reworked or discarded. If so, level two of this phase included evaluating the validity of themes in relation to the entire data set. I performed this step by re-reading the entire data set to ensure the themes aligned with the data set as well as to ensure that no codes were missed in earlier phases. Once I had a strong idea of what the various themes were and how they fit together across the interview data, I defined and named the themes. This fifth phase entailed not just paraphrasing the thematic content of the data, but identifying what makes them valuable and why. Finally, phase six included the final analysis and creation of a report. Practically, I provided evidence through direct quotes and data extracts both within and across themes. This ensures that my report moves beyond merely describing the data in an effort to make an argument concerning my research questions. Ultimately, reflexive thematic analysis provided me theoretical flexibility regarding my data generation method as well as rich, detailed, and complex accounts of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2021).

Ethical Considerations

As the Principal Investigator, it is my ethical responsibility to center and promote human dignity, respect for all people, and justice throughout all facets of this research process (van den Hoonaard & van den Hoonaard, 2013). Therefore, before designing this study, I completed the Course on Research Ethics based on the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and

Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2022) (see Appendix D). After designing the study but before recruiting participants, I applied for and received approval from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba (see Appendix E). Notably, my initial protocol application stated that the study will include a maximum of eight potential participants. However, due to increased interest from potential participants following the second MMEA recruitment email, I applied for and received an amendment to my ethics protocol which increased the maximum number of potential participants to 12 (see Appendix F).

There was minimal risk to participate in this study and participation was entirely voluntary. Recognizing that participants are fellow music educators in the province and that I am an executive board member of both the MMEA and the MCGA, it was made explicit that choosing not to participate in the study will not impact our future relationship and there was no penalty for not participating. Participants were informed that if they found sharing their experiences distressing or upsetting, they have the right to abstain from responding to a particular question or questions during the interview (Galletta, 2013).

A letter of informed consent (see Appendix G) which explained the purpose of the research study and outlined the risks, benefits, costs, study procedures, and participant rights, was emailed in advance to all potential interview participants. To ensure participant confidentiality, all research data was and is securely stored on the University of Manitoba's password protected OneDrive data storage system. Further, gender-neutral pseudonyms are used for all interview participants in the sharing and dissemination of results (van den Hoonaard & van den Hoonaard, 2013).

As made explicit in the letter of informed consent regarding dissemination, the results of this study were compiled into a master's thesis and shared in a formal public defense. The final written thesis will be accessible through the University of Manitoba's digital repository, MSpace. All research participants indicated on the consent form that they would like to receive a summary of results. This summary was emailed to all research participants in May 2024. Additionally, it was communicated to participants that there may be subsequent presentations of this study to a broader educational audience. Results may be shared at conferences, at education workshops, as part of teaching resources, as published articles in journals and magazines, on education websites, and in books.

Potential Limitations

It is likely that only those who are interested in SJE participated in the study as a result of my convenience sampling approach. Although participants may express interest in participating for a variety of reasons—whether in support of or in opposition to SJE—this "motivation bias" (Stratton, 2021, p. 373) shapes the data generated through the interviews and therefore the results of the study. Although this motivation bias does not inherently discredit or negate the results of the study, I have attempted to account for participants' motivations by asking them *why* they are interested in SJE during the interview. In line with my philosophical assumptions, and in pursuit of addressing my research questions, this ensures that I attend to participants' subjectivities regarding SJE and their roles as music educators.

Owing to my ethical responsibility to protect the confidentiality of participants, I did not collect participants' demographic information, including race, gender, age, sexual orientation, or (dis)ability. Although this data would assist in contextualizing and analyzing participants' interview responses, the Manitoba music education community is a relatively small group. As

such, the inclusion of this demographic information alongside the unique nature of participants’ music teaching contexts would increase the likelihood that they would be identifiable to people within the Manitoba music education community. Therefore, I chose not to include participants’ demographic information in this study as I am ethically bound to honor the trust participants have placed in me through their willingness to participate.

Chapter 4 – Analysis and Findings

Study participants expressed a variety of perspectives concerning their perceptions of SJE, how they understand the importance of SJE in relation to their roles as music educators, and how they understand the connections between social justice, music education, and the Manitoba music curriculum framework. Moreover, participants' responses are evidence that music educators are not a monolith; the unique ways that they perceive and take up both music education and SJE are diverse and oftentimes contrary to one another. Yet within this diversity of perspectives, two themes were generated from the data. The first theme is the hegemony of the Western classical ensemble paradigm which both constructs and constrains music educators' perceptions of SJE, thereby perpetuating the dominance of Western art music and colonial musical epistemologies while simultaneously marginalizing the work of social justice. The second theme is the salience of liberal discourses of SJE which have the potential to invisibilize unequal power relations and normalize coloniality. Therefore, in this chapter, I will critically analyze the two themes generated via the interviews.

The Hegemony of the Western Classical Ensemble Paradigm

Without exception, all of the study participants' responses demonstrate that they are regulated by the discourses of the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm. This paradigm—with its centering of Western art music composed by white men, use of Western notation over aural traditions, emphasis on director-led ensembles that eschew student power and agency, aesthetic understanding of music as an object to be studied and appreciated, and privileging of skill development for the purpose of musical excellence in performance—is the dominant form of music education within the Manitoba Grade 7 to 12 context. Further, it is arguably the most significant factor that influences students' music education experiences

(Spruce, 2017). Due to its emphases on skill development and performance excellence, this paradigm affords little space for SJE. For example, Sam states:

> We're so performance-based sometimes, especially when you have, in a few weeks we have a holiday concert so it's just drilling the skills for that performance. And I'm finding in the year, like in the school year, sometimes there's not a whole lot of time to touch on other things. . . . When we do have these performance dates, that kind of takes precedence because there's only so many hours in the day and then we only get to see our kids so many times a week. So you have to prioritize what you want to do.

Sam makes explicit not only the centrality of skill development and performance excellence within their music education program, but also emphasizes how "drilling the skills for that performance" takes precedence over "other things." Although Sam acknowledges the potential for the performance paradigm to marginalize SJE within their teaching, they do not problematize this reality and instead accept it as normal when they later state, "Yeah, it's just kind of part of our job." This is evidence of the normalization and naturalization of the Western classical ensemble paradigm within the Manitoba music education context.

Some participants are explicit about the Western classical ensemble paradigm and how it is understood and manifest in their teaching contexts. Quinn discusses how they perceive a "normal" music education experience:

> When I think about your normal choir class, you're just coming and you're warming up and you're rehearsing different, the difficult moments in your music and then working on the larger, the verse and the refrain, and we're going to, we're just piecing the piece together. Not necessarily talking too much about the themes.

Quinn recognizes that the normalization of this rehearsal model marginalizes opportunities for critically engaging with social justice themes and topics. Similarly, Kris argues that "There's certainly room for [SJE throughout the curriculum], but from a current state of affairs, what does a regular music program look like and regular school around urban areas or rural areas in Manitoba?" Kris identifies that it is possible to enact SJE within a holistic understanding of the music curriculum framework while simultaneously conceding that it is not necessarily compatible within a "regular" music education program in Manitoba. Finally, in a significant critique of how the performance paradigm is enmeshed with community expectations, Jamie states that "I think people would be very happy for me to just teach traditional band here. . . . In my first 15 years, I feel like I could've completely ignored social justice education and no one would notice."

The above quotes demonstrate that the Western classical ensemble paradigm has achieved hegemonic status through its ascendancy within the Manitoba music education context. The concept of hegemony, as developed by Gramsci (1971), refers to the supremacy of the ruling class through the normalization and naturalization of the dominant ideology. In this case, the dominant ideology is the Western classical ensemble paradigm and its associated perspectives, values, and discourses. This paradigm is perceived as natural, inevitable, and beneficial for everyone despite being a colonial and patriarchal construct that only benefits those already privileged through the perpetuation of the status quo (Hess, 2013). Specifically, this paradigm does not attend to diverse musics and musical epistemologies within a praxial music education framework, thus denying students opportunities for creative and critical musicking according to their lived experiences, prior knowledge, and preferences (Elliott & Silverman, 2015; Horsley & Woodford, 2015). Instead, this colonial paradigm is both rooted in and celebrates the musical

practices, compositions, and values of white men (Hess, 2017). Therefore, the Western classical ensemble paradigm ultimately functions as imposition and domination—core traits of colonialism (Dei, 2006)—by normalizing a Eurocentric center at the expense of students' diverse musics, ways of musicking, and musical epistemologies (Hess, 2019b).

Crucially, hegemony is not achieved through physical force, but through the "consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 12). In other words, "the power of the ruling classes [is] now reproduced through a form of ideological hegemony; that is, it [is] established primarily through the rule of consent, and mediated via cultural institutions such as the schools" (Giroux, 1983, p. 20). The Western classical ensemble paradigm is so deeply entrenched within the Manitoba music education context that it is rendered invisible and perceived as normal; to teach Grade 7 to 12 music in Manitoba is to be governed and regulated by the repressive discourses of this dominant paradigm. Thus, these dominant discourses, naturalized by school administrators, community members, music educators, and students themselves, both construct and constrain study participants' perceptions of SJE vis-à-vis music education in problematic ways.

In the following sections, I will interrogate how the interconnected discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm generated throughout the interviews—including the primacy of skill development and pursuit of performance excellence—shape, inform, and regulate participants' perceptions of SJE. Although all participants identified the presence of these characteristics in both explicit and implicit ways, participants were divided regarding the extent to which they perceived these discourses to be problematic or incompatible with their understanding and enactment of SJE.

Primacy of Skill Development

Skill Development and the Manitoba Music Curriculum Framework. One of the most prevalent Western classical ensemble paradigm discourses within the Manitoba music education context is the primacy of skill development. Skill development refers to fostering the technical skills and abilities of students with their instrument or singing voice. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Manitoba music curriculum framework consists of four distinct essential learning areas, including Making, Creating, Connecting, and Responding. Graphically organized as four wings of a butterfly, each of these four essential learning areas are essential to a holistic music education experience and none are more or less important than the others. Importantly, skill development is most closely aligned with the "Making" essential learning area and its recursive learning of developing learners' "competencies for using tools and techniques to produce and represent sound and music in a variety of contexts" (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015, p. 16). Conversely, the two essential learning areas within the Manitoba music curriculum framework where almost all music educators perceive the most potential for enacting SJE are "Connecting" and "Responding." For example, Blake states that "[SJE is] easier to do through 'Connecting' and 'Responding.' It's easier, right? . . . That part of the butterfly was always considerably easier." Detailing their understanding of how the "Connecting" and "Responding" essential learning areas connect to their perception of SJE, Jamie shares:

> "Connecting," "Responding," it's all about how do I perceive of my identity through music? What are my first impressions? How did those impressions change when I learned the music or when I learned more about this interacts? How did I respond to my peers' music making? How am I placing this music in history of time and place and context? I think our curriculum is amazing and if I had to choose, I would say definitely the

> "Connecting" and "Responding" areas have been really valuable for [engaging in discussions about social justice].

Like Jamie, Kris is explicit about how they perceive the "Connecting" and "Responding" essential learning areas in relation to SJE:

> [SJE has] a more tangible connection, or a more readily accessible connection, in the "Responding" and "Connecting" areas than it is in the "Creating" and "Making" areas. . . . The easiest way to connect SJE to the music curriculum is through connecting with music that we can listen to and the way we respond to music that we listen to and providing opportunities for kids, students, to do that in deeper and broader and more meaningful ways.

Yet despite their advocating for the meaningful ways that SJE can be enacted through the "Connecting" and "Responding" essential learning areas, skill development—referenced by all research participants as fundamental to their understanding of music education—and the "Making" essential learning area dominates the Manitoba music education landscape. On this topic, Alex states:

> I think to a certain extent [music education] almost has to [be about skill development] because . . . they can't do anything without a basic skill set. . . . They couldn't create without the skills, right? And particularly in band there's so many different instruments, you know? And it's like, hold this here, hold this here, move this, look at this, you know? And so there's a lot of moving parts. Like actually a lot of moving parts, right? So I think there's a certain amount of time that you do have to grind those skills.

Alex describes the music education experience as one grounded in skill development and developing technical proficiency as it concerns manipulating band instruments to produce sound.

Yet by stating "they can't do anything without a basic skill set," Alex constructs their music education experience as one fundamentally premised on students becoming competent on their respective instruments, thereby marginalizing other forms of musicking and excluding SJE through non-"skill-based" avenues. In this way, technical competence is situated as the very foundation of the Western classical ensemble paradigm (Bartel & Cameron, 2004). Further, Alex's positioning of skill development as core to music education shifts the balance of power within the four curriculum essential learning areas by centering the "Making" essential learning area as foundational and the source from which all other forms of musicking are subsequently enacted.

The primacy of skill development becomes especially problematic when Alex discusses potential ways to enact SJE through the Manitoba music curriculum framework:

> The toughest one is the skills, right? Because it's your bread and butter. I don't really know how much you can do with that. It's essential to all the other [curriculum areas], you can't get rid of it, right? But I don't see how [the "Making" essential learning area] really exactly connects to social justice other than all students should have opportunities to play instruments and make music.

If skill development is fundamental to music education yet can only be understood vis-à-vis SJE regarding inclusion and access, then other forms of SJE are constructed outside of the bounds of the Western classical ensemble paradigm. Similarly, Blake shares that when they "started looking at social justice and anti-racism and decolonization, all that stuff in my classroom, the 'Making' [essential learning area] was the hardest because the 'Making' is where we focus on performance, reading the music, the technical stuff, right?" Thus, because the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm is naturalized and equated with music education in the

Manitoba context, SJE is constructed outside of what music education is understood to entail. Put differently, when the overwhelming majority of contact time with students is centered on skill development, the notion of which is understood as largely incompatible with SJE by research participants, then SJE itself is perceived, at best, as peripheral, and at worst, impossible.

Skill Development and the Elements of Music. Multiple research participants naturalize the primacy of skill development through their perceptions of music education. Morgan states:

> [Social justice] kind of just became background white noise in the teaching experience then because for years you suddenly got put into a classroom. Okay now I gotta teach. Now I gotta get these students [playing]. . . . Well it says "guitar teacher" [in my job description] so that's what I'm going to be focused on. . . . I essentially need to be pumping out able guitar players by the end of the semester. . . . So that's generally where my priorities land, is for the most part, is on that skill level.

In this case, "Okay, now I gotta teach" reduces "teaching music" solely to developing students' technical music skills and abilities. This reductionist understanding of music education—regulated by the Western classical ensemble paradigm and perpetuated by school administrators, community members, music educators, and students (Bartel & Cameron, 2004)—again excludes SJE from what it means to "teach music." Additionally, this reductionist approach embodies a technicist model of teaching that reinscribes the status quo. Equating "teaching music" merely with skill development is a taken-for-granted pedagogical maneuver that is perceived as conventional wisdom because it is so engrained within the hegemonic music education culture. Morgan espouses the benefits of SJE yet fails to critique how their privileging of skill

development and the "predictability of their routines" (Regelski, 2020, p. 27) excludes the pursuit of social justice within their teaching.

Relatedly, Jamie recognizes the difficulties of enacting SJE while being regulated by the pervasive discourse of skill development. They state:

> You know the challenges of teaching music and teaching foundation and technique and performance and literacy. I had an administrator last week remind us that when everything is a priority, nothing is a priority. I think just giving ourselves permission to say once in a while, it's okay if those kids, if our students, what we don't work on is the wrong note and rhythm. Because we're going to be doing that 90% of the time. We're still going to be working on that. But once in a while, it's okay for something else to be a priority.

Jamie expresses a desire to do more than merely skill development and to engage more fully in critical dialogue and discussion with their students. However, like Alex and Morgan, Jamie constructs "teaching music" as focusing on technique via correcting wrong notes and rhythms, thereby concretizing the centrality of skill development within the Western classical ensemble paradigm. Over-emphasizing technical perfection within this colonial paradigm is a "long-standing problem of instruction. Technical imperfections are blatantly evident, especially when they result in 'mistakes.' Consequently, teachers are often sticklers for technical development, intolerant to mistakes of any kind" (Bartel & Cameron, 2004, p. 44). Even though Jamie agrees that decentering the "Making" essential learning area would allow them to more fully engage in SJE, going so far as to seek "permission" to do so, they still quantify skill development as "90%" of what they would do as if to justify not working on skill development 100% of the time. This is

additional evidence of how music education in the Manitoba context is strangled by the discourse of technical skill development which results in the marginalization of SJE.

By constructing "teaching music" as "teaching foundation and technique and performance and literacy . . . [and working on] the wrong note and rhythm," Jamie's response reveals how "*the elements* of music have become a foundational curricular component of music education" (Rose & Countryman, 2013, p. 46). Particularly important to the Western classical ensemble paradigm are the technical emphases on melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, and musical structure. According to Rose and Countryman (2013), these "elements emerged in music education during a time when music curricula in North America were based on the traditions of European art music" and were developed to help analyze and "uncover *the greatness* of these works of art" (p. 48). Thus, rooted both in colonial forms of music education and Eurocentric ways of thinking about music (Gould, 2012), this emphasis on skill development privileges particular ways of engaging with Western art music while rejecting musical cultures outside of the Western mainstream (Louth, 2013). More specifically, this Western music aesthetic "demands conformity to a particular way to listen and respond[,] negates personal ways of experiencing and knowing, stifling how adolescents really engage with music [and] denies the important work of identity and community development" (Rose & Countryman, 2013, p. 50). Ultimately, such emphases on elements are borne from power and privilege which, by devaluating culturally-sustaining repertoire and student-centered pedagogies, deny students agency and voice (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015; Spruce, 2015).

A focus on the elements within the discourse of skill development reveals the pervasive nature of an aesthetic philosophy of music education which has a profound effect on how music education, and therefore SJE, is understood and enacted. As discussed in Chapter 2, an aesthetic

philosophy of music education emphasizes music as an object to be studied and appreciated and that music's value is intrinsic within the very sonic patterns and sounds (Elliott & Silverman, 2015; Regelski, 2014). The aesthetic philosophy of music education is connected to the omnipresence of the study of elements within the Western classical ensemble paradigm: "Unfortunately, as a result of their ubiquitous curricular presence the elements are too often taken as truth, the preeminent framework for exploring and understanding music" (Rose & Countryman, 2013, p. 47). Thus, an aesthetic view of music is premised on metaphysical assumptions of objective beauty and truth divorced from their social, cultural, and political contexts (Regelski, 2014). This aesthetic philosophy is incongruent with SJE because it invisibilizes music's diverse sociocultural contexts, a necessary component in coming to know and critique how power relations are constructed and contested within unique socio-musical contexts. This results in the reproduction of the status quo because it erases the inherently contextual relationships and possible meaning-making opportunities within and through diverse forms of musicking (Vaugeois, 2007). In other words, because SJE must be contextually situated, critically theorized, and reflexively enacted (Kelly, 2012; Kumashiro, 2009), it is incompatible with an aesthetic philosophy of music education that values objectivity and fixes musical meaning within the notes themselves at the expense of subjectivity and musicking as socio-cultural human action (Odendaal et al., 2014).

This aesthetic philosophy is manifest when Robin states, "In front of a standard Western music ensemble with flutes and clarinets and saxophones and trumpets and trombones . . . when the rubber hits the road, you're still pulling out a piece of someone's published music." Robin's use of "music" within the phrase "pulling out someone's published music" is characteristic of an aesthetic philosophy of music education because music is understood here as a physical, paper

object that exists independent of the students and not as a relational process of human interaction through organized sound (Small, 1999). Further, by stating "when the rubber hits the road," Robin normalizes what is fundamental to the Western classical ensemble paradigm: performing published music compositions written by others. Here, the paradigm is accepted as foundational and normative which consequently constructs anything outside of the paradigm, including SJE, as marginal.

SJE in the Service of Skill Development. Multiple research participants' responses demonstrate how they conceive of SJE only within a discourse of skill development. For example, Sam asserts:

> For me in middle years, the "Music Language and Performance Skills" [now titled the "Making" learning area in the updated Kindergarten to Grade 8 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework] is a little harder because sometimes we just don't have the skills to do that just yet. . . . I'm finding with beginner band, it's very limited with the repertoire that we can't really focus on the performance of certain topics.

For Sam, it is only once students have the musical skills and technical abilities within the concert band setting that they are able to engage in performing songs about social justice. However, because skill development is a theoretically endless pursuit, when situated as a prerequisite to enacting SJE, it can function as a barrier to meaningful music education experiences outside of a "base level" of technical competency. Phrased as a question, at what point are students "skilled enough" to engage in justice-oriented music education experiences? Further, when skill development is afforded supremacy in this manner, it is only through the avenue of technical competency that SJE is possibly enacted. This limited understanding of SJE constrains radical

possibilities for musicking that contain the potential to move beyond the colonial confines of the music education status quo (Hess, 2014).

Additionally, some research participants' attempts to enact SJE inadvertently reify the primacy of skill development. Alex argues:

> [SJE] is also, how do I teach those students? Some students need more supports and some don't. Maybe there are some students that I have to write the letter name for in there even though I really don't want to, but that's what they need, or that's what they need for now.

Alex frames their attempt to practice a more inclusive pedagogical approach through the taken-for-granted nature of Western notation. However, by not critiquing how Western notation itself is a colonial construct that marginalizes aural traditions and non-Western musical epistemologies (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015; Hess, 2019b), their attempt to enact SJE is subsumed within the hegemony of the Western classical ensemble paradigm. This further privileges and reinforces the already ascendent nature of developing students' technical skills via Western notation, and by extension, the Western classical ensemble paradigm. Similarly, Quinn states:

> I'm always going into the planning for it thinking about what is engaging for our kids, what is representative of our kids, and then within that, what is going to build their skill set, because there's a wealth of things that are going to meet the same aims as sort of traditional choral music canon that are from outside of it from a more diverse range of composers and experiences.

Despite Quinn's efforts to include diverse curriculum content that is more representative of their students, the goal of doing so is to "build their skill set." Couched in the language of diversifying repertoire for the purpose of enacting a more socially just music education experience, the "aims" of Quinn's pedagogy uphold the dominance of the Western classical ensemble paradigm's

central emphasis on skill development. Taylor also reifies the primacy of skill development despite their focus on equity:

> As you get teaching, as you know, you start to see the equity piece. The kids that don't practice, well, is it because they're lazy or just because they don't have a nice space? And they don't have the encouragement? Those kids that mom and dad just buy all the reeds and all the stuff, no problem. Of course, they're going to have a chance to practice. But those, for the kids having to pry and they're already struggling in other areas of school, the chance of them practicing is pretty low.

Taylor recognizes certain financial and relational barriers that may limit students from fully participating in music education. However, their full participation is constructed as "practicing" for the sole purpose of skill development. Again, the pursuit of equity in this response is aligned with developing students' technical skills and abilities in the Western classical ensemble paradigm rather than critiquing how this very paradigm reproduces the inequitable status quo (Gould, 2012; Hess, 2019b).

Ultimately, all of the above responses demonstrate that participants' music teaching and pursuit of social justice is both constructed and constrained by the discourse of skill development within the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm. Although SJE can and should be practiced within the context of developing students' musical competencies and technical abilities, by situating skill development as foundational to music education, other forms of justice-oriented musicking are devalued and marginalized.

Pursuit of Performance Excellence

Stemming from the primacy of skill development, the pressure to perform looms large for research participants. Sam shares that "it's the expectation in the community that the teacher

does put on the holiday concert and then the spring band concert and we do, we have a whole festival of the arts in the spring." Similarly, Jamie states that "I just think it is so easy to just be like 'concert, concert, concert' that you don't have time. Yup. 100%. That is a huge thing." When discussing what administrators and school communities expect from music educators, Taylor says, "in Canada, it's very, basically here's the room, here's the keys, just put on a winter concert and maybe a spring concert." Quinn also discusses the pressure to perform:

> The more advanced [ensemble], they have a ton of performance pressure, so even though we see them so often, I would say that my time does get hijacked by performances a little bit because we get trotted out to do a lot of different things in our division.

Just like the interrelated discourse of skill development, this pressure to perform has the potential to marginalize opportunities to engage in various forms of SJE.

Arising from the pressure to perform, multiple research participants highlight the expectation that they are pursuing performance excellence and upholding high standards in their performances. Alex shares at length:

> There's a lot of pressure on product instead of process. . . . I mean, as a music teacher, you're one of the only ones [where] the students are up in front of everybody presenting, right? In real time. So it's very different than just a piece of artwork on the wall. Their faces are there, you see them and they see you, so they're so vulnerable. You want to set them up for success for that performance, right? You feel like it has to be a certain, at a certain level. . . . Somehow we get them up on stage and we're like, "Oh, that wasn't very good." You're right, it wasn't, but they're 11. It's good for an 11-year-old. So there is a lot of pressure.

Alex expresses their discomfort with what they consider unrealistic expectations placed on their students but still feels pressure to work toward those high expectations. Cam also discusses the difficulty of working toward performance excellence within the current Manitoba music education context:

> It's tough because you're trying to be excellent and you're trying to represent the best education these kids can have and teach them what process and product is, and how refinement towards a goal is important. And so in that process, we go to festival, right? And then festival has a list you have to pick pieces from. And you've got all these adjudicators that have this basically, all the same background that are going to evaluate and then how well you do definitely has an impact on recruitment, retention, budgeting, staffing, all those things, right? So it's a dance.

It is inevitable that SJE will be marginalized when music educators are expected to participate in multiple concerts and festivals a year wherein students perform at a high level. Unfortunately, responses indicate that this is the case for all of the research participants. As Bartel and Cameron (2004) argue, "The expectation of performative perfection, which always means note perfect, technical perfection, may come from teachers, may come from the students' internal competitiveness, but both may be fueled today by the image we set up as the ideal" (p. 43). This ideal, held aloft through the discourses of Western classical ensemble paradigm, excludes anything outside of a narrow vision of performance excellence.

The discourse of performance excellence, normalized by all research participants, has multiple consequences. First, it again reveals how an aesthetic philosophy of music education pervades and limits participants' conceptions of both music education and SJE. Louth (2013) argues at length that:

> The most obvious manifestation of the [aesthetic] view . . . is a common tendency to focus on performance as the conveyance of a work's meaning rather than to consider the context of its creation or reception as sites for constructing new meanings. If we assume that musical meaning is essentially embodied in its transmission, then a performer either conveys that meaning faithfully or, through choice or necessity, fails to do so. (p. 74)

Within this aesthetic approach to music education, "performance oriented music teachers have focused instead on technique and repertory to the almost effective exclusion of contemplation" (Regelski, 2014, p. 4). The result is that justice-oriented modes of musicking are again situated as peripheral to performance excellence within the Western classical ensemble paradigm.

Second, the discourse of performance excellence, driven through the primacy of skill development, reproduces hierarchical relationships between teacher and students that are contrary to the aims of SJE (Spruce, 2015). With the vast majority of contact time devoted to pursuing performance excellence, efficiency in instruction becomes paramount which then excludes possibilities for student-centered pedagogies as well as experimentation, creativity, and play (Hess, 2014). Blake upholds the director-led discourse pervasive within the Western classical ensemble paradigm:

> I don't want to change the way choir functions, right? I still think choir needs to function with a director. . . . If you're going to have choir the way that our school systems are expecting it to be, we can't really change that part of the structure. . . . Choir is still a little bit of a dictatorship. It kind of has to be.

Contradictorily, it was Blake who previously articulated support for anti-racism and decolonization within music education yet makes explicit their preference for choir being a "dictatorship." Although music education classes "might now include a broader repertoire of

music than previously, the paradigm of musical and knowledge-teacher-learner relationships within which young people are required to work has remained the same: primarily those promoted by the Western music aesthetic" (Spruce, 2015, p. 7). In this way, Blake embodies a fatalistic view of how music education is currently practiced within educational institutions by arguing that "we can't really change that part of the structure." If music educators are unable to imagine pedagogical possibilities beyond the structural constraints of the current music education landscape, then they will ultimately be unable confront how music education embodies oppressive potential. Justice-oriented music educators must instead "diminish traditional hierarchies between teacher and student, between those who have something to learn and those who have something to teach" (Picower, 2012a, p. 6) in order to work toward more democratic classroom environments based on care, trust, respect, and a shared commitment toward social justice.

Connected to the aesthetic philosophy of music education, Hess (2014) argues that "traditional music education focuses on music above all else" (p. 239), including above students' needs, desires, prior knowledge, lived experiences, and potential futures. As such, "the teacher-centered pedagogy that *the elements* has traditionally encouraged denies that students are already musickers capable of constructing their own understandings, framing their own questions and collectively shaping language to communicate these understandings and questions" (Rose & Countryman, 2013, p. 47). This reflects a longstanding hierarchical relationship within the Western classical ensemble paradigm wherein students are positioned as passive consumers rather than active participants in the act of musicking and teachers retain ultimate authority in deciding what school music knowledge will be disseminated (Philpott, 2010). This hierarchical positioning of teacher over student in the Eurocentric music classroom concretizes unequal

power relations by silencing and excluding students' (musical) voices, values, preferences, and perspectives.

Time Constraints

Importantly, multiple participants centered the notion of critical dialogue with students as it concerns issues, topics, and themes relating to social justice. For example, Jamie argues: "I think in jazz, you can't teach jazz without discussing race on a regular basis. I think that is the area that I've talked about most with that. Second to that would be probably the gender representation in jazz." Jamie identifies racial and gender inequities in jazz music and frames those as starting points for engaging in conversations with students. Kris shares this sentiment and states that "You can't talk about the history or evolution of the blues or jazz or the recording industry in North America without talking about colonization and racism. You can't. You can't separate those concepts, right?" Further, Blake shares a story of how they recently discussed race and identity through music:

> My kids and I really walked through [the questions], why did they write this song? Now that we know the background, what does this sentence now mean to you? Now that we're looking at it through a racial lens as opposed to, because when you just look at the lyrics without the context it sounded a little bit like a lost love song until you took the context and realized what they were writing about. . . . They're talking about loss of life, of loss of loved ones, of loss of community, and loss of identity too. We talked about that a lot with my kids with the identity piece when it comes to racism. And that they're, it's a direct attack on your identity of who you are, right?

Critical discussions with students about social justice issues is an essential aspect of what it means to enact SJE. However, it is crucial to note that, arising from the aforementioned

discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm, almost all study participants identified the constraints of time as it concerns enacting this mode of SJE within their teaching context. Therefore, despite many study participants centering the theoretical importance of critical dialogue with students, they were reticent when discussing what this entails in their practice. Even though both Jamie and Kris offer the same example that "you can't" engage with jazz music without critically discussing racism and colonialism, the contextualization of the social, political, and cultural aspects of music is largely absent and not centered by study participants. Specifically, because of the expectation that music educators are focused on skill development and performance excellence within their teaching, study participants repeatedly centered time constraints as the main reason why they are unable to engage in critical discussion and dialogue about social justice issues to the extent they deem meaningful. For example, Morgan shares that:

> Conversations that even scratch the surface of social justice just don't happen when you have a very limited amount of contact time. I'm really just focused on guitar playing. . . . Yeah, I cannot stress contact time enough. It can, especially with the younger kids, it can always be a barrier for so many different things, social justice just being one of many.

When asked what barriers or challenges they experience when attempting to enact SJE, Sam was direct in their assessment of the situation: "The barriers or challenges is time." Relatedly, Blake discusses how class length constrains their ability to engage in SJE: "My choir classes, the classes themselves are too short. I only get them for 40 minutes, and that's if they show up on time. By the time everyone straggles in it's, [sigh]." When discussing diversifying repertoire, Taylor opines:

> That's where people stop, honestly, is that time piece. And it's hard for me too . . . it's like you run out of time. I need to put together this concert program and I've got repairs that need to go to [place] and I can't, I just can't, don't have enough time in the day.

Finally, Jamie shares that:

> [SJE is] not woven into what I do every day because the constraints of time and resources. . . . I love our music curriculum for [engaging in critical discussions] because it is all there—if you look at the music curriculum, I wish everybody looked at the music curriculum, and I need to actually look at it with my students—but time, right?

These few excerpts again reveal how SJE is perceived by participants as peripheral or marginal to what is fundamental to their understanding of music education: developing students' technical skills and abilities to an "acceptable" performance standard.

Despite almost all participants lamenting the constraints of time, not all were convinced that SJE should be prioritized over the traditional emphases of the Western classical ensemble paradigm. For example, drawing on an aesthetic philosophy of music education, Robin advocates for performance excellence within the Western classical ensemble paradigm at the expense of SJE:

> We need to not take away from the good stuff that we're already doing and start layering on other things, right? So I do believe in performing well and listening to other members of the group for a cohesive and excellent performance where people understand how the music is structured and how music is structured generally and all of those things that we have always done, and maybe not even enough.

Robin centers the importance of delivering an "excellent performance" premised on understanding how music is structured, a key characteristic of what defines "good" Western art

music (Louth, 2013; Spruce, 2015). Further, SJE is constructed as additive rather than foundational by arguing that it is a "layer" that potentially "take[s] away from the good stuff that we're doing." Robin adds when discussing potentially engaging in critical conversations with students: "As I say, it's not always easy to include all of that stuff without taking a bit of a side bar." Here, SJE is constructed as a "side bar" to what is foundational to their understanding of music education and therefore not as valuable given their time constraints. Similarly, for Morgan, because of the limited class time that they have with students, conversations about injustice, power, and oppression are constructed as less important than what they see as their central priority as a music educator:

> I'm not the social studies teacher. And sometimes I have to think, these conversations, am I the right teacher to be having, like, they're good conversations to have, am I the right teacher to be having these conversations with? . . . Where do I draw the line that maybe my class is not the place to have this conversation? Or that it maybe it could be a good conversation, but it's guitar class and maybe there's a better way to still use, to focus the time. . . . Again, because I still think about, am I, what am I doing with the time that I have with these guys? Is this always the best use of my time? . . . How much time do we need to dedicate this, really, in the context of this class or do we need to move on and start focusing on something else?

Through the prioritization of skill development and performance excellence within their teaching, Morgan and others purposefully and intentionally marginalize the potential for critical musicking within their classrooms, thereby reifying the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm.

As Opportunities Arise. As a result of perceived time constraints experienced by participants teaching within the Western classical ensemble paradigm, a common sub-theme generated throughout almost all of the interviews was the notion of SJE only being taken up in tacit, implicit, opportunistic, and "organic" ways. For example, Alex argues that "[SJE] *just happens* [emphasis added] because you create a safe place for them to ask questions and to give their opinions without fear of retribution or dismissal, right?" Similarly, Morgan shares that:

> Quite often you don't really think about any social justice context until it sometimes either just happens organically. . . . To me, the driving factor with that, to have a classroom climate where you can walk in and say, "Okay, I see social justice being, I see it happen." To have that kind of climate, it has to happen organically. . . . Social justice, if you spend time just thinking about that, you can actually make it very difficult for yourself, but if you just let it, it's gotta happen organically for it to happen right. . . . [SJE is] not a topic that I'll ever walk into my classroom thinking of, it's just stuff, like I said, it happens organically.

Although constructing the music classroom as a "safe place" like Alex, Morgan, and most other research participants attempt to do is an important aspect of enacting SJE, it alone does not constitute SJE. For Adams et al. (2023), creating a welcoming and inclusive learning environment is only one of six pedagogical principles necessary for enacting SJE. A central tenet of SJE is a teacher's willingness to engage with critical analyses of injustice and oppression through the curriculum (Picower, 2012a). SJE is therefore an explicit, intentional, and purposeful pedagogical act centered on undoing the systems, structures, and discourses that oppress, exploit, and exclude. As Bettez (2008) argues, social justice educators must "[engage] in explicit discussions of power, privilege, and oppression" (p. 276) with their students. If these explicit

discussions do not occur, unequal power relations and their concomitant inequities and injustices remain invisible and are continually reproduced.

Relatedly, several research participants discuss how they only take up SJE opportunistically and that it is not intentionally structured into their teaching. Blakes states that:

> I'll only do [SJE] if it ties in. So I don't necessarily go looking specifically for certain things. . . . I don't think I seek things out to do in my classroom related to social justice. I think I'm more "seize the opportunities" as they arise.

Kris echoes this opportunistic approach to how they enact SJE:

> I think [SJE] is an all the time thing. That's why I say it's kind of implicit in my practice and my approach because it isn't something that I'm going to make a point of focusing on in a period of time or a block of time or a chunk of music or a particular piece of music that I'm going to address. . . . I tend to follow my nose a little bit and then teach opportunistically to the issues that arise along the way.

Additionally, Robin shares that:

> I don't try to spend a lot of time specifically inserting things into my teaching practice that would address [social justice] issues specifically. But it pervades my teaching also because I think that it's part of why I do what I do. So I'm a little bit opportunistic and serendipitous with it when those issues come up.

Enacting SJE opportunistically is an important aspect of what it means to reflexively attend to the fluid and changing nature of students' experiences and circumstances within specific sociocultural contexts. However, if only ever enacted opportunistically, it lacks the intention and purpose necessary to substantively engage with issues of power, privilege, and oppression. In addition to once again constructing SJE on the margins, this lack of intentionally also constructs

SJE in an additive manner. In other words, the pursuit of social justice is not foundational to the pedagogical practices of these music educators.

As further evidence of how SJE is enacted as opportunities arise, Quinn explains that:

> [SJE] happens very organically, right? You'll have like three classes in a row that feel like, just sort of your normal choir rehearsal, and then all of a sudden, for eight minutes in the middle of the fourth rehearsal, you end up having this really cool conversation where students are sharing that kind of stuff. And it's unpredictable.

Although critical classroom conversations can indeed be "unpredictable"—perhaps necessarily so at times if attending to students' lived experiences and prior knowledge—if SJE is only taken up within these "organic" and "unpredictable" ways, then it is once again marginalized and constructed as peripheral. Specifically, Quinn naturalizes the discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm by constructing the "normal choir rehearsal" as a place where SJE does not occur and where space is not explicitly carved out for discussions centered on social justice topics. Put differently, it is in the absence of teaching for and about social justice that Quinn situates a typical music rehearsal experience, thereby reifying the centrality of the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm. Ultimately, when SJE is solely constructed as tacit, implicit, organic, passive, or only taken up opportunistically, its transformative potential is relegated and diminished to, at best, a background role which in turn (re)centers the constraining discourses of skill development and the pursuit of performance excellence.

SJE and COVID-19. One of the most impactful opportunities for enacting SJE in the music classroom came as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the height of the global health crisis, many countries and jurisdictions prohibited playing wind instruments and singing indoors because of the potential for these activities to transmit the virus at increased rates over

normal breathing (Firle et al., 2022). In Manitoba, this prohibition manifested in various restrictive policies at the school, divisional, and provincial level, forcing music educators to drastically alter their pedagogical practices (Laidlaw, 2023). Music educators experienced immense difficulties and challenges during this period. However, because music educators were not allowed to play wind instruments or sing with their students—the modes of musicking which constitute the vast majority of music education classes in Manitoba—the COVID-19 pandemic inadvertently liberated music educators from the repressive expectations of skill development and performance excellence.

Multiple research participants share how they were able to engage more fully in critical dialogue and discussion with their students during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, Cam shares that:

> During COVID I started, and lots of music teachers do this, I started a "Tune of the Day" because we couldn't do a lot else. So it would just be any tune, and I would talk about the history of the composer and the artist and the piece and why we're listening to it and what it has to say and then open it to discussion about people's opinions, have they heard it, do they have any experiences, what are their biases surrounding, you know, country music or music from a particular part of the world, or genre, or history, a point in music history. And I think that has been a really valuable resource.

Freed from the constraints of multiple performances and festival appearances during the pandemic, Cam was forced to engage in other forms of musicking beyond merely "music-making." They make explicit how this opportunity to critically dialogue with students about the history and context of music and musical artists has been a "really valuable resource." Yet once restrictions were lifted on playing wind instruments in school, Cam returned to a performance

model of music education. Sam shares this same notion: "Strangely enough when we weren't performing [due to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic], that's when we touched on different things that we've never maybe even thought of before because we had to fill in time." This quote from Sam is further evidence that freed from the constraining discourses of the performance paradigm, enacting different forms of musicking become possible. Yet, problematically, anything outside of the bounds of performing is problematically constructed as "filling time," once again reifying the hegemony of the Western classical ensemble paradigm.

Finally, some participants speak of the opportunity to focus more on the "Connecting" and "Responding" essential learning areas of the Manitoba music curriculum framework, the two areas almost all research participants identify as having the strongest connection to SJE. Jamie shares that:

> The year I did the most of this stuff was two years ago [during the COVID-19 pandemic] when there were no concerts because we had so much more time to give the students a solid curriculum without needing to present music. . . . Two years ago, there were no concerts, so we did way more connecting and responding, way more . . . we had so much more time.

Jamie makes explicit that not being required to prepare for concerts afforded their learning community immense freedom to critically explore topics and themes relating to social justice. Specifically, they discuss how "my students in COVID were really feeling disconnected," but that through critical music explorations with a local Indigenous musician, they were able to make meaningful connections with one another while simultaneously interrogating issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, toxic masculinity, and identity through music. Unfortunately, despite the revelations from multiple research participants regarding the transformative nature of engaging

in forms of critical musicking beyond the "Making" essential learning area, participants have largely reverted back to pre-COVID forms of musicking regulated by the discourses of skill development and pursuit of performance excellence. For example, when asked if they still engage in explicit dialogue with their students about the sociocultural contexts underpinning particular compositions or composers now that COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, Jamie states, "No, I would say I am not."

Ultimately, research participants' interview responses reveal that their perceptions of SJE are both constructed within and constrained by the dominant discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm. These discourses, including the primacy of skill development and the pursuit of performance excellence, regulate and naturalize how research participants understand their roles as music educators and the central purpose of their work. Specifically, SJE—and critical dialogue with students about social justice issues in particular—is constructed as additive and only enacted opportunistically when peripheralized by the centrality of developing students' skills and abilities in the pursuit of "high standards" according to a Western music aesthetic. Thus, the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm is continually (re)centered within participants' responses which results in the marginalization and devaluation of SJE.

The Salience of Liberal Discourses of Social Justice Education

Regulated by the discourses of the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm, interview data reveals that SJE is taken up in two distinct ways: ensuring instrument access and diversifying repertoire. In addition to the previously discussed perception of SJE as critical dialogue and discussion about social justice issues (that is ultimately not taken up because of time constraints), instrument access and diversifying repertoire represent aspects of SJE that embody radical potential as it concerns challenging oppressive systems, structures, and

discourses within and through music education. Further, as discussed in Chapter 2, each has the potential to improve the social, cultural, and economic conditions of students' lives and communities.

However, both instrument access and diversifying repertoire are taken up within liberal frameworks by study participants. Liberalism emphasizes individualism, universalism, rationality, and equality. From these values, liberalism "fosters competition and notions of meritocracy without recognition that students are situated differentially in relation to power based on factors including gender, race, class, disability, immigrant and refugee status, age, language and sexual orientation" (Hess, 2014, p. 231). In other words, a liberal paradigm fails to recognize that students are not positioned equally in society as a result of sociohistoric relations of power that continue to act upon and govern how they interact with and in the world.

Specifically, the two aforementioned modes of SJE are saturated by liberal discourses of salvationism, tolerance, neutrality, and equality. Further, these liberal discourses are reified through music educators' "good intentions" manifest through additive and tokenistic approaches to multiculturalism wherein racialized students and musics are constructed as deficient, "Other," and in need of help. Therefore, in the following sections, I will interrogate how study participants' felt ethical responsibilities alongside their liberal perceptions of SJE vis-à-vis music education invisibilize unequal power relations which in turn normalizes coloniality.

Ethical Responsibilities

All participants spoke positively about SJE (as they understood it). Specifically, almost every participant identified their ethical responsibility to make a positive difference in the world. Kris speaks at length of both their responsibilities and obligations as a music educator:

> I think that my responsibility as an educator is connected to [the questions,] why am I here? What is my purpose on the planet? And what is my purpose in my interactions with the people that I come into contact every day? And I'd like to think I'm here to make a positive difference, to leave the world and to leave any situation I get involved with maybe better than I found it. . . . We have this obligation, I feel this obligation that we owe it to ourselves to try and do better. . . . I think we owe it to ourselves as smart and intelligent people who have the ability to try and do better, to do that, to do better, right? And so at whatever level I can meet that as an educator, I think that I have to.

Similarly, when asked why they are interested in SJE, Alex answered, "It should be important for everybody, that we want to make this a better world to live in. . . . I just think that's a big part of who I am and possibly who we all should be." Connected to the felt ethical responsibilities of music educators to pursue social justice in and through their teaching, many participants discussed the importance of using music as a vehicle to pursue social justice. Cam states:

> I really truly believe that our job is to raise humans through music. And our world is just, is becoming a place of conflict and chaos whenever we dig our heels deeper into entrenched beliefs. And it becomes more loving, an open place and especially a place for creativity and intellectual development when we can dissolve, or at least open our hearts and ears to another's perspective.

The above quotes demonstrate that study participants are broadly committed to the ideals of social justice within their music education contexts and communities. Indeed, all study participants embody the moral imperative to care (Allsup & Shieh, 2012). However, as will be explored in greater detail throughout this chapter, their ideals and their conceptions of both music education and social justice are not grounded in substantive critiques of systemic

oppression, unequal power relations, nor the ways that coloniality is (re)produced via their teaching.

Citizenship Education and Multiculturalism. Multiple participants discussed the centrality of citizenship development while attending to the ethical responsibilities of music educators. Robin framed their felt ethical responsibilities within the context of citizenship education through a brief discussion of the purpose of public education:

> That is the purpose of public education, to socialize, to create good citizens, whatever the definition of a good citizen is. And in the past, it hasn't always been a very admirable definition of a good citizen. But despite that, I still believe that all public school institutions are meant to somehow get children to conform to a societal norm, even if that means erasing their own culture. So you do have to sort of step away from that often. I think it's good to be aware of that, that the institution exists to a certain extent indoctrinate. . . . I think that that's my job [to "create good citizens"] as much as teaching them how to play an instrument.

Likewise, Blake is adamant that "It's our responsibility to make sure that they are on their way to becoming good citizens." However, what constitutes a "good citizen" and what type of society such a citizen would participate in is not described nor theorized throughout the interviews. By not explicating on what these terms might entail, fostering "good citizens" through music education can thus be read within normalized and taken-for-granted Canadian multicultural discourses centered on tolerance and inclusion.

For example, when discussing the goals of music education and schooling in general, Taylor argues:

> It's enculturation, because otherwise, if it doesn't happen outside of school, then what are we doing here? Because we're kind of teaching, I guess, tolerance through all our subjects, right? They come in very blank and we're trying to make them open by the time they're, they leave.

By drawing on a discourse of tolerance and enculturation, Taylor centers a model of multicultural education focused on assimilation (Lechtenberg, 2021; Verkuyten & Kollar, 2021). However, a discourse of tolerance within multiculturalism—along with Taylor's positioning of students as "blank slates" as if they are neutral, ahistorical objects devoid of lived experiences and prior knowledge—fails to critique how unequal power relations are manifest within society (Hess, 2013). Similarly, Cam shares:

> I think social justice in education, music education or any education, is sort of unravelling or dissolving some of the oppressive parts of that structure to allow for a more clean slate when it comes to allowing students to absorb content without bias or pressure or any kind of negativity or framework that might prevent having the voice of another heard. . . . Here it's actually a place where it feels quite neutral.

Cam constructs their music room as a neutral space wherein the goal is to "allow for a more clean slate" so that students can "absorb content without bias." However, there is no such thing as neutrality and any attempt at being neutral results in the invisibilization and perpetuation of the status quo. In this way, Cam situates students outside of sociohistoric relations of power and denies the knowledge and experience that they bring to the music room. Like Taylor, Cam invisibilizes the unequal power relations inherent within their classroom by attempting to be inclusive through neutrality. Yet without engaging in transformative educational practices that critique the inequitable status quo as well as value and sustain the cultural knowledge and

experiences that students embody, these liberal perceptions of SJE risk perpetuating systemic inequities and marginalizing the very students it attempts to engage with (Paris, 2012).

Additionally, the vague employment throughout the data of "creating good citizens" as the end goal of participants' felt ethical responsibilities potentially reinscribes the widely held narrative of Canada as a benevolent multicultural society that is accepting of all (Stark, 2023). However, this liberal discourse of fostering equal citizens within a multicultural society has the effect of invisibilizing and erasing the history of Indigenous and racialized peoples because it "claims inclusivity without acknowledging that there is an implicit frame of reference which is largely Anglo-European. This frame of reference hinges on the notion that we are inviting people to 'our' house" (Vaugeois, 2007, p. 174). Developing "good citizens" within the dominant Canadian multicultural narrative extracts, commodifies, and ahistoricizes difference which normalizes and naturalizes coloniality. Therefore, music educators must move beyond a vague commitment to "making a positive difference in the world" based on liberal understandings of social justice (Bonnycastle, 2011; Gil, 2006).

Good Intentions as a Settler Move to Innocence. From this perspective, the felt ethical responsibilities of study participants can be analyzed in the context of "good intentions." Mawhinney (1998) argues that individuals in power can make a claim of good intentions by situating themselves "outside of the relations of racism. This is reflected in the often-held belief that if one doesn't actively discriminate against anyone, one is not implicated in racism" (p. 104). For example, when discussing engaging with musics from around the world, Taylor states, "I mean, I'm not trying to be overly racial. I think it makes it for an awkward classroom. But you just try to, you're trying to explore different types of music from different places of the world." By not being "overly racial," Taylor adopts a colorblind perspective which invisibilizes racial

inequities manifest both within their classroom and wider society, thereby naturalizing whiteness and Western art music as the dominant center.

As such, being comforted by the appearance of good intentions functions as a settler move to innocence because it obscures how individuals in power are implicated in injustice and oppressive colonial relations. This appearance of good intentions secures settler futurity through the perpetuation of the status quo (Tuck & Yang, 2012). As Stark (2023) argues, the "move to innocence allows those racialized as superior to ignore the ways they contribute to upholding various systems of oppression" (p. 47). Undoubtedly, all study participants genuinely have good intentions. All 10 participants are dedicated music educators who strive to make a positive difference in the world. Yet as Gorski (2008) contends, "despite unquestionably good intentions on the part of most people who call themselves [justice-oriented] educators, most intercultural education practice supports, rather than challenges, dominant hegemony, prevailing social hierarchies, and inequitable distributions of power and privilege" (p. 515). Thus, good intentions buoyed by liberal understandings of social justice not only fail to adequately challenge systemic oppressions and unequal power relations, but function as a settler move to innocence that naturalizes coloniality (Mawhinney, 1998).

Instrument Access

Providing instruments so that all students can participate in music education is paramount for most research participants. As Robin clearly articulates, "[SJE] definitely comes up with the actual providing of musical instruments." Similarly, Taylor argues multiple times throughout the interview about the importance of instrument access when attempting to be more inclusive:

> I think that we're always trying to be inclusive and I think that we're seeing year over year, people can't afford their fees, for example. My evidence is looking at unpaid fees

> every year and I think that number is slowly ticking up. . . . I think the first thing I'm really trying to do, and we're still maybe not doing it as well as we could, is just making sure the kids have the tools. They each have access to an instrument whether they can afford it or not.

Thus, many study participants posit that providing musical instruments to students is an integral aspect of constructing a more inclusive and equitable music education experience. However, two issues arise from this notion of instrument access.

Instrument Access as the Totality of SJE. First, for multiple research participants, this is both the beginning and the end of their understanding of SJE. In other words, for some participants, SJE only means providing instruments to students and nothing else. This limited perception of SJE is arguably not SJE at all because it neglects to critically engage students with issues of injustice, power, and privilege through curriculum, teaching, and learning, all essential aspects of what it means to enact SJE (Hess, 2017; Picower, 2012a). For example, Sam shares that:

> [SJE] means removing the barriers that are sometimes there for children and young adults to get equal access to different programming within the educational system. It's just making sure that everybody can get what they need to do to get a better education. . . . Sometimes [barriers] can be financial if families are not able to provide different, say registration fees for hockey, or in my case with instruments, renting an instrument. . . . Mainly what I've seen in my experience is more of financial barriers sometimes with students so that they cannot access what they need to make different things work within their education.

Sam identifies a legitimate barrier that their students experience concerning accessing educational programming such as music education. Likewise, Taylor states that:

> That's the first piece of equity is just to make sure that everybody, every kid has access to an instrument. . . . I think a lot of kids, sometimes they think that they just can't afford it, so they don't even bother. . . . Yeah, the tools are the first, and trying to create a level playing ground.

In the age of neoliberalism and increasing wealth inequality, this is a real and immediate issue that demands collective attention. However, this is the only way that both Sam and Taylor conceptualize SJE throughout their interviews. In this way, their understanding of SJE fails to account for the transformative possibilities embodied within curriculum, teaching, and learning in constructing a more equitable and just world.

Moreover, their understanding of social justice is limited to the distributive justice paradigm. As discussed in Chapter 2, distributive justice is focused on alleviating the injustice of maldistribution through the fair distribution of resources. Yet due to its historical grounding in liberal individualist perspectives, this paradigm has the potential to obscure and erase systemic and structural inequities (Hytten & Bettez, 2011). For example, only providing instruments to students who cannot afford them does not challenge the potentially systemic reasons—including, but not limited to, race and colonialism as well as class and capitalism—that they cannot afford them. Put differently, employing the distributive justice paradigm in this way only addresses the consequences of inequity and injustice rather than actively challenging and undoing the power structures and discourses that produce them (Spruce, 2017).

Relatedly, Taylor's reference to "a level playing ground" is evidence of the attempt to invisibilize unequal power relations by situating everyone as equal. Vowel (2014) explains that

the notion of a level playing field is a Western liberal myth: "There does not exist today a 'level playing field' upon which Indigenous peoples can benefit equally. Historic injustice did not cease at some magical moment to be replaced by contemporary fairness." Additionally, Hess (2014) claims that "equality and merit are at the heart of liberal education. Prevalent discourses in music education do not necessarily acknowledge the unequal playing field upon which students are situated" (p. 236). Simply providing Western wind and brass instruments to students does not and cannot create a "level playing ground." Therefore, by not challenging the inherently colonial nature of concert band and its centering of both Western classical music and Western musical epistemologies, Sam and Taylor's construction of SJE purely within the discourse of instrument access normalizes coloniality, marginalizes students' diverse ways of musicking, and neglects explicit teaching for and about oppression (Picower, 2012a).

Discourses of Salvationism. Second, multiple research participants perpetuate a discourse of salvationism when discussing instrument access. A discourse of salvationism stems from liberal conceptions of social justice wherein "disadvantaged groups' or individuals' failure to access resources and social capital can be easily be ascribed to their 'deficiencies'" (Spruce, 2017, p. 725) rather than how unequal social, cultural, and historical relations of power have shaped society. This liberal conception in turn leads to salvationist discourses wherein disadvantaged groups or individuals are considered to be in need of help, or saving, by someone positioned as superior within that society. As Hess (2014) argues at length:

> A liberal understanding of social justice and equity is founded on principles of equality and freedom but what is absent here is the differential understanding of why inequality exists. Systemic factors disappear and inequality is understood in terms of merit rather than the material realities of factors like racism. This social justice then remedies

> inequality through discourses of charity, salvation, and benevolence. Rather than dismantling privilege, it tries to "help the needy." These discourses are not helpful because of their lack of attention to the systemic factors that structure the playing field into a differential "matrix of domination." (p. 243)

As evidenced in the quotes above, Sam and Taylor in particular embody a savioristic perspective by their tacit assumption that those who cannot afford instrument rentals would benefit from participation in the school concert band while failing to critique how this Eurocentric music education paradigm reproduces unequal power relations through the privileging of certain peoples and musics over others. As Gaztambide-Fernandez and Rose (2015) contend:

> This approach reflects what Kumashiro (2000) calls an "education for the Other," as it seeks to change the presumed harm done by providing equal access to what is assumed to be good for everyone. Often these approaches assume that participation in music has the effect of rescuing students from their social and economic conditions. Music teachers are construed as saviors who can ensure access to dominant musical practices and values. (p. 7).

Alex adopts a similar posture and perpetuates the same discourse of salvationism when they state:

> Where I teach, all the students have instruments provided for them because a great deal of them wouldn't be able to afford instrument rentals. Or if they could, they might not have parents that value it. But we don't want to deny them those experiences.

This is evidence of how Alex uncritically positions "those experiences" within the Western classical ensemble paradigm as something that poor students should have access to. Moreover, Alex disparages parents who may be able to afford instrument rentals but who do not necessarily

"value" the "experiences" that Alex is offering. Crucially, what Alex fails to recognize in this moment despite referencing it elsewhere in the interview is that caregivers and students in their community have immensely diverse backgrounds, cultures, and lived experiences. They state that a "lot of my students are newcomers to Canada. I know we have students from Ukraine, Tanzania, Uganda, Eritrea. . . . The experience of the immigrant, the newcomer, the refugee, that's something I would like to meaningfully address." Yet the mode of music education that Alex is offering—namely concert band in the Western classical music tradition—may not only be of no interest to the diverse school community but embodies oppressive potential through its colonial curricular and pedagogical emphases and concomitant exclusion of other musics and musical epistemologies. Thus, a discourse of salvationism promotes the dominant form of music education which in turn erases students' cultural identities (Vaugeois, 2007).

Similarly, Cam perpetuates this discourse of salvationism when discussing with students what access to their music education programs can offer:

> I put a big picture of the family photo [up] and it's all these people from different backgrounds and different stories and I go through the whole picture, it's like a senior jazz band. I'm like okay this person came from this country and they are now a dental hygienist here. *And this person was actually in a war-torn country and sought refuge, couldn't play an instrument when they came, they learned this thing and in three years* [emphasis added].

Cam positions the student from a "war-torn country" as deficit both in that they "sought refuge" and that they "couldn't play an instrument when they came." It is understood in Cam's statement that it is through their providing access to dominant musical practices and values that this person is ultimately saved, transformed, and enlightened. Within this discourse, "the concern is that

most students do not have access to such opportunities, and the goal of social justice is to address this lack and ensure that poor students and students of color have equal access to the great works of European music" (Gaztambide-Fernández & Rose, 2015, p. 7). Vaugeois (2007) echoes this argument:

> Liberalism teaches us that it is the citizen's duty to "lift up" the "underprivileged" or the "underdeveloped", and yet, this duty and the hierarchical relationships it fosters are predicated upon the notion of lesser Others. . . . The notion of lesser Others situates us (citizens) squarely in charity narratives that fail to question how contemporary relationships have come to be as they are. (p. 166)

Ultimately, by limiting SJE to the sphere of instrument access within the distributive justice paradigm while embodying a discourse of salvationism, music educators are at risk of invisibilizing unequal power relations while simultaneously perpetuating oppressive models of music education.

Diversifying Repertoire

Multiple research participants discuss the notion of diversifying repertoire as central to enacting SJE. For example, Jamie states, "If we aren't working toward that equity then we're just going to perpetuate 99% of everything we play being by a white male, right?" Jamie recognizes the overwhelming dominance of white male composers within the concert band context and how whiteness and masculinity are normalized within the Western classical ensemble paradigm. Alex also draws attention to this reality by focusing their attention on engaging with diverse repertoire:

> I made a purposeful, or intentional, decision to choose music that was diverse in genre and diverse in artist, diverse in gender, diverse in race, so that my students that I taught could see themselves in that music. And see other people that they weren't seeing.

However, liberal discourses permeate study participants' understandings of how and why to diversify repertoire. In particular, many participants discuss diversifying repertoire through multicultural frames that are additive and tokenistic, thereby reinscribing the dominance of Western musical practices and values while simultaneously marginalizing and "othering" students and non-Western musics, practices, and values (Hess, 2014). Further, some participants perpetuate discourses of equality and balance within their explorations of diversifying repertoire which again invisibilizes unequal power relations (Vaugeois, 2007). Therefore, despite participants' good intentions in wanting to disrupt the dominance of white men within the Western classical ensemble paradigm, their curricular practices embody the potential to reinscribe the colonial center.

For example, Blake makes a concerted effort to diversify the repertoire that their choir sings. They state:

> I had made it a point this year that I was going to try and get away from doing choral pieces that are arranged by the same five white guys from the mid-west. . . . [But] it's something I'm actually really struggling with right now. I've been trying really hard to branch out, and for middle school in particular, there is just such a small pool of people who arrange for that age group. . . . We're still doing, there's still some [white male composer] in there, I'm still doing a [white male composer] piece with my jazz choir. They do the best arranging for that age group and if it gets my kids singing, that's the most important part.

Blake makes it a goal of theirs to challenge the historic dominance of white male composers in the middle years' choral tradition. They also identify the difficulty of the task because of the perceived lack of repertoire for middle years choir. However, when Blake states "They do the best arranging for that age group and if it gets my kids singing, that's the most important part," they are making three implicit assumptions about music and music education, all of which are rooted in Eurocentric discourses.

First, by situating the "most important part" as singing, Blake perpetuates an aesthetic discourse of music divorced from its sociocultural context. In other words, despite making "it a point this year that I was going to try and get away from doing choral pieces that are arranged by the same five white guys from the mid-west," centering singing as the "most important part" constructs students as decontextualized subjects who—stripped of their agency and situated outside of power relations—are confined to producing "good" music. In this way, "music can become more important than the individuals who make it" (Hess, 2019b, p. 32). Thus, it is purely in the act of singing that music education has value for Blake rather than in the praxial ways that music education embodies transformative potential through the inherently relational process of musicking (Odendaal et al., 2014).

Second, Blake positions the "five white guys from the mid-west" as the standard to which all other composers and arrangers are measured. However, these white male composers operate within a framework dominated by Western musical sensibilities and use of Western notation. As such, the "standard" that Blake constructs is inherently colonial and imbued with particular Western musical values not necessarily shared by other cultures. To this end, Gaztambide-Fernández et al. (2018) discuss how race and racism are central in understanding what society situates as valuable within the arts:

> Dominant understandings of "the arts" and what it means to be an artist are profoundly shaped by racial logics and racist assumptions. Yet, because racism is foundational to Eurocentric understandings of culture and cultural production, it is always implicit in how the arts and artists are recognized and valued. (p. 2)

Therefore, if non-white male composers are unable to compose or arrange choral pieces to the (colonial) standard that Blake deems acceptable, then diverse repertoire, modes of musicking, and non-Western musical epistemologies are excluded. In this way, Blake ultimately reinscribes the dominance of white men at the expense of enacting a substantive form of SJE.

This discourse of high standards within diversifying repertoire is highlighted by various research participants. For example, Morgan states:

> For the most part, [guitar repertoire was composed by] a bunch of white guys. Like there weren't a lot, not a lot of women represented there, definitely not a lot of People of Color represented in there as well. So it came from an era where that's the music that was being pushed. Now in their defense, they wrote some really great, memorable stuff. So that's the music that got carried forward and so that's the music that I'm now presenting. . . . To a degree though, I don't always find it easy getting out of [the dominance of white male composers], because like I said, they wrote great stuff, they wrote some very memorable stuff, so what am I going to replace it with is where I'm coming up a little bit empty now.

Like Blake, Morgan problematizes the dominance of white men in music education. However, Morgan also tacitly constructs the repertoire of the white men as the standard to which all other musics must be evaluated and measured, going so far as to declare that they are "coming up a little bit empty now" when attempting to diversify their repertoire. As a result, Morgan continues

to center the music of white men according to a colonial music value system. Kris also makes the notion of standards explicit when discussing diversifying repertoire:

> If you're playing a piece of music that was written by an old white guy, let's call it out and let's talk about how it might be different in the eyes of someone who isn't an old white guy and let's try to find another piece of music that wasn't written by an old white guy that can measure up against this. And if we can't, then maybe that's worth talking about.

Again, Kris critiques the dominance of white men in music education. But like Blake and Morgan, Kris focuses their critique on the difficulties of finding music that "can measure up against this." This pervasive multicultural discourse of comparing non-Western musics and ways of musicking to a colonial standard fundamentally constructs the music and musical epistemologies of white men at the center. As Stark (2023) argues, "Canadian multiculturalism thus becomes a tool for cataloguing and commodifying difference, where the norm against which all cultures, bodies, and people groups are measured is White Anglo culture" (p. 45). This continual centering of colonial musical practices and values is evidence of the ways in research participants fail to meaningfully engage in decentering and challenging the dominance of white men in music education despite the stated importance of doing so.

Third, Blake, Kris, and Morgan's statements above are evidence of their superficial and trivial engagement with the importance of diversifying repertoire (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Hess (2014) contends that "a liberal dominant paradigm of music education is often additive in nature. Western classical music dominates while musics appropriated for use in school are arranged peripherally" (Hess, 2014, p. 236). Study participants perpetuate this liberal framework by positioning the notion of diversified repertoire as additive and as something that would be "nice

to have if possible." Yet, evidenced by the repeated centering of music as an object to be studied and appreciated, diverse repertoire is ultimately optional and inferior to the importance of having students make music according to their firmly held colonial ideals about what kind of music and musical experiences are valuable.

For example, Cam states: "I've made a concerted effort [to diversify my repertoire] and I think a lot of educators are now. And the other part that I've been encouraged to do is to represent Canadian works as well." Here, Cam situates including diverse repertoire to better represent their students as important as including Canadian music. As such, Cam perpetuates a liberal discourse of balance. Yet "Canadian works" already occupy a privileged space according to the colonial musical value system naturalized within the concert band setting. In this way, incorporating diverse repertoire is constructed as "equal" to including Canadian music which excludes how sociohistoric relations of power have shaped the dominance of colonial musical epistemologies and ways of musicking. Similarly, Alex argues that "We can empower people to explore their traditional ways of making music within the context of wind band in a meaningful way." However, doing so functions as an assimilative move wherein students' diverse cultural ways of musicking and musical epistemologies are subsumed into the dominant paradigm. This superficial approach to diversifying repertoire, and SJE in general, is characteristic of an additive multicultural "approach undertaken by many music educators: an additive approach whereby 'other' cultures are sprinkled in for good measure to a curricular approach that centres White, European cultural productions" (Stark, 2023, p. 44).

Within the notion of diversifying repertoire, it is necessary to highlight how some research participants present troubling and problematic perceptions of how to enact SJE. Robin shares the following regarding their attempt to diversify repertoire:

> I have a lot of kids from India, from Iran, from a lot of countries in that area of the world. And I gave them a piece that was written by an American called "Snake Charmer." And I premised it by saying, you know, this is not really Middle Eastern music. But the composer has used a Middle Eastern scale so the sound will be different to some ears and more familiar to others and you mustn't—we talked about cultural appropriation and whether it was okay for him to write this piece. And in the end, the kids loved the music because it reminded them of music that was part of their experience and they didn't mind so much that it was just a mock-up by an American composer. It didn't really bother them because they appreciated the scale.

In this example, Robin exotifies and "others" "Middle Eastern music" according to the stereotypical representation of a snake charmer through the use of a "Middle Eastern scale" (Racy, 2016). "Middle Eastern music" in this scenario is reduced to a particular set and order of notes within the Western temperament system. Composed by an American, this piece is an appropriation of Arabic music according to Western standards and expectations of what "Middle Eastern music" should sound like. This excerpt from Robin is evidence of the problematic nature of an additive multicultural framework within music education. Stark (2023) suggests that "in an additive multicultural frame, bits and pieces storied as exotic difference from the cultures of the Other are available to those of the colonizing culture for extraction and spectacle" (Stark, 2023, p. 48). Similarly, Hess (2014) argues that within a liberal framework, the "inclusion of 'outside' musics and activities in the curriculum generally consists of appropriated versions of the activity that exists in the exterior; this altered version often serves to reinscribe the ensemble paradigm as the dominant centre" (p. 242). Although Robin argues that this music "was part of [their students'] experience," what this fails to consider is that this piece functions as an appropriated

spectacle that reinforces the dominant center and the racialized "Other." Robin justifies their use of the song because students "appreciated the scale," yet the very notion of appreciating the scale is one that decontextualizes music by promoting an aesthetic philosophy of music education based on objectivity and universality. In other words, because the music is understood as a decontextualized object meant to be appreciated, "Snake Charmer" is presented as a justice-oriented way to connect with students despite its appropriating, stereotypical, and arguably degrading nature.

Additionally, like most other research participants, Cam recognizes the dominance of white men within the concert band setting: "We always talk in the band world about having this sort of colonial repertoire that we're kind of like, oh, the old white guys composed this." However, Cam goes on to argue how they have struggled with this notion of diversifying repertoire because it potentially excludes what they consider important and valuable music within the Western classical tradition:

> And I've struggled a bit with, there's people who say, "well you can't perform Percy Grainger, that's off the table." And it's difficult . . . it's part of music history, you know. Not all of the, we can't put the genie back in the bottle. So where we are is where we are because of all the things that happened before. So I try to teach from that perspective. It's like, good and bad, this is what's happened in music and it's our responsibility to learn all of it, as much of it as we can.

Notably, Percy Grainger was an early 20th century composer and pianist known not only for his music, but also for being a fervent white supremacist, anti-Semite, and eugenicist who promoted a variety of explicitly racist projects based on his beliefs about the superiority of the "Nordic" race and music (Kirby, 2021; Pear, 2000). Although Cam is correct in that "we can't put the

genie back in the bottle," music educators' engagement with incredibly problematic historical figures does not need to involve celebrating them through the performance of their music. Therefore, by not challenging the harmful ideologies of individuals such as Percy Grainger in a liberal attempt of ensuring "balance" within the music classroom, Cam retains the inherently racist and colonial nature of Western classical music. Cam goes on to say:

> And so that's challenging, is to say, I think in this movement to represent underrepresented, we have to walk this delicate balance of respecting the history from where we've come. I don't think band music is the devil because it is an eastern European history. It does have that history, but I think we can take this art form and do more with it than we once thought, if that makes sense. And so I think that's the struggle now is how do you respect where we've come from and have an open heart to where we can go.

Essential to enacting SJE in the music education context is exposing sociohistoric relations of power and the ways that injustice and oppression are manifest within and through music. Cam's reluctance to address and challenge how racism is embodied by the music they perform—based in the belief that "it's our responsibility to learn all of it" and "respecting the history from where we've come"—reconstitutes the concert band setting as a fundamentally racist space despite partially working to destabilize the dominance of white men. Gaztambide-Fernández et al. (2018) discuss this topic at length:

> As a field, the arts in education has been late to reckon with its racist past and white supremacist present. . . . There has been a general reluctance among arts educators and researchers to recognize, theorize, and address the ways in which the arts operate in relation to and are implicated in white supremacy. (p. 2)

Ultimately, even though the inclusion of diverse musics and musical practices is stated as central to most study participants' perceptions of SJE, many construct this inclusion in a liberal, multicultural, additive, and sometimes problematic manner, thereby (re)centering the dominant musical paradigm and excluding students' diverse cultural practices.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

Data analysis of the two themes, including the hegemony of the Western classical ensemble paradigm and the salience of liberal discourses of SJE, assists in coming to know and respond to my research questions about music educators' perceptions of SJE. Therefore, in this chapter, I will interrogate study participants' perceptions of SJE in light of the three research sub-questions. Ultimately, I will argue that despite music educators' best intentions, efforts to enact social change in the music education context may inadvertently embody oppressive potential.

Conceptualizations of Social Justice Education

The first research sub-question is: How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators conceptualize SJE? Research participants conceptualize SJE in three main ways, including ensuring instrument access, diversifying repertoire, and engaging in critical discussions with students about social justice issues and topics. Instrument access is a primary component of what it means to construct an inclusive music learning environment because if students do not have access, they will be unable to fully participate in music learning experiences. However, some research participants position the notion of instrument access as the totality of what it means to enact SJE. In so doing, these music educators fail to engage in justice-oriented music pedagogies and practices which leaves the colonial music education status quo unchallenged. Moreover, many participants position the notion of instrument access within a liberal paradigm of distributive justice. This liberal framing of SJE does not account for structural inequities and sociohistoric relations of power. Instead, it emphasizes the notion of equality based on the myth of constructing a "level playing field" for all. This results in study participants' perpetuating a discourse of salvationism wherein poor and racialized students as constructed as deficient,

lacking, and "Other" and are therefore in need of help. However, the "help" that is offered is (mandated) inclusion into a colonial model of music making via the Western classical ensemble paradigm.

Diversifying repertoire is the most common conceptualization of SJE according to interviews with research participants. Including diverse repertoire that represents students is an important aspect of engaging in modes of music education that sustain students' cultural practices and identities (Alim & Paris, 2017). This student-centered and culturally relevant pedagogical practice empowers students through the inclusion of their lived experiences, prior knowledge, interests, and preferences through music (Hamilton, 2021). Additionally, engaging in repertoire that is more representative of students allows music to function as a mirror that can reflect back and give voice to how students are potentially impacted by oppression, injustice, and unequal power relations (Jorgensen, 2015; Kertz-Welzel, 2022). However, this notion of SJE is taken up in superficial and liberal ways through an additive multicultural framework. Participants perpetuate an aesthetic philosophy of music education that valorizes the object of music above the relational act of musicking through an emphasis on ensuring "high standards" within all repertoire learned. Yet the standards to which participants hold diverse repertoire to is dominated by Western musical sensibilities, practices, and values which are not necessarily shared by other cultures. In other words, diverse repertoire that is more representative of students is positioned as supplemental and not foundational to study participants' music education contexts rooted in the Western music aesthetic.

Finally, many study participants discuss the notion of engaging in critical dialogue with students about social justice issues and topics. This is arguably one of the most important features of SJE because, unlike superficial celebrations of diversity through additive

multicultural frameworks, critical dialogue affords students the opportunity to come to know the social conditions in which they live for the purposing of transforming those conditions (Freire, 1968/2000; Picower, 2012a). Without explicit dialogue with students regarding issues of power, privilege, and oppression, students are not encouraged to engage in conscientization which veils and masks the processes that perpetuate inequity and injustice in their lives. However, owing to the time constraints that all study participants discuss due to the regulating discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm, critical and explicit dialogue about social justice is situated on the periphery for some participants and outside the bounds of what music education should entail for others. Critical discussions with students are thus only engaged with opportunistically despite the fact that many study participants identify how Eurocentric music education practices and values perpetuate the dominance of white men. Further, there is no discussion in the interviews of any direct action resulting from critical dialogue with students. Therefore, one of the most powerful forms of engaging in SJE, praxis—the recursive interplay between critical reflection and action in order to transform the world—is marginalized and devalued in the endless quest of developing students' technical skills and musical abilities in order to pursue performance excellence.

Importance of Social Justice Education

The second research sub-question is: How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators understand the importance of SJE in relation to their roles as music educators? Importantly, SJE is understood to be a positive concept by study participants as they understand it and almost every participant centered their ethical responsibility to make a meaningful difference in the world as a music educator. However, because of the salience of liberal discourses of SJE and the attendant invisibilization of unequal power relations and systemic inequities, study participants'

good intentions can be interpreted as a settler move to innocence (Mawhinney, 1998; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Put differently, by not attending to the ways in which individuals in power (including music educators) are implicated in injustice through their power and privilege, participants potentially uphold particular forms of oppression premised on colonial relations through their music education practices and values.

From this basis of good intentions as a settler move to innocence, how study participants understand the importance of SJE is both constructed within and constrained by the dominant discourses of the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm. In other words, because study participants are regulated by the expectation and normalized understanding that to be a Grade 7 to 12 music educator is to focus first and foremost on skill development and performance excellence, the importance of SJE in relation to their roles as music educators is diminished and devalued. This is evidenced by study participants only engaging in SJE tacitly, implicitly, and opportunistically because it would otherwise take time away from the centrality of "music making." Thus, manifest through their pedagogical emphases on skill development and performance excellence, study participants understand—whether consciously or unconsciously—SJE to be much less important than developing students' musical technical proficiencies. As such, SJE is positioned as marginal to their perceived primary roles and responsibilities as music educators within the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm.

Curricular Connections to Social Justice Education

The third research sub-question is: How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators understand the connections between social justice, music education, and the Kindergarten to Grade 8 Music or Grades 9 to 12 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework? The "Connecting" and "Responding" essential learning areas are highlighted by almost all study participants as

having the most natural connection to SJE due to their emphases on developing contextual understandings regarding the social, cultural, and historical significance of music as well as critically reflecting to inform music learning and to develop agency and identity, respectively. However, due to the time constraints experienced by all study participants as a result of the regulating discourses of the Western classical ensemble paradigm, they are transparent that they do not engage in these curricular areas in substantive, robust, and meaningful ways. Put differently, what is perceived as the most obvious ways to connect SJE and the music curriculum are simply not enacted. Additionally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the "Creating" essential learning area is largely avoided by almost all study participants because it does not fit within the traditional bounds of the Western classical ensemble paradigm. As such, there is even less emphasis on how creativity potentially connects to SJE throughout the interviews.

The "Making" essential learning area, discursively constructed by study participants as foundational to music education in Manitoba, receives the vast majority of music educators' time, attention, and energy. Centered on developing the languages and practices necessary for making music and manifest through the discourses of skill development and performance excellence, study participants are generally unable to connect music making with SJE beyond liberal conceptions of instrument access. As a result, SJE is once again situated outside of what it means to be a music educator. In sum, the curricular areas where study participants understand the strongest link to SJE are relegated to the periphery. Conversely, the curriculum area with the weakest perceived link to SJE is the one that dominates the Manitoba music education landscape.

Musicking for Social Change? Or Social Reproduction?

As discussed, study participants' perceptions of SJE perpetuate liberal understandings of social justice through their discursive emphases on salvationism, tolerance, neutrality, and

equality. Further, their perceptions of SJE are both constructed within and constrained by the regulating discourses of skill development and performance excellence within the Western classical ensemble paradigm. This has multiple consequences for students, music learning communities, and attempts to enact social change through music education.

First, the constant centering of Western art music largely composed by white men in the Manitoba music education context excludes students' diverse cultures and musics. This results in students not *hearing* themselves represented in the curriculum which functions as a disempowering experience, the very opposite of what SJE vis-à-vis music education attempts to achieve. Relatedly, the ascendency of colonial musical epistemologies manifest through the dominance of Western notation excludes aural traditions foundational to many non-Western musical cultures. This marginalizes the values, perspectives, and voices of non-dominant musicians, composers, and artists who often music from and through their lived experiences of systemic inequities and injustices.

Second, the daily reinscription of colonial modes of musicking based solely on "music making" according to the Western music aesthetic dismisses the transformative potential of other forms of musicking such as creating, connecting, and responding. Specifically, musicking in these ways provides opportunities for students to critically engage with, from, and through music as a vehicle for social change. Additionally, restricting music education merely to skill development and performance excellence concretizes a director-led music education paradigm that perpetuates a hierarchical model of teacher-student relations. This strips students of their power, agency, and (musical) voice, all necessary components of SJE.

Third, participants' perceptions of SJE privilege an aesthetic philosophy of music education wherein music, understood as an object, is valued more than both students and

musicking, the inherently contextual and relational process of engaging in musics through human interaction. This fundamentally diminishes the potential of musicking as social change because it invisibilizes the power relations and sociocultural underpinnings that give meaning to musical experiences. It also marginalizes students themselves, especially if students do not possess the musical capital necessary to fully participate in the Western classical ensemble paradigm since they are unable to conform to the colonial standards expected by their aesthetically-minded music teachers.

Fourth, liberal conceptions of SJE fail to critique systemic inequities and unjust power relations. By not accounting for how both students and musics are positioned unequally because of sociohistoric relations of power, attempts at ameliorating injustice within a liberal framework only focuses on the immediate consequences rather than actively challenging the power structures and discourses that produce them. Moreover, by failing to engage in explicit and intentional teaching for and about social justice, students are not afforded the opportunity to come to know, name, and act upon how injustice is potentially manifest in their lives and communities.

Fifth, through their privileging of cognitive engagements with music, music education, and social justice, participants neglect to engage with SJE vis-à-vis music education affectively. This erases what is arguably most unique, powerful, and potentially transformative about music education: the ability to help students hear, feel, and engage with and through music in embodied, emotional ways.

Sixth, without emphasizing and taking (musical) action, social justice becomes, at best, confined to the classroom. As such, music education is currently not engaged with for the purpose of fostering and encouraging student activism which an essential component of SJE. If

there is no action toward a better future based on critical understandings of systemic inequities and structural oppression, then the status quo is continually perpetuated. Taking musical action can occur through a myriad of musicking activities, including creating, composing, arranging, and performing.

Ultimately, this study is significant in coming to know how Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators' perceptions of SJE may work to secure settler futurity, naturalize white supremacy, and normalize coloniality. This study demonstrates that music education—even that which is enacted in the name of social justice—can function as a negative and harmful experience for equity-seeking students and communities. In other words, study participants' attempts at musicking for social change may potentially function as musicking for social reproduction. Therefore, despite music educators' best intentions, efforts to enact social change in the music education context may inadvertently embody oppressive potential.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

Recognizing the ways in which Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators' perceptions of SJE potentially perpetuate the status quo, I will conclude with two suggestions for justice-oriented music educators when attempting to enact SJE in their teaching context as well as potential areas for future research. In particular, I will discuss how moving beyond liberal conceptions of SJE as well as how moving toward a praxial philosophy of music education may allow for more robust, substantive enactments of SJE not beholden to the Western classical ensemble paradigm.

Moving Beyond Liberalism

Liberal conceptions of social justice permeate study participants' understandings of SJE which results in the invisibilization of sociohistoric relations of power and the normalization of coloniality. However, it is arguable to what extent participants are cognizant of their liberal approaches. Indeed, multiple interviewees discuss how they are unsure what exactly social justice might entail with some expressing a desire for more education on the topic. It is only through analyzing their interview responses that liberal discourses centered on salvationism, neutrality, tolerance, and equality become evident.

Spruce (2017) outlines three consequences resulting from a "lack of clear conceptual and theoretical underpinning for the relationship between music education and social justice" (p. 723). First, participants' generic and undertheorized conceptions of social justice—constructed largely within the liberal tradition—results in the inability to both argue for and enact the very justice-oriented ideals they purport to embody. Second, theoretical ambiguity renders the term "social justice" vulnerable to appropriation which can in turn promote models of music education that work against the ideals of equity and justice. In this vein, Bonnycastle (2011)

warns that such "conceptual vagueness may actually support the prevailing realities of social injustice" (p. 268). Third, the appropriation of social justice within the Western classical ensemble paradigm has the potential to veil and silence more radical music education paradigms and social justice discourses. Critiquing the taken-for-granted nature of dominant music education discourses, Regelski (2020) argues that music educators are either unable or unwilling:

> To undertake the kind of personal and professional ideology critique that can identify dysfunctional paradigms, taken for granted assumptions, biases and unwarranted personal theories, and other such impediments to bringing about praxial results for typical students. Instead, too many become complacent followers of the status quo. . . . They derive a certain solace from the predictability of their routines and continue in the same patterns—despite the fact that actual results often contradict the values or "goods" claimed by their curricular assumptions. (p. 27)

Following Regelski, I contend that music educators need a better understanding of social justice and SJE not rooted in taken-for-granted liberal frameworks. Drawing on Hess (2014), I suggest that music educators move beyond liberalism and toward a critical framework by: (a) recognizing, critiquing, and working to undo systemic inequities, structural oppression, and unequal power relations with students, (b) rejecting additive multicultural approaches that reinscribe the centrality of colonial repertoire and pedagogies, (c) embodying a multicentric curriculum wherein multiple musics, ways of musicking, and musical epistemologies are appropriately contextualized, enacted, and ascribed value and meaning, and (d) explicitly teaching for and about injustice, power, and privilege through music for the purpose of revealing and dismantling oppression.

Moving Toward Praxialism

An aesthetic philosophy of music education dominates the Manitoba music education landscape. Arguably, it is the longstanding Eurocentric belief in the objective value and beauty of Western art music that undergirds and provides justification for the hegemony of the Western classical ensemble paradigm in Manitoba. Moreover, most Manitoba music educators' formal training is positioned almost exclusively within the Western classical ensemble paradigm, beginning in Kindergarten and extending through elementary music, secondary music, and university music programs. Manitoba music educators are therefore so deeply entrenched in aesthetic and colonial music education models that it is naturalized and normalized. Yet as discussed, an aesthetic philosophy of music education alongside and within the Western classical ensemble paradigm precludes SJE. Therefore, inspired by the ongoing work of the MayDay Group—an international community of music educators, researchers, and theorists who combine critical theory/ies with music education (Bates, 2016; McCarthy & Goble, 2002; Regelski, 2020)—I suggest that a praxial philosophy of music education may help in pursuing more equitable and just ways of engaging in music education (Elliott & Silverman, 2015).

As discussed in Chapter 2, praxialism in music education posits that music does not exist objectively and underscores the inherently relational nature of all musical experiences. In other words, the meaning and value of music does not reside in the notes themselves, but rather in the unique ways that humans engage with and make meaning through socially and culturally specific musicking activities. In this way, music education experiences are underpinned by the sociocultural contexts in which they are enacted. Indeed, engaging with the social, historical, political, and cultural conditions in which music is created, exists, and ascribed meaning is essential to praxialism, lest these foundational conditions become decontextualized and invisibilized.

Through a praxial philosophy of music education, justice-oriented music educators are better situated to: (a) reject the colonial underpinnings of the Western classical ensemble paradigm built on an aesthetic philosophy of music education, and (b) attend to unequal power relations as well as systemic inequities and injustices present in music, music education, and students' lives. As Allsup and Shieh (2012) remind us: "The moment we accept that music teaching is more than the teaching of sound and sound patterns alone—that there is something non-neutral about music that requires our moral engagement—we enter into the realm of a public pedagogy" (p. 51) centered on naming and transforming the world through music education. This praxial approach recognizes the inherently political nature of music education and that all musics, musickers, ways of musicking, and musical epistemologies are informed by and exist within power relations. Thus, a praxial framework can work to decenter the dominance of colonial modes of musicking and the Western art tradition based on the understanding that all musics are inherently valuable because they are all meaningful within specific social and cultural contexts. Ultimately, by embodying a praxial philosophy of music education, "music educators can *diminish their teaching of music*—as the study of objects of art to be appreciated aesthetically—and *increase their teaching of musicking*—as dynamic human behavior" (Goble, 2021, p. 12) in the pursuit of social justice.

Suggestions for Future Research

Notably, this study focused on Grade 7 to 12 school music educators' *perceptions* of SJE. What this study was unable to engage with was music educators' in-class *practices* of SJE. Therefore, further research that moves beyond music educators' perceptions of SJE and into the domain of justice-oriented classroom practices may prove beneficial in coming to know how SJE is enacted in the music classroom and the resulting impacts of this enactment.

Additionally, as a result of my positionality and lived experiences as a Grade 7-12 music educator, this study intentionally centered the perceptions of Grade 7 to 12 school music educators rather than Kindergarten to Grade 6 school music educators (or post-secondary music educators). However, Kindergarten to Grade 6 school music educators in Manitoba use the same curriculum framework as Grade 7 and 8 music educators which coheres and aligns with the Grades 9 to 12 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework. As a result, all Kindergarten to Grade 12 school music educators in Manitoba are working within curriculum frameworks that share the essential learning areas of Making, Creating, Connecting, and Responding. Therefore, further research that involves Manitoba elementary school music educators may prove beneficial in coming to know what discourses and paradigmatic assumptions construct and constrain Kindergarten to Grade 6 school music educators' perceptions (and practices) of SJE. This future research could also critically examine how Kindergarten to Grade 6 music educators' perceptions of SJE differ from Grade 7 to 12 school music educators based on the unique nature of elementary music education for the purpose of strengthening all music educators' justice-oriented musical practices and pedagogies.

In Closing

Returning to my opening paragraph in Chapter 1, we are indeed in the midst of multiple ongoing crises with a future shrouded in uncertainty. However, as Downey (2022) rightfully argues, "this moment demands a project of curricular futurity in the face of imminent precarity. What is needed today is creative response-ability, dreaming, and the envisionment of new curricular possibilities" (p. 24). As is evidenced throughout this research study, music educators in Manitoba are largely constrained by the hegemonic Western classical ensemble paradigm and its concomitant discourses of skill development and performance excellence. The dominance of

this paradigm constructs SJE outside the bounds of what is possible in music education and relegates the pursuit of justice and equity to the periphery. In so doing, Eurocentric musical practices and values are continually (re)centered at the expense of non-Western musics along with potentially transformative ways of musicking. Moreover, the pervasive nature of participants' liberal discourses of social justice invisibilize unequal power relations and normalize coloniality. By not engaging in explicit critiques and actions to address how inequity, injustice, and oppression are manifest in students' lives, music education—even that which is done in the name of social justice—is at risk of propagating colonial relations premised on white supremacy. Put differently, efforts to enact social change in the music classroom may inadvertently perpetuate the colonial status quo despite music educators' best intentions.

In conclusion, I turn to a quote from Jamie which provides a summary of both music education's transformative capacity as well as its oppressive potential. Jamie cautions: "I also think music has the potential to do some positive things and it also has the potential to do some very damaging things depending on how we teach it or how we engage with our students." If music educators are to enact a substantive form of SJE through their teaching beyond merely the scope of "good intentions," they must disrupt the hegemony of the Western classical ensemble paradigm and challenge taken-for-granted liberal discourses of social justice. Only then will music educators be able to engage in "creative response-ability, dreaming, and the envisionment of new curricular possibilities" necessary for working toward a more equitable and just future both in and through music education.

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Appendices

Appendix A: MMEA Conditional Study Approval

MANITOBA MUSIC EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION MANITOBAINE DES EDUCATEURS DE MUSIQUE
191 Harcourt Street Winnipeg MB R3J 3H2 / Phone (204) 888-7961

March 3, 2023

RE: Conditional Approval of Research Study

Dear Mr. Justin Fraser,

This letter is to inform you that the Manitoba Music Educators' Association has conditionally approved your research study. Upon successful University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board approval, we agree to act as a third-party to recruit participants for your research study.

Sincerely,

Janet Yochim

Janet Yochim
President, MMEA

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter

Subject Title: Music Education and Social Justice Research Study

Dear Music Education Colleague,

We are inviting you to participate in a research study titled "Musicking for Social Change: Music Educators' Perceptions of Social Justice Education." We hope that this study will ignite critical conversations and deepen our understandings of the relationship between music education and social justice.

All currently practicing Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators are eligible to participate in this study.

Potential study participants will participate in a 30-60 minute semi-structured virtual interview. There are minimal risks to participating in this study. Participation is entirely voluntary, there is no penalty for not participating, and participants may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. All interview responses will be kept confidential.

If you are interested in participating in a 30-60 minute virtual interview for this study, please contact Justin Fraser at [redacted] for further information and next steps.

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry campus. If you have any further questions regarding the study, please contact:

Principal Investigator:
Justin Fraser
Graduate Student
Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
[redacted]

Research Supervisor:
Dr. Beryl Peters
Director of Practicum & Partnerships Office and Assistant Professor
Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
[redacted]

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Musicking for Social Change:
Music Educators' Perceptions of Social Justice Education

The following list constitutes possible interview questions. Because the interview will be semi-structured, this list is not exhaustive, nor will all questions necessarily be asked.

Please tell me about yourself, including the grade levels and music areas you teach, how long you have been teaching, and anything else you want to share about yourself or your teaching context.

How would you describe or define social justice education?

Why are you interested in social justice education? (I.e. Why is this an important topic for you?)

How do you understand social justice education in relation to your role as a music educator? (I.e. What does social justice education mean to you as a music educator in your specific context?)

How do you understand the connection between social justice education and the Manitoba music curriculum, if at all?

- Do you find it easier to connect social justice education to any particular essential learning areas? Why?
- Do you find it difficult to connect social justice education to any particular essential learning areas? Why?

What, if any, social justice themes or topics do you explore the most through your music teaching?

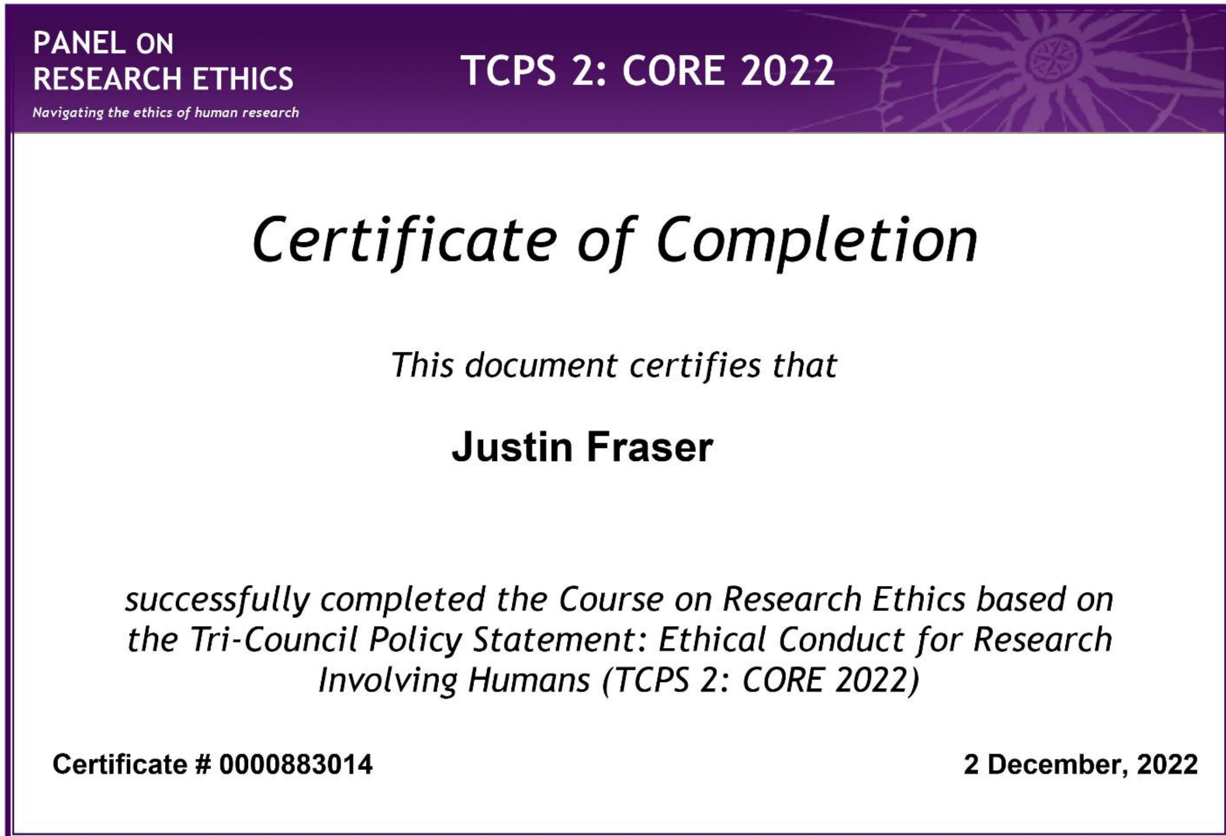
- Why do you explore those topics the most?
- If any, are there any social justice themes or topics that you do not currently explore that you would like to engage with more in the future?

How comfortable are you practicing social justice education in your specific teaching context?

- If anything, what motivates or inspires you to work toward social justice through your music teaching?
- What, if any, barriers or challenges do you experience when attempting to practice social justice education within your music teaching context?
  - What, if anything, would help and support you remove these barriers or overcome those challenges?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me that we have not yet discussed?

Appendix D: TCPS2 Core 2022 Certificate of Completion



Appendix E: Ethics Approval

University of Manitoba | Research Ethics and Compliance

Human Ethics - Fort Garry
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2
T: 204 474 8872
humanethics@umanitoba.ca

PROTOCOL APPROVAL

Effective: July 28, 2023 Expiry: July 27, 2024

Principal Investigator: Justin Fraser
Advisor(s): Beryl Peters
Protocol Number: HE2023-0198
Protocol Title: *Musicking for Social Change: Music Educators' Perceptions of Social Justice Education*

Cameron Hauseman, Acting Chair, REB2

Research Ethics Board 2 has reviewed and approved the above research. The Human Ethics Office (HEO) is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*- TCPS 2 (2022).

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

i. Approval is granted for the research and purposes described in the protocol only.

ii. Any changes to the protocol or research materials must be approved by the HEO before implementation.

iii. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be reported to the HEO immediately through an REB Event.

iv. This approval is valid for one year only. A Renewal Request must be submitted and approved prior to the above expiry date.

v. A Protocol Closure must be submitted to the HEO when the research is complete or if the research is terminated.

vi. The University of Manitoba may request to audit your research documentation to confirm compliance with this approved protocol, and with the UM *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*Ethics of Research Involving Humans policies and procedures.

Appendix F: Ethics Amendment Approval

Research Ethics and Compliance

Human Ethics - Fort Garry
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2
T: 204 474 8872
humanethics@umanitoba.ca

AMENDMENT APPROVAL

November 22, 2023

Principal Investigator:	Justin Fraser
Advisor(s):	Beryl Peters
Protocol Number:	HE2023-0198
Protocol Title:	*Musicking for Social Change: Music Educators' Perceptions of Social Justice Education*

Cameron Hauseman, Acting Chair, REB2

Research Ethics Board 2 has reviewed and approved your Amendment Request submitted on November 17, 2023 to the above-noted protocol. The Human Ethics Office (HEO) is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*- TCPS 2 (2022).

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

i. Approval is granted for this amendment only.

ii. Any further changes to the protocol require subsequent amendment approvals from the HEO before implementation.

iii. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be reported to the HEO immediately through an REB Event.

iv. Amendment Approvals do not change the protocol expiry date. Please refer to the original Protocol Approval or subsequent Renewal Approvals for the protocol expiry date.

Appendix G: Consent Form

Research Project Title: Musicking for Social Change: Music Educators' Perceptions of Social Justice Education

Principal Investigator: Justin Fraser
Graduate Student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
[redacted]
[redacted]

Research Supervisor: Dr. Beryl Peters
Director of Practicum & Partnerships Office and Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
[redacted]
[redacted]

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of the Research
The purpose of this research study is to critically explore Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators' perceptions of social justice education. More specifically, this study will explore:

- How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators conceptualize social justice education?
- How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators understand the importance of social justice education in relation to their roles as music educators?
- How do Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba music educators understand the connections between social justice, music education, and the Kindergarten to Grade 8 Music or Grades 9 to 12 Music: Manitoba Curriculum Framework?

Rationale for the Study
This study seeks to:

- Highlight Manitoba music educators' perceptions of social justice education.
- Ignite critical conversations regarding the discourses of and relationships between social justice and music education.
- Inform professional practice by illuminating the justice-oriented methods and pedagogies enacted by Manitoba music educators.
- Fill gaps in existing scholarly literature on music education and social justice.

Participants

Participants will include a maximum of 12 currently practicing Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators.

Participant Selection and Study Procedures
Beginning October 2023, an invitation to participate in this research study will be emailed to all currently practicing Grade 7 to 12 Manitoba school music educators by the Manitoba Music Educators' Association (MMEA). This email invitation will outline the purpose and rationale of the study, eligibility criteria, ethical considerations, instructions for how to participate, and contact information for the Principal Investigator and Research Supervisor.

Potential participants who are willing to participate in a 30-60 minute semi-structured virtual interview will contact the Principal Investigator who will respond with follow-up information and a Consent Form. The first 12 individuals that respond with a completed Consent Form will be chosen as study participants.

Recording Devices
Using the recording function within Microsoft Teams, the Principal Investigator will audio-video record the interview. Notably, only the audio recording will be used for data analysis. If participants wish to only be audio-recorded, they have the option of turning their video off before the interview. Even though the video will not be used for data analysis, to maintain participant confidentiality, all audio-video data will be securely stored on the University of Manitoba's Microsoft OneDrive, a password protected, multi-factor authentication, cloud storage system.

Benefits
Participating in this study has no direct benefit. However, participants will benefit by contributing their unique personal experiences, beliefs, and perceptions to a broader conversation about social justice and music education. Further, participants will indirectly benefit by developing a greater awareness of the importance of social justice in music education.

Risks
There are minimal risks to participating in this study. If participants find that sharing their experiences in the context of the interview is distressing or upsetting, they have the right to abstain from responding to a particular question or questions, ending the interview, and/or withdrawing entirely from the study.

Please note that the researchers are legally required to report allegations of abuse of children or persons in care to legal authorities if discovered during the course of the study.

Confidentiality and Data Storage
No participant names or identifying information will be used in the sharing and dissemination of results. Gender neutral pseudonyms will be assigned to all study participants during the data analysis stage in order to protect participant confidentiality. Participants will not be informed of their pseudonym. Only the Principal Investigator and Research Supervisor will have access to the data. All data will be stored on the University of Manitoba's Microsoft OneDrive, a password protected, multi-factor authentication, cloud storage system.

Because Microsoft is subject to American laws, USA authorities under provisions of the Patriot Act may access data communicated or stored using Microsoft software. However, risks associated with

participation are minimal and are similar to those associated with many email and social media websites.

Participant Rights: Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal
The Principal Investigator also serves as a board member of the Manitoba Music Educators' Association. However, despite this dual role, a participant's decision to take part in this study is entirely voluntary and there is no penalty for not participating. Participants may withdraw from the study verbally, by phone, or through email to either the Principal Investigator or Research Supervisor at any time—including before, during, or after the interview—without consequence. If participants withdraw from the study, their data will be deleted immediately. Notably, participants will not be able to withdraw from the study after data analysis has commenced in January 2024.

Debriefing
If study participants wish to receive a brief, non-technical, one page summary of research results, they may check the appropriate box at the end of this form and indicate which format they wish to receive it in (email or mail). Study participants can expect to receive the summary of research results in March 2024.

Dissemination and Sharing Results
The results of this study will be compiled into a master's thesis and shared in a formal public defense. The final written thesis will be accessible through the University of Manitoba's digital repository, MSpace. Additionally, there may be subsequent presentations of this study to a broader educational audience. Results may be shared at conferences, at education workshops, as part of teaching resources, as published articles in journals and magazines, on education websites, and in books. In all cases, pseudonyms will be used to protect participant anonymity.

Disposal of Data
All data—including audio-video recordings and transcriptions—will be stored for a 7-year period until October 2030. After this time, all data will be deleted.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry campus. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Officer at 204-474-7122 or humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Printed Name: ____

Participant's Signature: ___________________________________ Date: __________________

We intend to quote your words directly in reports and publications resulting from this study. However, we will only use pseudonyms and your real name will not be used or published. Please indicate if you agree to being quoted under this condition by checking "yes" or "no" below (recognizing that you will become ineligible for this study if you do not consent to be quoted directly).

- Yes, I agree to be quoted directly if a made-up name (pseudonym) is used.
- No, I do not agree to be quoted directly if a made-up name (pseudonym) is used.

An audio-video recording of the interview will be collected for manual transcription and data analysis. (Note: only the audio from the interview will be used for this study and you have the option of turning your video off before the recording). Recognizing that you will become ineligible for this study if you do not consent to the interview being recorded, please indicate if you consent to the interview being audio-video recorded:

- Yes, I consent to the interview being audio-video recorded.
- No, I do not consent to the interview being audio-video recorded.

If you wish to receive a brief, non-technical, one-page summary of research results, please check the appropriate box below:

- I would like to receive a summary of results by email. My email address is:

____

- I would like to receive a summary of results by Canada Post. My mailing address is:

____

____