EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN EVERY CLASSROOM OF THE SCHOOL

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EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN EVERY CLASSROOM OF THE SCHOOL (83 pp.)

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The purpose of this thesis is to explore why schools ought to educate for sustainability in response to the climate emergency. Moreover, the author explores why the elementary school is an appropriate place to begin such education as well as how such education can be implemented in the field of music education, specifically elementary music education. The research questions for this thesis are as follows: (1) Why should schools educate for sustainability? (2) Why is elementary school an appropriate place to begin education for sustainability (EfS)? (3) Why is the general music classroom a worthy space for EfS?

The author uses social and educational theory, philosophy, and findings from other research to answer these questions. This thesis reviews and synthesizes research, theory, and philosophy from various foundational disciplines. This thesis concludes that EfS ought to be included in the school and begin at the elementary level. Every subject

and teacher ought to consider how their subject might help attune students to nature and its protection for the sake of our love for the world, our subjects, and teaching. This thesis specifically explores and argues for EfS in the general music classroom, but practitioners in every field ought to consider EfS in their subject's context.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I believe the climate emergency is the crisis of our time because of the impact it has and will further have on all life—human and non-human. I believe at the forefront of decision making and agenda-setting in every corporation and governing body should be sustainable development and education. Boards of education and schools are certainly no exception, and I argue they are vital in transforming society into sustainable living that will allow for the continuation of life, newness of life, and the learning of our students. I argue that classroom teachers themselves, working collaboratively with one another, across disciplines and subjects—through considering and drawing from their love for those subjects; for learning and for teaching—should educate for sustainability. All the arts and sciences, including music, can attune students to ideas, feelings, and understandings and teach social and political skills necessary for a sustainable and democratic world.

The climate emergency must be considered and addressed in every realm of society. Education is a central realm in which the old generation passes the world on to the new (Vlieghe & Zamojski, 2019). In order to pass the world on in a just way, society and education must be grounded in reality and must provide a space for the new generation to imagine and dream for their own futures. The reality is that there are other serious issues worldwide which threaten and terrorize human and non-human lives everyday, such as war, poverty, extremism, hate, genocide, misinformation and disinformation, and the like. However, I believe that the climate emergency warrants supremacy at this very moment because of its global influence, from which no part of society is safe.

This thesis explores the *why* of educating for sustainability in schools, but also more specifically within elementary schools and the general music classroom. I chose this topic because of its potential to do something good. At the very least, this journey of researching and writing, making connections and finding tensions has helped me grow as an educator and scholar. When addressing contemporary issues in education, I have learned to go down to the foundation, the root. *Why* do we have schooling? *Why* do we have the arts? *What* ought we do with them? *How* can schools help society be better? *Why* are schools important in the moment and time which students are within them; focusing on the present in these spaces? At most, this journey could lead me to research and write more about schooling assisting in sustainable development and education. It could help me start conversations in my school and community that can help us live more sustainably and educate our students on how and why to do so.

This thesis explores why the elementary school and specifically general music classroom are good spaces for education for sustainability (EfS)[1] in response to the anthropocene and climate emergency. I use social and educational theory, philosophy, and findings from other research to answer this question. This paper reviews and synthesizes research, theory, and philosophy from various foundational disciplines. The research questions for this thesis are as follows:

1. Why should schools educate for sustainability?
2. Why is elementary school an appropriate place to begin EfS?
3. Why is the general music classroom a worthy space for EfS?

My argument is that schools ought to hold the climate emergency at the center of their mission. Every educator, regardless of subject, should include educating for

[1] Education for Sustainability (EfS) is a phrasing/concept introduced to me by Davis (2015) and the authors of various chapters in her book.

sustainability in their teaching. Schools should operate in sustainable ways, setting an example for their communities and their students (ie. food waste reduction, composting, “green” energy, single-use waste reduction, “green” transportation, etc.). Elementary schools should work to connect students to nature, giving them the time to love it and grow to protect it. Music educators should take good advantage of the power of their subject to bring students together, share ideas, generate ideas, connect to their world and to each other, and to make the *memory* that the world is worthy of our care.

I believe there is an absence of explicit instruction for sustainability and sustainable operations by schools; but noteworthy, too, is the decline in the frequency and depth of which individuals and groups interact with nature (Kesebir & Kesebir, 2017). Some philosophers of education believe that teachers and schools working to connect students to nature and leading them to love it could lead to them protecting it in their futures (Säfström & Östman, 2020). This is an opportunity for the arts, including music, to attune students to nature—to connect with it and to hopefully lead them to love it.

My initial research regarding education and the climate emergency led me to research and theory regarding elementary education specifically, and my role as an elementary general music teacher led me to wonder how music educators like me could be a part of the effort. I believe musicking can be transformational and meaningful for those who partake. Musicking is “the present participle, or gerund, of the verb to music” (Small, p. 9, 1998); more on this later in the thesis. But for now–I believe the acts of making and experiencing music bring people closer together, share ideas, and concentrate ideas in a way that slows down time, expands on the ideas, and offers creative ways for people to respond and make meaning within the context of their own

lives. I believe the elementary school is where the most playful and interdisciplinary musicking should take place. And thus again I pose: why? Why the school to address the climate emergency? Why is the elementary school, and specifically general music classroom, an appropriate and worthey space for education for sustainability (EfS)?

The structure of this thesis begins with exploring why schools ought to educate for sustainability. I consider the foundational aims of mass schooling and its purpose. This is followed by a discussion of why the elementary years are an appropriate time to begin education for sustainability. I discuss elementary schools which are already implementing comprehensive education for sustainability. Finally, I explore the roles of music education and music in responding to the climate emergency and educating for sustainability and how music may better attune students to attitudes of sustainability better than other subjects alone. This chapter on music education and music is an example for educators in all fields. Music is my speciality and the subject I love. However, it is one of many subjects in this world which we love. I argue that because of teacher's love for learning, teaching, and the subject which they teach, EfS ought to be a focus at this moment in time; for without a habitable world to practice and continue our beloved arts and sciences, how can they continue?

Necessary, first, is to define several terms used frequently throughout this thesis. "Sustainability," as Davis (2015) writes, "remains a confused and contentious topic with no universally accepted terminology or definition" (p. 9). I use "sustainability" and not "sustainable development" intentionally, because I endorse the rationale put forth by Davis (2015) as follows:

> [Sustainability] is preferred because of the implied assumption that development equates with economic growth, and that only after economic growth is achieved

> can environmental concerns be addressed. As many in the environmental movement emphasise, supporting the growth and development of economies - especially through increasing mass consumption - in a world of finite resources and growing population is not a sustainable option… sustainability emphasises the linkages and interdependencies of the social, political, environmental and economic dimensions of human capabilities… Sustainability is essentially an issue of social justice and fairness. The causes and effects of unsustainable living are disproportionate and unevenly distributed. (p. 10)

This concept of education for sustainability includes more than a focus on economic development and preparing students to be simply capitalists and consumers with more of an environmentally-conscious mind. As Davis (2015) acknowledges, that is simply not enough. Education for sustainability includes the teaching of political and social skills for democratic participation. It includes understanding the connectedness of human life and non-human life. This thesis utilizes the concepts Davis and her co-authors' (2015) use of education for sustainability (EfS) and early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfS) to encompass and endorse this understanding.

"Nature" is used in this thesis to refer to everything not of or from humankind. This is intentional and is done with full understanding that human *nature* exists, and an argument can be made that frankly everything is ultimately of and from nature. However, the usage of nature in this thesis is done with the understanding of how mankind finds itself in this anthropocene—which recognizes the actions of humans which have led to this climate emergency. I especially endorse the fact that aims of capital accumulation by nations, corporations, and individuals have significantly contributed to this emergency.

In regard to anthropocene, I utilize the definition published by Jeong and Kaplan (2023):

> The Anthropocene (pronounced an-thruh-puh-seen) epoch refers to an unofficial unit of geological time that describes the most recent chapter in our planet's history. During this time, human activity has had a significant impact on the planet's climate and ecosystems, via increased fossil fuel consumption, nuclear weapons tests and deforestation… The Anthropocene Working Group [a collection of international scientists and academics] says it began in the middle of the 20th century. Since then, humanity has tested nuclear weapons, spewed radioactive material into the atmosphere and significantly increased consumption of fossil fuels, contributing to global warming. (The Washington Post)

It feels as though labeling any such acts of human activity - which blatantly ignored the work of the scientific community for decades and disregarded human and non-human life - as "nature," human or otherwise, would grossly misrepresent what has occurred and the state of emergency which society finds itself in. However, this is not to negate the interconnectedness which exists among all realms of society and planet earth. And, perhaps by the end of this thesis, the author and reader might recognize that, as Allen and Dawe (2016) write, "There is, to paraphrase Schama (1995), a necessary union between nature and culture, between environment and human. It is not productive to construct binaries—unless they are used heuristically, then complicated, and ultimately torn down" (p. 10). Maybe a goal of education can be to teach as such—that "we are in fact part of, from, and nothing more than nature or the environment" (p. 10).

First, this thesis explores why the school should educate for sustainability. Beaver & Borgerding (2023) write, “Education is one strategy to prepare an informed citizenry that can contribute to individual and collective climate actions and advocate for governmental and intergovernmental climate responses (Anderson, 2012; Stevenston et al., 2017)” (p. 3). While solely instrumentalizing education and schooling to solve the world’s problems is a controversial idea, I will discuss in this thesis how I believe it should play a significant role; not as the individual institution burdened with societal change but as a central component within societal change. I argue that reducing schooling within a society to no political or social influence for positive change robs it of its power for good.

Next, this thesis examines elementary education for sustainability (EEfS) more specifically. I will argue that such education should begin during early childhood education. Citing research and testimonials, I will share how young students have demonstrated their capabilities and success learning to participate and use their voice in a democratic society.

Finally, this thesis explores the opportunity that the music classroom offers because of the subject in which it is rooted: music. Established in this thesis is a foundation for why the elementary music classroom would be a powerful and influential place for inviting students to love nature, to love the world, and to be responsible caretakers of both.

CHAPTER II

WHY EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY (EfS) IN SCHOOLS

In this section I argue why education for sustainability should take place within schooling. First I establish the purpose of school which I endorse and argue is a good foundation for this thesis. Then, this section is divided into the following arguments for educating for sustainability in schools:

1. Schools are a major developer in the identity of students and communities and sustainable life must be woven into the identity of society.
2. Schools are major institutions within local communities, and thus can serve as a "change lever" in creating "islands of decency."
3. Schools are where love for the world is conveyed and demonstrated by the teachers. It is also the place where students come to begin anew with the world. Because of these two characteristics of the school, hope can and should exist; hope for a better future, which is necessary within education for sustainability.
4. Given the reality and severity of the climate emergency, it would be cruel *not* to educate future generations for sustainability.
5. If there is a call for schools to be an institution of justice and equity (which many argue it should be), then environmental and climate justice ought to be a part of schooling.

To establish why the old generation—using the language of Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019)—should educate for sustainability in schools, I believe it is necessary to establish what I believe the purpose of schooling is. I endorse the use of "old generation" to mean those older and wiser than the pupils being educated (ie. parents and teachers are of the old generation, while children are of the new). The use of the word "schools" is

intentional because there is a difference between education and schooling. This thesis is exploring why *schools* should educate for sustainability. However, the discoveries from this thesis will apply to why a community or society at large should educate for sustainability in other spaces beyond the school. A determination as to the purpose of schooling and education is not the focus of this thesis but has been a central question for education scholars across disciplines.

I believe the purpose of schooling is to provide a commonality in the education of the young people entering society. Furthermore, I believe that it provides an opportunity for the community and greater society to set goals for the future—to bring what matters and leave the rest. I believe determining what to bring can be found when considering what is loved. I lean on Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019), who—when differentiating between political endeavors and education—write, "education can be conceived of in terms of an unconditional love for this world" (p. 2), "in which there is something that is important in and of itself – something we should care about, and that is worth of the effort of study" (p. 55). Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019) argue for a "thing-centered pedagogy" where beyond a broad love for the world, teachers also "testify to the unconditional love for a subject matter" (p. 110); for example—music, English, mathematics, etc. I echo these motivations—love for the world and love for the subject matter. That is why I have written this thesis. I say love for the world and love for the extraordinary sciences and arts we teach must demand, initiate, and sustain a redesign in the ways our society lives that are harmful to the world, to nature, and —firstly, to the poorest and the powerless among us and ultimately, to—all of us. When our world is nearly and completely inhabitable, what good will the love for anything that we teach be then?

Of course, it is important to acknowledge that schooling in America has been instrumentalized for political and economic aims (ie. democratic equality and social efficiency) (Labaree, 1997). And, ultimately, I argue that sustainability is a political and economic issue—without a functional environment our economic and political structures will be extremely burdened if they do not fail altogether. However, schools fulfilling capitalist desires have been a complicity to and within the systems which have resulted in this late-stage form of capitalism known as neoliberalism (Blacker, 2013). This stage is characterized by people and the environment being targeted "as waste products awaiting managed disposal" (Blacker, 2013, p. 1). So, for the sake of this discussion, political and economic aims are not the foundation. Unconditional love for the world and a passing it on to the new generation in such a way that the newcomers can "begin anew" with the world (Vlieghe & Zamojski, 2019)[2] will be the foundation. From such a foundation, meaningful aims can grow such as education for sustainability. There are several reasons why society, and thus schools, should educate for sustainability.

Schools and Identities

First, education helps to form the identity of students and how they think about the world and how they view themselves in relation to the world. I intentionally write "helps" because of course I do not believe education alone is the only part of a person's life that forms her identity. I draw first from the field of anthropology and education, which has been a part of my studies of the cultural foundations of education. In my research for this thesis, I was struck by the words of Abu El-Haj (2020), who in an address reminds anthropologists of education the following:

[2] This idea comes from Vlieghe & Zamojski (2019) considering Arendt (1961).

> education is always about learning personhood in relational worlds … We are all always being educated into lived, embodied (usually subconscious) understandings of ourselves in relation to others and to the landscapes across which our lives unfold … education is always about becoming kinds of persons in social worlds … (p. 7)

With this understanding, education is an opportunity for students to become "kinds of persons" who care about the earth and will be good stewards of it. Abu El-Haj continues:

> we must account for how learning is always also about learning new ways of being persons in the world. A child cannot learn the complex task of "reading" if she is not also able to embody a sense that she is a reader … (p. 8)

Similarly, a child cannot learn the complex task of stewardship of the earth if she is not able to embody a sense that she is a steward of it.

A component of one's own perception (or a group's perception) of place and personhood is how she views and is connected to her environment. Scannell and Gifford (2010) write:

> Ecopsychologists assert that a disconnect from nature is an important cause of pro-environmental inaction, and that regaining a sense of connectedness should realign our values toward pro-environmental stewardship (e.g., Lovelock & Sydney, 1975; Reser, 1995; Roszak, 1992). Others have also speculated that feelings of attachment and connectedness to a place should result in greater efforts to protect it (e.g., Sobel, 2003). (p. 289)

However, the authors do point out that "the empirical evidence surrounding this topic is far from definitive" (p. 289). Through their own quantitative study, Scannell and Gifford conclude that "natural attachment [is] a predictor of pro-environmental behavior," and

"connectedness to nature is a source of hope in the endeavor to reform humans' mistreatment of the environment" (p. 296). They defined natural attachment as "a measure of attachment to the natural features of one's local area (as opposed to nature in general)" (p. 295). This is important to consider because it suggests a focus in education for sustainability should be on attachment to the local features specific to the community in which students reside—all of which I argue ought to be a focus in schools when considering the development of identity of the community and individuals within it. An identity of sustainability ought to be a focus.

Schools and "Islands of Decency"

Second, a better future can be built through school communities becoming what Horton (1990) says are "islands of decency" (Abu El-Haj, 2020; Hytten, 2018). These are communities built by the people within them in ways that best serve all members and their futures. I believe it is more probable that community members can change their local surroundings and institutions than they can those beyond (ie. their state, country, etc.). What social sciences view as the macro-level of society will likely never change in a short period of time, but change can occur most realistically at the micro-level followed by the meso-level. Sallum Jr. (2005) nicely defines such language (micro, meso, and macro) by writing the following:

> the micro level — which refers to individual agents and interactive processes —, the meso — which concerns movements, associations, groups, formal organizations (workplaces, unions, churches, etc.) and social institutions — and macro-sociological — which concerns the processes of differentiation, stratification and social integration at national and global levels (a scope that includes relationships that exceed or cross the national level of societal

> integration). This research program has been explored, from different angles and with different emphases, by sociologists such as Jonathan Turner (1987 and 1991), Randall Collins (1981 and 1987), Neil Smelser (1987 and 1997) and others. (p. 23)[3]

If communities invite and support their schools educating for sustainability, communities could find themselves living more sustainably at the micro-level and meso-level. In fact, anthropologist Thea Renda Abu El-Haj (2020) speaks of resilience and change within communities at a local level which drew her to her field, writing:

> [communities] continually create and regenerate forms of collective living that refuse the status quo. These are forms of living that reject settler-colonial and patriarchal narratives. These are embodied ways of being in community that tell and retell the history that lived before, and continues to live alongside, the imperial ruins. These are stories that refuse erasure, reject the very notion that any person is expendable, that borders are more than, as some very wise young people I once worked with described, "imaginary lines." These are embodied educations that create what the late activist Myles Horton (1990) called "islands of decency"—ways of living together now that go against the grain—ways that might prefigure a different future for our planet. (p. 12)

These islands or pockets of goodness are perhaps the most possible to achieve and thus is the reason educators, administrators, parents, and community stakeholders and leaders should all embrace and implement education for sustainability because it is within their reach. Perhaps another force begging the importance of the local community is Nodding's concept of caring, which Levinson (2016) discusses, writing

[3] Serpa and Ferreira (2019) led me to Sallum Jr. (2005). The latter of which was translated for this thesis by Google Translate.

that “we are not able to care for distant others in the same way as we might be expected to care for those who are physically and psychologically proximate” (p. 114).

Such action and change at the local levels could fall within what Blacker (2013) describes as *compartmentalized pessimism* because it is a recognition of what can and cannot be done considering the power of capitalism and the power of individuals and groups:

> “compartmentalized” because the pessimism is to be targeted toward social assemblages whose processes are so dependent on machinations in the underlying economy that those assemblages are unlikely really to move on their own. Our education system may change substantially, and there may be a dusting of oppositional grit in the gears, but the gears will end up turning as directed by the needs - or perceived short-term needs - of the owners of capital. (p. 245)

Many people likely feel quite powerless in terms of responding to the climate emergency and changing the course of entire societies to live more sustainably. But perhaps people can be pessimistic about the macro-level and focus their energy on the micro-level and meso-level (their community, schools, and homes). Perhaps those children they educate in doing so will be active and reach larger spheres of influence before it is too late. The embrace of power and the acceptance of powerlessness are not new.

This thinking is reminiscent of The Serenity Prayer (see Shapiro, 2014), written and spoken in various places is some variation of: May I have the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. The theme of which, regardless of of origin, as discussed by Wibowo (2021) so clearly relates to this compartmentalized pessimism whereby Wibowo writes:

> The words are not long, but they are enough to summarize the realities often faced by humans in general. It is as if everyone agrees that the reality that humans face is not easy, it is very complex, it is not always ideal, and there are even times when humans have to "surrender" to the situation. Therefore, wisdom is needed to deal with it, not just forcing oneself to change a situation that is impossible to change. (p. 73)[4]

Accordingly, this thesis is not a means to inspire educators to take on the task of changing the world and all its capitalist processes which have led to this anthropocene and neoliberalism. However, it is an attempt to explore the why of education for sustainability within schools—elementary schools and the music classroom in particular–as well as to look into the knowledge and power educators do have.

Schools and Newness

Third, as demonstrated in what I have established as the purpose of education written above, schools are places where better futures can be imagined and developed.[5] Säfström and Östman (2020) write the following:

> The very institution in society in which the future as 'always better' is supposed to happen, or rather, where we all are to be included in the logic through which social and economic life, in general, is to be better, is the school. That is to say, schooling is the institutionalisation of a hope that your own life as well as the life of your community and society will be better and will progress in all conceivable ways. It is an institutionalisation of the desire of the state and nation to 'produce'

[4] Wibowo (2021) was translated to English with Google Translate.

[5] Portions of this thesis were initially developed in my final paper for CULT 69595: Proseminar in Cultural Foundations of Education at Kent State University in December of 2023.

> functional citizens through schooling, who live their lives within the web of meaning defining the nation as well as the authentic self of such a nation (Säfström, 2014).

What is the point of education and therefore schooling if there is no active hope for the future (active because it demands action)? In fact, many argue that it is vital education be a place of love for the world without despair for the future. Levinson (2002) quotes Arendt (1968) writing:

> Education is "the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it, and by the same token save it from that ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and the young, would be inevitable."[10] (pp. 202-203).

Levinson (2002) later concludes:

> To the extent that schools manage to preserve newness while helping the young to understand the world that precedes and surrounds them, they are genuinely educational spaces. It follows from this, of course, that not all schools are educational spaces. (p. 203)

If educators and schools do not "preserve the newness" by preparing students to generate their own solutions and live sustainable futures, how can schools be educational spaces? Similarly, if educators and schools do not "[help] the young understand the world that precedes and surrounds them" which includes the anthropocene, capitalism, neoliberalism, and necropolitics; how can schools be educational spaces?

Schools and Cruelty

Fourth, not educating for sustainability could be considered cruel (Pratt, 2015) considering that climate change and its current and future consequences have been researched and corroborated. Pratt (2014) argues:

> Equipped with further knowledge, skills and support, children are able to develop resilience and the capacity to deal with [climate change]. I believe that educators are doing children (and nature and humanity) an injustice if they seek to shelter young children, or 'bubble wrap' them, in order to protect them from knowing about and engaging with such challenges in positive ways. (p. 80)

There is a risk of not educating the child in a way that they can begin anew with the world for the betterment of their own futures and that of all life around them. I believe it is cruel to ignore science and its predictions for future human life in the education of our youth. How can they begin anew with the world if the truth of climate change is not regarded; is ignored? How can they begin anew with the world if they are not comprehensively taught the social and political skills necessary for building sustainable futures? It is not enough to give them life but ignore the reality of the context in which they live. Levinson (2002) writes:

> Similarly, as Arendt's reflections on "The Crisis in Education" make clear, natality refers to more than the mere fact of birth. Natality can be stifled, which is what happens when educators fail to "preserve" the child's capacity for newness in relation to the world. Natality is a condition that has to be nurtured. Because the conditions of action are so tenuous, in the rare instances when people do act, action has a miraculous quality. (pp. 201-202)

Herein lays a compelling reason why schools should educate for sustainability. Newness in the way society exists and grows is necessary for continued life and prosperity. I argue that if schools are to prepare students for the future, the abilities of students to engage in action and bring newness to the world as it stands now must be fostered. How can students bring newness to the world without learning about the state of the one in which they live? How can they bring newness for their own futures if they are not educated for the new lifestyles and societal norms for the continuation of our species and earth as we know it? Not educating for sustainability, not equipping them with necessary knowledge and skills for sustainable development is setting them up to repeat our generational mistakes and thus repeat our failure.

Schools and Justice

Fifth, education for sustainability *is* a matter of justice, environmental justice–and similarly climate justice—but not only regarding the disproportionate actions by humans which caused the anthropocene and also the disproportionate ways in which humans are affected by climate change, but also regarding the value of and justice for non-human life. The environmental justice and climate justice—as they are concerned with justice for various groups of people—lays with the fact that poor and developing nations, communities, and individuals will continue to bear the brunt of the consequences of climate change (Fears & Grandoni, 2021), which humans (particularly the wealthy, capitalists, corporations, and government leaders) have created (Grasso & Heede, 2023) . However, there is also a need for justice for the earth, environment, and non-human life. Levinson (2016) points to Joldersma's (2014) work, adding to that which Joldersma calls on schools to "attend to the needs of those who have no voice—not only the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized, but also the

environment" (p. 115). Stewardship and education for sustainability is about justice for all life. If schools ignore the reality of the climate emergency, are they being just?

CHAPTER III

WHY EfS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In this section I argue why it is appropriate to begin education for sustainability in the elementary school. I argue the following reasons:

1. Considering the scaffolded approach to education and our understanding of how knowledge is constructed and how children develop, children in elementary school should be educated for sustainability.
2. Living in a sustainable society–one in which protects our environment and world–-requires more than simply love and care for nature; it requires democratic and social skills. Some argue that the development of such skills should begin at the elementary level.
3. It has been demonstrated that young children have the ability to take part in their communities via service and advocacy in an appropriate way and also in a way that they understand their actions and voice. This warrants and allows education for sustainability to begin at this stage in their learning.

Many question the appropriateness of teaching for sustainability to students, let alone elementary-aged children. Concerns include overwhelming students (Hung, 2014)[6], but also instrumentalizing the children to solve the problems that the generations before them created and perpetuated (van Poeck and Östman, 2020). While there are concerns and cautionary considerations, there has been theory developed and research conducted which supports such teaching.

[6] I discovered Hung (2014) through the work of Henderson et al. (2017).

Elementary and the Elemental

First, the elementary years offer the time and space for students to connect and love nature. From the literature, this seems to be a common intention elemental of education for sustainability. Concerns with a growing disconnection from nature evident throughout society (Kesebir & Kesebir, 2017) is common throughout discussions regarding the climate emergency and education (Bonnett, 2013; Stickney & Bonnett, 2020; Säfström & Östman, 2020). Advanced knowledge about the environment will come later in middle and high school courses on biology, physical science, and chemistry; but the early years provide the opportunity for students to come to love the environment. Sobel (1997) shares:

> Rachel Carson, in her book, *A Sense of Wonder* ... said: "If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. Once the emotions have been aroused, a sense of the beautiful, the excitement of the new and the unknown, a feeling of sympathy, pity, admiration, or love, then we wish for knowledge of our emotional response." John Burroughs said it more concisely. He said, "Knowledge without love will not stick, but if love comes first, knowledge is sure to follow." What we need to do is reclaim the heart in nature education. We have to lead with this emotional connectedness before we start to impose issues on children. (p. 3)

In fact, some, including Sobel (1997), argue that this elementary time is the opportunity for emotional connection and falling in love with the natural world:

> Between the ages of four and seven, the latter part of early childhood, the objective of environmental education should be empathy with the natural world.

> That means "becoming" the natural world, being birds, moving like a deer, hiding the way a rabbit would hide. Activities, songs, and artwork that capture emotional responses can meet that objective. Between the ages of seven and 11, the key notion is engagement. In other words, connecting with or exploring the natural world. (p. 4)

Therefore, the earliest education for sustainability is not teaching of the crimes against nature and their connection to capitalist accumulation and corporate greed; nor is it explicitly teaching human intervention or sustainable practices. The earliest education for sustainability is engagement with the natural world; connection, love, and joy.

While such practices could be modeled (ie. food waste reduction programs in the cafeteria and utilizing the generated compost in the school garden, recycling programs, etc.), the earliest education (for sustainability) should encompass that for which man has a “natural taste” and to which an “instinct leads [humans] to seek” (Rousseau, 2019, p. 167). Rousseau (2019) further writes:

> At first children are only restless; then they are curious; and that curiosity, well directed, is the motive of the age we have now reached. Let us always distinguish between the inclinations which come from nature and those which come from opinion. There is an ardor to know which is founded only on the desire to be esteemed as learned; there is another ardor which is born of a curiosity natural to man concerning all that might have a connection, close or distant, with his interests. The innate desire for well-being and the impossibility of fully satisfying this desire make him constantly seek for new means of contributing to it. This is the first principle of curiosity, a principle natural to the human heart, but one which develops only in proportion to our passions and our enlightenment.

> Picture a philosopher relegated to a desert island with instruments and books, sure of spending the rest of his days there. He will hardly trouble himself any longer about the system of the world, the laws of attraction, differential calculus. He will perhaps not open a single book in his life. But never will he refrain from visiting the last nook and cranny of his island, however large it may be. Let us, therefore, also reject in our first studies the kinds of knowledge for which man does not have a natural taste and limit ourselves to those instinct leads us to seek. (p. 167)

This is a reminder of relevancy, interest, and appropriateness on the part of the student(s). I believe such consideration is necessary at every stage of learning, education, and schooling and within every focus and goal. There is a place for EfS in elementary education, and EfS is elemental in that it first begins with engagement with, connection to, love for, and joy within the natural world.

Elementary and the Foundation of Democracy

Second, consistent exposure to sustainability ideas and topics and the consistent opportunity to practice the social and political skills necessary for building students' own sustainable lives will serve to be the foundation in what is ultimately sequential learning for sustainability (SLfS). Elliot (2015) writes:

> There is a window in early childhood to set the scene for more than simply stewardship; lifelong advocacy in action with the sustainability frame of mind is the goal. Chawla (1998) summarizes that "there is no single all potent experience that produces environmentally informed and active citizens, but many together" (p. 381). (p. 48)

This idea follows the logic of scaffolding in teaching, but also the socialization of norms and customs in society that the school plays a role in. The elementary years are not disconnected from this process, and thus educational/community leaders, teachers, and parents ought to be intentional about the teaching and socialization of societal norms and customs that take place within the elementary school and during these years of the childrens' lives. I and the authors whose work I have studied argue that if a sustainable future will be developed, sustainable practices and ways of living must be a part of the norms and customs of our society moving forward. Thus, as the elementary school is a part of this educational and socialization process, its leaders and stakeholders should include EfS within its programs, curricula, and operations.

Cultural and societal ways of living are reproduced throughout life including during the early years, regardless of the level of conscious understanding (for an example see Gansen, 2017). Henderson et. al (2017), too, acknowledge this socialization within schools writing that "employing education as a social change lever, and educational settings as sites of socialization toward alternative futures, is our strongest suit" (p. 415). Similarly, Marsh et al. (2020) write, "Early childhood classrooms represent the first template of democratic participation for many young children (Astuto & Ruck, 2010; Kemple, 2017)" (p. 2). However, I argue that care must be taken to differentiate and fully understand each of the following: "employing education as a social change lever" (Marsh et. al, 2020, p. 2), "instrumentalizing the children to solve the problems that the generations before them created and perpetuated" (p. 20 of this thesis), and allowing "education [to become or remain] the object of continuous reforms in the name of societal and political needs" (Vlieghe and Zamojski, 2019, p. 22).

Education and schools changing social habits should not be considered or characterized as the *sole* social change lever nor burdened with the task individually as an institution. But it must be a part of it; a *major* part of it because education is a major part of society. It is a foundational part that deserves constant consideration and thought; it must do its part *within* social change. I foresee a potentiality of denying education its power for good (ie. building a sustainable future) by attempting to protect from the resulting political disruption of which doing so may cause. Of course, this requires the agreement that building a sustainable future is a *good* thing. I say those who believe wholeheartedly that it is must take part in the democratic process to ensure sustainability is something on which the majority agree (ie. supporting candidates at every level who believe so as well; initiating more sustainable operations at their workplaces, schools, and community buildings; running for office and leadership positions themselves; talking with and writing to their friends, families, and neighbors about the importance of a sustainable future; supporting education for sustainability; etc.).

I foresee superintendents not encouraging the boards of education to adopt education for sustainability and sustainable operations for fear of the boards rejecting them in the midst of further conservative-led efforts to limit schools' ability to participate in affecting *social* change. I foresee boards of education not adopting such initiatives in fear of losing their seats on the boards at the hand of the voters or appointers during such a time. However, I believe social change is not inherently a positive or negative thing; *that* conclusion is subject to the particular intent and result of the social change. I argue that social change for the sake of a future sustainable society is not negative. Its intent is the continuation of our lives—the arts and sciences that we

love with roots of inclinations like musicophilia[7] and biophilia. So, I do believe education, schools, and students should be instrumentalized for societal change, but not to a burdensome extent nor independently. I say that the school is not the instrument but a part within it. Important, however, is that this instrumentalization ought not be the sole aim (or necessarily even the major aim) of schooling and education. Learning for its own sake; enjoying and loving the arts and sciences—these aims for the *continuation* of our beloved arts and sciences are the reason societal change is necessary for a more sustainable future so that such education can continue to be passed on.

Not only is the socialization process within schools an opportunity to normalize sustainable living habits and democratic participation, but Scannell and Gifford (2010) remind readers that, "Fried's (1963) classic study of neighborhood attachment showed that despite the poor physical conditions of the area, the residents were strongly attached to it because it afforded social interactions with others" (p. 290). This reminder begs the question whether such an attachment to nature and the environment can be achieved through intentional social interactions in schooling for this purpose.

Elementary and the Capability of Action

Third, studies suggest that students in early childhood are capable of engaging in civic action as a result of their own "curiosities and concerns" (Kenyon & Lampe, 2020, p. 28). Should this capability be embraced and fostered? At the very least, their own curiosities and concerns should be supported and embraced for their own future engagement. And, as Levinson (2016) writes:

> Schooling, after all, is not simply to be a space in which teachers heed the call of learners, but has the broader and more urgent aim of opening students to a world

[7] See Sacks (2008) for exploration into musicophilia.

> that precedes them, and encouraging them to engage in *tikkun olam*—repairing the present (19). (p. 114)

The question, then, is *when*. When are students invited to participate in civic action? When are they invited to engage in repairing the present? Furthermore, are questions of how. And based on my research for this thesis, I believe it starts at the beginning of their schooling, but in a comprehensive and deliberate way that acknowledges their age and zone of proximity, but also is a level in the scaffolded instruction—as is argued for by Elliot (2015). At a young age students can be empowered to make a difference as seen in Marsh et al (2020).

CHAPTER IV

WHY EfS IN THE MUSIC CLASSROOM

In this section I argue why the general music classroom is a worthy space for educating for sustainability. I argue for educators of all subjects to implement education for sustainability in their teaching. Earlier in this thesis, I argued in support of the purpose of schooling and education being unconditional love for the world and our cherished subjects. I posed the question of what good any of our arts and sciences will be in an uninhabitable world. My intention here is to inspire educators to implement EfS in their philosophies, intentions, and classrooms. If we teach what we teach because of our love for that *thing* and the desire for its continuation, then we must also teach to protect the environment in which that *thing* can be practiced and passed down through the generations. As one reads this chapter, I hope they also imagine how EfS could be included in their beloved subject. I want the physical education teacher to think about their field. I want the reading teacher to think about their field. I choose music as an example for this thesis because it is what I teach, but it is one beloved subject of many that—like all of them—is unique for its own reasons and has something to offer EfS.

First in this section, I make an attempt to establish music's uniqueness among other subjects and even arts to attune students to nature and a desire to protect it. Every art and science is unique in how it could be connected to an education for sustainability. Then, I argue the following points as to why the general music classroom is a worthy space for education for sustainability:

1. Education for sustainability requires a collaborative and complete approach on the part of the school. It has been argued that it must be incorporated into every curriculum and space within the institution.

2. The general music classroom offers a space for students to creatively share and generate ideas and issues regarding sustainability and nature because of the creative and productive nature of general music education.
3. Students demonstrating their learning within education for sustainability is an important component of the process, and I argue that the music classroom is a place for students to creatively demonstrate such learning.
4. Music develops humans in a way that other subjects cannot. The arts and sciences must work together to lead people to care for the world.
5. There are values that must be taught in effective education for sustainability, and I argue that music has the power and ability to teach such values.
6. Music can assist in the teaching of political and social skills discussed in the section of this thesis regarding elementary education.
7. Music offers a means of communication regarding issues of sustainability, and through general music education, schools can bring the community together to share such messages.
8. Music can help students cope and heal during this climate emergency we find ourselves in. It can help people enjoy the lives we do have, since ultimately, I argue, a future of societal sustainability is a large undertaking, and one in which no one person or small group has the ability to secure. Therefore, I argue acceptance and peace will be required as well and the arts can help with that.
9. Finally, I argue that music is capable and worthy of being a part of transforming society for sustainability.

I believe music has an ability to connect with the soul that perhaps other art forms and the sciences cannot. Because of this ability and several factors related to how

music is incorporated into American schooling, I believe the music classroom is a worthy place for education for sustainability. In society at large, I believe music is a worthy and useful tool for connecting with each other and sharing messages of love for nature, preservation, and sustainability. In regard to the uniqueness of music, I would like to share a quote by Sacks (2008) where he writes:

> …for virtually all of us, music has great power, whether or not we seek it out or think of ourselves as particularly "musical." This propensity to music—this "musicophilia"--shows itself in infancy, is manifest and central in every culture, and probably goes back to the very beginning of our species. It may be developed or shaped by the cultures we live in, by the circumstances of life, or by the particular gifts or weaknesses we have as individuals—but it lies so deep in human nature that one is tempted to think of it as innate, much as E.O. Wilson regards "biophilia," our feeling for living things. (Perhaps musicophilia is a form of biophilia, since music itself feels almost like a living thing.) (pp. ix-x)

Considering this "great power" of music and this "propensity to music" or "musicophilia" coupled with the EfS design set forth by Davis (2015) and others, there are several reasons why music education should be a force in education for sustainability.

General Music and its Place in the School and EfS

First, if music education is truly a part of an educational institution, it must fit into the institution's comprehensive framework of education for sustainability (EfS). Pratt (2015) shares principles of his institution, Kenmore West Kindergarten & Preschool, listed in its Kindergarten Handbook as of 2015. Two of which are as follows:

> *A fully integrated curriculum for EfS* - learning about the environment is not an add-on, but is embedded into all curriculum areas.
>
> *Sustainability* - this is embedded in all aspects of centre practice, as well as into the daily lives of members of the KWK community. (pp. 78-79)

Both of these principles specify *all* - all curriculum areas and all aspects of the centre will bring such principles of environmental education and sustainability. The arts are no exception. The inclusion of the arts into institutional initiatives offers an opportunity for reinforcement of learning goals and outcomes and—I argue—offers another opportunity for students to learn and understand sustainable ideas and practices and the skills necessary for leading sustainable lives.

However, merely including the arts is not enough. O'Gorman (2015) acknowledges that "a project approach (Katz & Chard 2000) in which children engage in integrated, collaborative learning across boundaries, and over time, is likely to promote … powerful and transformational learning" (p. 217). In other words–education for sustainability (EfS) that occurs within the arts' curriculum should be comprehensively developed in conjunction with other learning that is taking place for the students for it to be "powerful and transformational." Similarly, Baker and Gehlbach (2022) said:

> If we localize the learning about climate and climate change just to one natural science class, that 's not going to cut it. We need to get into this issue in the English class, in the social studies class, and so on, and it's really got to be much more interdisciplinary. (p. 116)

Additionally, Stickney and Bonnett (2020) write of "the significance of poetry and the arts in environmental education" (p. 1089), particularly as a means to achieve Bonnett's (2012) concept of emplaced transcendence in regard to ecologizing education. They even

write that "participation in musical experience might help to refine the ear in a way that can resensitise it to the rhythms and nuances of the acoustic landscape of nature" (p. 1092).

Along the same lines as Bonnett's (2012) emplaced transcendence, two ways of knowing are important for educating for sustainability, and music might help instill one of the ways more than other subjects in school can. Elliot (2015) compares *affective knowing* of the natural world–through simply experiencing nature–with *cognitive knowing*–an understanding of "facts and information" of the natural world beyond what simple experiences within it can bring (p. 47). She relates her *affective knowing* with Bonnett's (2003; 2004) acquaintanceship with nature, which he describes as:

> … a direct, intimate, tacit knowledge that affects us … something of the essential poetic character of which is suggested by Henry Thoreau: 'Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influences of each . . . Open all your pores and bathe in all the tides of Nature, in all her streams and oceans, at all seasons . . . Grow green with spring, yellow and ripe with autumn' (Thoreau, 1962, Vol. 1, pp. 394–395). (Bonnett, 2003, p. 646)

Elliot (2015) writes, "Affective knowing can be a key motivating force when making decisions about sustainability that may have far-reaching impacts" (p. 47). Alternatively, she writes, "Such understandings [of *cognitive* knowing] provide a sound basis for decision making from a sustainability frame of mind" (p. 47). Noteworthy are how Elliot (2015) characterized affective knowing as a "motivating force" and cognitive knowing as a "sound basis" both in regard to decision making and sustainability. This conjunction of motivation and relevant information is reminiscent of Christopher Caudwell's (1947)

differentiation between the effects of science and that of art, which will be discussed later in this thesis. Music can attune students toward nature in a way that builds their affective knowing of nature and sustainability. Consider the following lesson appropriate for a general music classroom, from YourClassical (2020)[8], which draws students to the sounds of nature:

> THEMED LESSON: Nature
>
> All Ages
>
> In this lesson, activities are paired with listening suggestions to help listeners discover and enjoy music inspired by nature. Select activities listed below based on time allotted, classroom goals, and student needs.
>
> MOVEMENT ACTIVITY
>
> 1. Go for a short nature walk - even if it's just around the block.
>
> 2. Bring a notebook - write down all the sounds you hear.
>
> 3. When the walk is over, look at your list and discuss how you could turn those sounds into a piece of music.
>
> Use a listening grid to organize ideas. Extend to a composition activity by playing all the re-created sounds in order, thus re-creating the nature walk through sound.

This activity requires students to focus on nature; to discover its sounds. Students are tasked with recreating the sounds which requires careful listening to the sounds themselves. I argue this lesson grows the student's affective knowing of the nature they encounter. The outline of this lesson is simple and adaptive to classroom resources. I do not believe that formal instruments are necessary. Students have their voices, bodies,

[8] This is listed in REFERENCES as Themed lesson: Nature - Class Notes from YourClassical (2020, April 3).

and countless idiophones of common classroom and household items—the latter of which are not even required. If formal instruments are available, students should have various options to choose from to recreate their discovered sounds.

This lesson is an example of how the general music classroom can play a part in what O'Gorman (2015) draws our attention to: "a project approach (Katz & Chard 2000) in which children engage in integrated, collaborative learning across boundaries…" (p. 217). It is an opportunity for students to develop Elliot's (2015) *affective* knowing of nature and to build Bonnett's (2003; 2004) acquaintanceship with nature—both are important components of EfS.

General Music and the Sharing of Ideas

Second, the arts offer a unique opportunity for students to creatively generate and share ideas in response to various prompts or issues. The Orff-Schulwerk approach to music education centers around the creativity and imagination of the children (Beegle & Bond, 2016), in which children often are tasked with creating arrangements and compositions oftentimes in groups. This connects to education for sustainability because in order to create a better future, it must be dreamt or imagined (Hess, 2021). The Orff Approach to music education is, in result, designed for dreaming and imagination, and thus I believe an approach to music education vital to educating for sustainability.

This focus on imagination and music's role within it has been discussed by music education researcher and professor Juliet Hess (2021), mentioned earlier, who connects

Paulo Freire's (2014)[9] concept of active dreaming with imagination and what she calls the dual roles of imagination. Hess references Freire (2014) when she writes:

> While understanding history is fundamental to dreaming, history does not determine the future when people purposefully dream. Education, [Freire] asserts, is only possible when dreaming is an active practice. A vision of utopia requires a taste for freedom and hope (89). (p. 274)

Baroness Warnock (1999, as printed in Warnock 2012) similarly discusses imagination as Hess (2021) discusses it while referencing Freire's (2014) idea of active dreaming. Warnock writes the following:

> It is my view that it requires imagination to perform the trick of connecting the momentary and ephemeral with the permanent, the particular with the universal, and that it is imagination which allows man to stand with his feet so far a stride. If we had no imagination, we would each of us be stuck firmly in the present. But each one of us is in fact conscious of ourselves as an individual -- that is, as separate centers of experience and with lives of our own to lead; in this consciousness is connected essentially with our ability to think of our own past and, to a lesser extent, foresee our own future or plan it as we want it to be. Imagination thus allows us to conceive of ourselves as continuous beings, playing a part in a continuous and partly intelligible world with a past and a future, which we can roughly call the natural world. (pp. 4-5)

Imagination thus is vital to education for sustainability, and it can be fostered and affirmed in the general music classroom. I argue that this is because of the opportunity

[9] *Pedagogy of hope : reliving pedagogy of the oppressed* by Paulo Freire was originally copyrighted in 1992 and first translated to English in 1994. Hess (2021) references a 1998 copyright update. On my references page, it will be listed under a 2014 printing which corresponds with the page numbers provided by Hess (2021).

and expectation of what students produce in the music and art spaces. Production in the general music classroom includes composing and improvising; communicating with other students via call and response. A good elementary general music classroom, I argue, consistently invites students to collaborate and share stories and experiences through imagined and created musical motifs and movements. Prompts for such work can call students to enter the past or create the future. Imagination is vital to education for sustainability because in order to create a better future, it must first be imagined or dreamt. The general music classroom can foster such imagination and dreaming through creative storytelling and opportunities for students to create and respond through music. It can lead students to effectively and consistently imagine and create via continued practice in the music and other art spaces.

The generation and sharing of ideas can occur in the music classroom even if the prompts or issues elicit negative feelings like disappointment and guilt. O'Gorman (2015) emphasizes how "the arts can help with [focusing] … on remedies, such as inspiring examples, and new approaches … that engender positive, transformative and hopeful responses to sustainability issues" (p. 216). As for the how or why, I connect this to his later writing, "Regular engagement with the artistic process – for adults as well as children – enhances our ability to see the world in new ways and to appreciate what is often overlooked," (p. 220). I connect this to the arts helping us focus on remedies and hopefulness instead of disappointment and guilt because of how deafening and intense negative outlooks and tones can be that surround discussion of the climate emergency. O'Gorman mentions "the gift of time" that can be given to students which can allow imagination, which he writes "is the cornerstone of creativity and foundational to both the arts and sustainability," (p. 220). This reminds me of Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019)

who write while referencing Hannah Arendt, “This is the sphere of education, skholé,” which “is an exceptional time and place,” (p. 19). I will reference this more later, but to me it speaks to the unique opportunity that is the school: it can be a place where the gift of time is given to allow imagination and creativity where remedies, new approaches, and hopefulness are developed, or atleast the capacity for such is.

As an example, I look to Cademartori (2017) who leads a unit for his elementary music classroom that concludes with students building their own instruments with trash. I argue that this is an example of how music can help us focus on remedies, new approaches, and hopefulness as O’Gorman (2015) highlights is an ability of the arts in EfS. With this project students engage in the artistic process of building instruments and producing their own sounds with something often overlooked—trash. The students are given the gift of time to be creative and imaginative and are learning sustainable ideas and practices in a hopeful and exciting way.

On a different, but related, striking and important note—O’Gorman (2015) goes on to write, “Integration of the arts across the curriculum increases the possibility of cross-curricular learning (Gibson & Ewing 2011) that transcends boundaries and transforms thinking, particularly in relation to social justice (McArdle, Knight & Stratigos 2013) and sustainability” (p. 217). Such a use for music education avoids the risk of it solely reinforcing neoliberal, capitalistic, and necropolitical norms for society. Willingham (2009) writes:

> As world tensions are intensified with economic, ecological, and international challenges, we need to rethink music education’s place … we need to return to the great question, “What is worth teaching?” I believe that the only curriculum that should matter to us is one that is designed to include learning outcomes for

> peace, social justice, diversity and planetary sustenance. However, it is difficult to address these issues in mainstream education … bell hooks (cited in O'Sullivan, 1999, p. 165) maintains that nowhere "is there a more intense silence about realities relating to class differences than in educational settings." Although in our isolated contexts of teaching, we experience a mythological sense that school is equal for everyone … Woodford (2008) adds that "Music education's purpose has become primarily economic. This is unfortunate because it distorts the nature and purpose of music education, turning what should be an exercise in the development of critical awareness, human potentiality, and spirit into a competitive race to maintain world economic, military, and cultural dominance" (p. 115). (pp. 60-61)

In other words–avoiding education for the future informed by research (such education as that for sustainability) is itself having an effect on our students and society at large. A decision must be made as to whether or not educators and schools prepare students for the world which they are inheriting and for building a future better for them. Not choosing to only reinforces the institutional systems throughout society which have resulted in the anthropocene.

General Music and the Demonstration of Learning

Third, the arts offer a space to make visible the learning that is taking place with education for sustainability (O'Gorman, 2015) and learning about nature. There is a space within the arts for students to demonstrate their understanding of not only theories and skills in the artform itself but also their understanding of sustainability and nature. O'Gorman (2015) tells the story of a student five years of age whose exposure and learning of nature occurred through the use of works by other artists and immersion

in nature itself. Coupled with a love for the visual arts, especially drawing, the student's art expressed her developing understanding of the nature she was portraying through new drawings and refinement of old. The adult working with her would discuss her understanding of the colors and shapes in her drawings in comparison to that of which the student was noticing in the works by other artists and immersion in nature itself. O'Gorman writes, "This co-construction of knowledge about the arts and the natural environment suggests Wright's (2012) Guided Learning Approach, in which adults work with children to scaffold their learning, extending their thinking through dialogue and interaction" (p. 219). This can occur in music as well, through the meaningful creation of melodies, rhythms, and songs. If not explicitly stated through lyrics or text, musical creation in this regard is meaningful if the student is able to explain what elements of nature or sustainability aspects of their creation represent. For example, if a student could create a motif for wind, rain, or the hop of a rabbit and identify the motif as a representation of such, the musicking is meaningfully attuning the student to that natural element.

Given the time and space for the student discussed above to explore and grow her skill and love of nature and art, the student's love for the nature she was connecting with grew. O'Gorman writes, "[The student's] project speaks to us of her love of the natural world, and is testament to the time she has been given to explore it, alongside a supportive adult. Chawla (2006) suggests that it is precisely these types of experiences that form the foundation of children's advocacy for the natural world … " (p. 221). O'Gorman shares the following quote of Chawla (2006):

> When children have access to the natural world, and family members encourage them to explore it and give it close attention, they have a strong basis for interest

> in the environment. To turn this interest into activism, they later need to build on this foundation through education, membership in organizations, or their careers that they pursue; but from their childhood experiences in nature through their own free play and in the company of significant adults, they carry the memory that the natural world is a place of such full and positive meaning that it justifies their most persistent efforts to protect it (p. 76). (p. 222)

I believe that music education can similarly offer such exploration and close attention as demonstrated in the story provided by O'Gorman. Music education can help create "the memory that the natural world is a place of such full and positive meaning" as Chawla (2006) writes is necessary for future activism of sustainability and environmental conservationism. O'Gorman (2014), in conclusion of the narrative described above, writes that "learning to draw is about learning to see … In order to draw something, one must give it close attention. Close attention leads to appreciation, appreciation leads to love, and love leads to a determination to protect" (p. 222). Similarly—learning to represent the natural world in music is about learning to listen. In order to create a musical representation of a natural element, one must give it close attention.

Willingham (2009) shares an example which connects to this, writing:

> composer Kenneth Gaburo spent years in the deserts of California and wrote *Antiphony IX,* a work for orchestra, children, and the tape that reflects the ecosystem he found there. We sense the presence of the earth in these works of art. (p. 62)

Willingham (2009) also writes:

> … the re-introduction of nature and the re-connection of humans to its beauty is an educational imperative. Artists, musicians, poets, actors, dancers, and film

> makers provide us with a perspective on earth life capable of evoking rich images of land, animals, and water. (p. 62)

An emphasis should be placed not only on existing art attuning us and "re-introduc[ing]" us to nature, but also on the intentional embrace of such a noble phenomenon of the arts. In other words–teach students explicitly that the arts can attune them to nature–to connect with it, respond to it, embrace it, and love it—and that they, too, can become artists who create such art.

The Uniqueness of the Arts

Fourth, music and the arts can teach and develop humans in ways that other subjects cannot. Prior (2022) reminds us of the research that has demonstrated such conclusions, writing, "Music has also been shown to encourage altruism (Fukui & Toyoshima, 2014) and increase empathy in some circumstances (Clarke et al., 2015)" (p. 1). Altruism and empathy are major sentiments which could help drive a turn toward sustainability and a love for nature and the earth. Specifically regarding the encouragement of altruism, Prior (2022) writes:

> there is evidence that music can influence altruistic behaviour in a game setting. Fukui and Toyoshima (2014) explored the effects of music listening on the behaviour of participants playing a game in which they were acting as a dictator. Participants were allocated to one of three conditions for a five-minute period in between rounds of the game: participants in the first condition listened to their own choice of preferred music that induced emotional 'chills' or shivers; participants in the second condition listened to music they disliked; and participants in the third condition experienced silence. They found that preferred music which induced emotional chills increased participants' altruistic behaviour

> (in this instance, the amount of money they gave to other players), whereas disliked music decreased altruistic behaviour, and silence had no effect on the amount given. If chill-inducing preferred music can increase altruistic behaviour (perhaps by making altruistic values more salient), perhaps this effect has the potential to be harnessed to encourage environmentally-friendly behaviours. On the other hand, care must be taken regarding the nature of the request: Ziv (2016) found that listening to music with a positive valence increased compliance even when the requested task would harm another person. (pp. 10-11)

Regarding the increase of empathy, Clarke et al (2015) write:

> These empirical findings provide support for the hypothesis that listening to music without any accessible semantic content can evoke empathy and affiliation in listeners. Participants with high dispositional empathy appeared to be particularly sensitive to the effects of musical exposure, which suggests that our findings cannot be explained solely in terms of priming or knowledge activation effects[165]. Furthermore, the effects appeared to be unrelated to differences in liking for the musical pieces. We propose that our findings can best be explained by an empathic 'resonance' with the music – a process involving: i) internal mimicry and emotional contagion; ii) the kind of entrainment of attention that Jones and Boltz [119] and Bolger, Trost and Schon [22] have proposed as the basis of rhythm perception; and iii) the entrainment of the music's gestural properties with listeners' own internal bodily states that Labbé and Grandjean [139] have called 'visceral entrainment'. (p. 76)

There is growing evidence that music can be an influential and motivating force in that it can attune people to nature itself or could draw out the emotions and sentiments

necessary for focus and intention of sustainable practice. Music education researchers could explore education for sustainability specifically and gather empirical evidence for how music can attune students to nature and assist in learning sustainable practices and sustainability skills.

One cannot fail, too, to acknowledge the difference between the sciences and the arts and the uniqueness of both in the development and education of people. John Bellamy Foster (2020) highlights the idea of Christopher St. John Sprigg (pen name Christopher Caudwell) writing:

> Humanity's struggle with nature, that is, the increasingly complex interpenetration of human society with the natural conditions of its existence, that generated both art and science as the two principal organized forms of human consciousness. Both were indispensable to the two primary forms of mediation between human beings and nature–labor and language. “Art is the science of feeling, science the art of knowing. We must know to be able to do, but we must feel to know what to do.... the value of poetry's illusions in securing catharsis, as compared to religion’s, is that they are known for illusion, and as compared to dream, that they are social.” Poetry and art can therefore be seen as a kind of social “dream-work.”[86] (p. 440)

This social “dream-work” in regard to poetry and art would require the poet(s) and artist(s) to transmit meaning in their work. Caudwell differentiates between the dream-work of dreaming and that of poetry in that “emotional organisation of the poet is condensed into words … and the psyche of the reader experiences the same emotional reorganisation. The reader puts himself … in the place of the poet, and sees with his eyes” (p. 208).

And so this is where the opportunity is. There is opportunity in the arts - including music; Caudwell writes that music is "an extreme kind of poetry" (p. 208) - to transmit social messages, perspectives, attitudes, etc. Caudwell (1947) writes:

> Poetry, however, takes its words and arranges them in such a way that the affects are roused and forced to take up a new organisation towards reality, a new emotional attitude. Dream moulds reality to the instincts, and is therefore of little use except to guard the dreamer from external reality and so keep him sleeping. Poetry moulds the instincts to reality, and is therefore useful, for it does not protect the reader from reality but puts him in good heart to grapple with it. Poetry is' inverted dream—inverted in direction, in aim, and therefore in technique. Poetry flows from reality down to the instincts, stopping only on the last outpost of perception where it encounters the instincts face to face. Dream flows from the instincts to the boundary of reality, at the limit of attention, and stops there, short of actual achievement, because it stops short of action. (pp. 219-220)

In his thinking, too, is another opportunity of the arts—not to "protect the reader from reality" but to put him in "good heart to grapple with it." Music and coping will be discussed later.

For social messages to be transmitted, they must be imagined, felt, or thought of, etc. Juliet Hess (2021) offers an overview of how music education can engage students in what she calls the "dual roles of imagination" (p. 276). She connects three major movements in the history of education to philosophy in music education and synthesizes how music might be a vehicle for social change through her roles of imagination. The three movements she discusses are critical/social reconstructionism, abolitionism, and

critical pedagogy. Where she begins her connection to these movements with music education is best summarized by the following quote:

> Critical reconstructionism veers toward reform of present structures, while abolition focuses on building something new. Critical pedagogy draws on strategies of reform and abolition. These theories also centre critique of present conditions and dreaming. While dreaming is not explicit within critical reconstructionism, the act of reconstruction after a crisis requires envisioning. Abolitionists and critical pedagogues purposefully centre dreaming as crucial to change and transformation. Hope for the future is inherent in all three education movements. In considering the importance these movements place on imagining and dreaming, I turn to the arts, and music specifically, to envision a role for music in this practice. (p. 274)

Her turning to the arts is noteworthy here. Professionals in any realm of society, any discipline and field should turn to the foundation of their work and consider how it may contribute to a better future. Hess (2021) does this not because she believes it's the only way to affect change or that music is the only *thing* with the power to drive justice, but because it is *her* thing—in a way it is *her* responsibility, as a music educator and researcher, to consider how her field and subject can connect to the issue and matter in its result:

> As a music educator, when faced with crisis, I turn first to music education to consider how music educators might contribute to addressing the crisis or injustice. It is my way of considering 'how music education might matter' (Gould et al. 2009) in difficult times. While music education is certainly not the only or even most direct route to social justice (Sloboda 2015), as music educators, it

> remains the domain through which we can effect change. In this convergence of crises, this paper considers how music might play a role in imagining a different possible future than our current trajectory suggests. (p. 270)

Of course, it is important to be realistic about what exactly the power is which is being placed upon these artforms. It does have to do with dreaming, but that is the first step. Music can be an "igniter" but not a sustained driving force all on its own. Willingham (2009) writes:

> The rather naïve idea that a song might contribute to peace in a war-torn world springs from music's flame of hope. Children singing might very well bring a momentary respite to conflict, but music in and of itself will not change the world. Although our children, youth, and adults from every generation are singing the songs, are they hearing the music in such a way that hope springs?. I believe that deep within the human heart there is the capacity for us to hear. For, when we draw from the well of hope, we begin to engage in action that realizes the dream of that hope. Action follows the dream. Understanding the issues coupled with the human need to be engaged in the work of the greater good inform the action. (p. 66)[10]

Accordingly, this thesis is not aiming to burden music education and music educators with the issue of climate change and educating for sustainability. However, it is a call for what can be done to be done. I believe the climate emergency warrants everyone to utilize their own "spheres of influence" to change human behavior and develop

[10] As this author discusses "music's flame of hope" it is important to acknowledge the ways in which music has also been used historically to war monger, ignite and sustain aggression, etc. I think its power, like most power, can be used for good but also for evil.

sustainable living and mindset for the future. This thesis is an attempt to explore why music and music education can be effective in these endeavors.

Another consideration for why the music classroom in schools can develop humans in ways that other disciplines currently cannot, is that within the context of schooling, many educators and researchers are all too familiar with the burden of standardized testing in schools. Sobel (2008) writes:

> … as environmental educators seek to professionalize their endeavors and work more closely with schools, they become assimilated into the world of standards, curriculum frameworks and high stakes tests. Learning about the environment becomes ingesting a sequence of facts and concepts that create environmental knowledge. The underlying assumption is that knowledge leads to the creation of attitudes that eventually lead to thoughtful environmental behaviors. (p. 15)

Sobel resists this by later writing:

> What gets lost, when we focus on facts, are the initiation experiences, the moments of transcendence when the borders between the natural world and ourselves break down. It's these experiences that provide the essential glue, the deep motivational attitude and commitment, the sense of place. (p. 16)

He hypothesizes that "one transcendent experience in the landscape has the potential for leading to 1000 nature facts" (p. 16). Here I turn to an Orff-Schulwerk expert and greatly accomplished music educator to describe general music connections to the natural world. I argue that such experiences are reminiscent of these transcendent experiences discussed by Sobel (2008). Crowell (2024) writes:

> The natural world offers many invitations to us and our students. With attentiveness, responsiveness, and flexibility, we can connect our students,

> through elemental music, to these particular joys. Have you and your students played with these vibrant invitations? My students and I have found joy and wonder singing Sakura in the spring underneath flowering Japanese cherry trees or singing in the woods to "wake" the winter animals they had been studying. Third-grade students recreated the water cycle with instruments and movement after a stream hike in science class. Consider guiding young students to dramatize the process of metamorphosis with movement and instrumental accompaniment of their choosing. Or to tie into the study of native birds, invite them to play bird calls on recorders in the woods—then experience the joy my students and I shared when the birds answered their calls! (p. 44)

But of course the reality for many educators and students is that school is disconnected from nature spaces and natural elements. These moments of "transcendence" that Sobel (2008) so compellingly advocates for and as Crowell (2024) demonstrates may simply not be possible.

Perhaps then - when going back to Blacker's (2013) compartmentalized pessimism or The Serenity Prayer - an opportunity could lay in the spaces without standardized testing and the narrowly-focused preparation for such (music and art classrooms). School administrators and educators cannot change the laws regarding standardized testing and the need to prepare for them in the general education classrooms (though of course they can *and* should advocate for changes and submit testimony as educational professionals), but they can encourage and make space for education for sustainability in other spaces coupled with the other subjects (music, art, physical education, library and media, etc.). This is because—as I will discuss below in the eighth point of this section utilizing the example of Pratt (2015) and ideas of

O'Gorman (2015) and Baker and Gehlbach (2022)--a comprehensive approach to education for sustainability at a school must be designed to include and exist within every classroom and subject.

Similarly, in addition to standardized testing, new curriculum requirements and state and administrative control are further limiting the time for general classroom and intervention teachers to build community, engage in pedagogies like inquiry work (ie. Kenyon, 2020), and explore meaningful topics like sustainable living and caring for the planet. Perhaps, however, this is where the music educator enters with a little more flexibility and opportunity to collaborate with general classroom and intervention teachers in embracing education for sustainability. After all, Marsh et al. (2020) remind readers, "Teachers in the United States, especially those in the public schools, have held the primary responsibility for teaching children about democracy and citizenship" (p. 1). Such democracy and citizenship must community building, social and political skills, and education for sustainability. Standardized testing, state administrative control, etc. cannot take away from this necessary education.

General Music and the Teaching of Ethics for EfS

Fifth, I argue that general music education in the elementary schools can teach the ethics which Robinson and Vaealiki (2015) argue are (or ought to be) at the heart of early childhood education for sustainability. They are ethics of care, listening, participation, and hope. Lee (2016) writes that "by the judicious selection and implementation of music activities, the values of character education could be effectively introduced to children" (p. 349). This study was limited, however, in that it did not measure the efficacy of such instruction beyond the perspective of the observance of student behavior changes by early childhood education teachers. There was no control

group, and the results were not determined by researchers observing student behavior following the implementation of values education. However, there is value in the teacher perspective. And, regardless of whether the music activities *taught* character values or merely elicited behavior associated with said values, the students were behaving in a more positive manner. Chung (2023) found that the principals she studied all saw benefit in teaching moral values and ethics through music. However, it is clear that further research as to the actual outcome of such instruction would be beneficial.

In regard to the ethic of care, Robinson and Vaealiki (2015) write that such an ethic of care in which "emphasizes interdependence is highly relevant to [early childhood education for sustainability] ECEfS as interdependence informs the concept of guardianship (particularly our responsibility to care for the earth)" (p. 108). Musicking and music education can lead students to such concepts of guardianship and care. In her study, Lee (2016) reports, "The respondents (i.e., teachers) felt that drama and songs do have the power to enhance children's ability to learn to care for others and their own needs" (p. 345). Moreover, "all [teachers] noted a positive effect on both caring development and academic achievement. The [teachers] reported that children's overall sense of caring increased: children behaved more responsibly towards their disadvantaged peers" (p. 308). If musicking and music education have the ability to effect more care, then it ought to be an intention of such within the general music classroom. Not only is an ethic of care "highly relevant to ECEfS," but I argue that it is highly relevant to society in general. I argue that growing a desire to care within the young people of the community would only have a positive effect.

In regard to the ethic of listening, Robinson and Vaealiki (2014) point to the need of educators to listen to students and families, writing

> ECEfs promotes the view that children must have an authentic voice that allows opportunities for children to influence their world. ECEfs, therefore, requires educators to listen and really hear what children and families have to say about sustainability issues, and for this listening to lead to action. Accordingly, children's competencies are enhanced as educators notice and respond to their ideas and creativity and encourage children's participation in decision making and action taking. (pp. 109-110)[11]

For the music teacher to listen, the student must speak or articulate something through or in conjunction with the creation of music. This opportunity is woven into the foundation of the Orff-Schulwerk approach to music education written about previously in this thesis. The approach of Orff-Schulwerk fosters students' ability to create and to share musical motifs and movement in the telling of stories and responding to such. Students get to be the creators; the imagineers, and the educator listens. Crowell (2024) describes this component of student creation to the Orff-Schulwerk approach nicely, writing:

> As children continue in our programs, their creativity and experience with movement lead to composition. Improvisatory movement becomes choreography and, by mutual consent, children learn to combine their ideas in a way that includes others. A beginning recorder player might create their first original piece with a handful of notes and give it a grand title, as with original street cries or

[11] This assumes that the families and community members care about sustainability issues. If they don't, such incorporation of EfS with music instruction and programming could be the opposite of being responsive to these stakeholders. I believe that the music educator needs to be realistic about where the community is in how they think about sustainability issues and the climate emergency. Similar to the scaffolding of EfS discussed earlier, perhaps in communities where sustainability issues are not either within the minds of community members or a pressing issue, music educators can focus on the connection to nature aspect EfS in their instruction and programming.

> Olympic themes for favorite athletes. My third graders relish creating and sharing entrance dances to Gunild Keetman's Intrada from Paralipomena (Orff & Keetman, 1977). As students' recorder skills expand, they create their own intradas on four notes and compose entrance dances for these as well. (p. 43)

This creation component on the part of the student creates an excellent opportunity for such listening on the part of the music educator; not to mention the times at "concerts" or "programs" when the families of students come to the school or another common space and partake in the musicking themselves by listening to their students. There is an opportunity here for further listening, connection, and sharing. Of course, this requires that families and community members already be familiar and concerned with sustainability issues. I argue that the music educator (or any educator incorporating EfS) must meet the community where it is, not lose sight of its subject for its own sake (ie. music for its own sake) but consider how they might incorporate EfS in a meaningful way for their unconditional love for the world, their subject, and passing it on. For a community without concern for sustainability or the climate emergency, an educator might put energy into connecting their students and the community to the natural world.

In regard to the ethic of participation, Robinson and Vaealiki (2015) write that such "in [early childhood education for sustainability] ECEfS considers the quality of the relationships educators have with young children and their families. Such relationships should be based on a willingness to share knowledge, respect difference, and hear and act upon children's and families' ideas and solutions" (p. 110). I argue that this ethic of participation among educators, their students, and the families/community

is vital beyond early childhood education for sustainability but through the schooling ages.

Music can assist in the facilitation and fostering of such an ethic; such an exchange of knowledge, respect, ideas, and solutions in its nature within schools of bringing people together (students, families, administrators, teachers, etc.). Lozada et al (2022) is a wonderful example of such. They connect the ideas and realities of community cultural wealth, deficit based pedagogy, asset based pedagogy, social capital, aspirational capital, navigational capital; resistant capital; linguistic capital racial justice, social transformation, culturally sustaining pedagogy, funds of knowledge-- and offer an extraordinary example of bringing an understanding of all of these things to a music education initiative in their community which they called "Una Noche de Música" (A Night of Music).[12] Lozada et al write that, "The project was a presentation and demonstration for families about using music in the home to foster both music-based and language-based literacies in the home language…" (p. 15). It included "bilingual elementary school children, district staff, [and] future teachers…" (p. 16). The event included singing games incorporating "culturally sustaining song materials that reflected [participants'] families' heritage," (p. 16). It also included folktales, multimodal approaches (which "encompassess the myriad of ways in which people communicate whether that is through gesture, speech, images, writing, sound, movement, or language (Kress, 2010)," (Lozada et al, 2022, p. 17).

Lozada et al (2022) serves as an example of this ethic of participation; detailed and connected to ideas, realities, and practices such as culturally sustaining pedagogy,

[12] Portions of this thesis were initially developed in my final paper for CULT 69530: Multicultural Theories & Scholarship in Education at Kent State University in July of 2023.

embracing social capital of students and families, etc. It can serve as a model for future attempts of music educators to put such theories to practice in our profession in regard to multicultural education and equity literacy. The most impactful quote from Lozade et al (2022) is:

> In order to reject [what could be seen as an attempt to ask students and families to "lose or deny their languages, literacies, cultures, and histories in order to achieve in schools" (Alim & Paris, 2017, p. 1)] teachers must learn to focus on using school for racial justice and social transformation by sustaining what [students and families] love (Alim & Paris, 2017; Paris & Alim, 2014). This is culturally sustaining pedagogy. (pp. 14-15)

This is an inspiring and empowering statement for educators across disciplines.

Robinson and Vaealiki (2015) stressed the importance of this ethic of participation and that, "Such relationships should be based on a willingness to share knowledge, respect difference, and hear and act upon children's and families' ideas and solutions" (p. 110). A multicultural approach—that sustains the cultures of all students and invites participation by not only students and educators, but families and other community members as well—can be fostered and ignited through music and music education as demonstrated by Lozada et al (2022).

In regard to the ethic of hope, Robinson and Vaealiki (2015) write, "Hope is essential as it enables individuals to look towards the future with confidence, even though the future is uncertain" (p. 111). They go on to write:

> Hope…is a key ethic to utilise when sharing issues of sustainability with children, as it empowers children, educators and families to action. Hope leads to the belief

> that there are solutions to problems, and builds capacity and confidence to act." (p. 112)

It seems necessary to me that the educator must first embody and exhibit an ethic of hope—both hope for the continuation of our cherished music as well as hope for a sustained environment and society for it to be enjoyed and produced there within, for as McCarthy (2019) writes:

> The teacher stands on the threshold of promise and possibility between past and future.... Jorgensen captures the essence of that powerful and responsible cultural moment: "[I]t is important to learn to hope, take heart, and be courageous. Without our efforts, musical traditions bequeathed to us will die. Much hangs on our transforming and transmitting the wisdom of the past to new generations."[54] She further illuminates the moment: I am very sympathetic to those teachers of oral traditions who regard what they teach as a treasure. To entrust it to a student is to hope profoundly that it will likewise be treated with great love, care, and respect. It is to wish that we (the embodiment of what we teach) will transmit a legacy to our students that will live on in the future. (pp. 279-280)

I argue that it is now time—in order to "hope profoundly that [music] will…be treated with great love, care, and respect"—that music educators not only entrust our treasure of music to our students, but do so understanding the reality of the climate emergency and its limiting and abolishing effect on everything including the enjoyment and advancement of our treasure, music. I argue that music elicits great passion from many who partake in musicking in its various roles (listening, responding, producing, performing, etc.). Passion about any of the treasures of life—music included—must now

drive hope; hope that not only is the treasure passed down, but a healthy and sustainable world is maintained. Love for music, like any of the treasures of the world, has that power. This, I argue, is why the music classroom is a worthy place to educate for sustainability.

General Music and the Foundations of Democracy

Sixth, music classrooms offer a space for students to learn social and political skills and engage in community building necessary for reforming the ways in which people live in society. Since building a sustainable future requires comprehensive skills and values beyond simply a care and concern for the environment, there is a need at every level of education to teach such social and political skills and values.

The Orff-Schulwerk approach to music education, which, as stated earlier, centers around the creativity and imagination of the children (Beegle & Bond, 2016), has been shown to have a positive effect on the increase of social skills in children, including skills such as leadership, diligence, sociability, and law-abiding (Yun & Kim, 2013). Such skills are vital in education for sustainability, a pioneer of which, Pratt (2015) points to the Earth Charter (Corcoran, 2005) for such related foundations, specifically to the charter's four guiding principles:

1. Be kind to each other, to the animals and the plants.
2. Take good care of the environment.
3. We are all equal.
4. Say yes to peace and no to violence. (Pratt, 2015, p. 78)

These are themes common in elementary music repertoire and literature, and certainly music educators for sustainability can more intentionally utilize such themes when creating, performing, and responding to music. Pratt (2014) also concludes:

> Children must be actively engaged in the learning process, and safe in a democratic environment in which they can share ideas and contribute towards decision making and action taking. In such a learning environment, children have the potential to develop a sense of agency and to 'make a difference'. These are important first steps in being knowledgeable, active and empowered citizens, now and into the future. (p. 96)

Such frankly democratic ideals are not foreign to music education. Niknafs (2021) writes:

> Music education has long embraced the concept of democracy, ideals of liberal education and democratic approaches to teaching and learning as the part-and-parcel of a radical and critical music education.[40] A democratic approach to music education and cultivating democratic citizens not only creates responsible characters but also sensible and critically aware individuals being able to judiciously interrogate the injustices occurring in the society writ large and question taken-for-granted assumptions entrenched in privileged lives. (p. 179)

And, part of democracy *is* political and social action. Some worry that not teaching (whether explicitly or not) how to engage in political action could lead to negative consequences such as has been experienced in history. Levinson (2001), while discussing Hannah Arendt, writes the following:

> Indeed, the outstanding political lessons of the last century testifies to the tragic consequences of political inaction as witnessed in the absence of protest in Nazi Germany in the years leading up to the war. It is precisely against this backdrop that Arendt wants to recover "the lost treasure" of political action. Her aim is to

> leave "a testament" that preserves those aspects of the tradition that must be passed on if we are to guard against the "failure of memory" that has had such tragic consequences in our century. Cultivating "mini-publics" in the classroom is one way to do this, to be sure, but such stagings minimize the risks of politics, as perhaps they must given our obligation to create safe learning environments for our students. (p. 335)

The idea of education for sustainability requires the teaching of social and political skills. Scholars and practitioners have demonstrated the ability and history of music education doing as such. Such skills are necessary in order to avoid the result of the old adage: those who do not know their history are doomed to repeat it.

General Music and the Communication of Sustainable Ideas

Seventh, coupled with other means of communication, music offers one way in which humans can transmit messages of sustainability and environmental and climate justice. Allen & Dawe (2016) write, “The relevance of ecomusicology comes from its attendant possibilities for adjusting cultural and environmental norms, particularly via teaching. Music and sound can be further media to communicate important ecological issues” (p. 4). I argue that such traditions of music programs and concerts offer a great space for such communication. In elementary schools especially, I argue that music programs are some of the few and only times such significant numbers of families come together at one time and in one place. This is a unique opportunity to reach a large number of people in the community with messages of sustainability and love for nature. Such a use can give music and music education additional meaning and relevance in an ever-changing world.

General Music and Peace

Eighth, music education can equip students with a means to cope, heal, and enjoy the lives they have. Moving forward, even if changes to the degree necessary are made in this society, trauma from this experience of climate change will occur. One may not be able to change all humankind in how it treats the environment—in fact even *many* may not be able to change all humankind–but one and all can turn to the arts for solace in even moments of hopelessness and helplessness as they relate to climate change. Robinson and Vaealiki (2015) draw attention to the reality of what lives in the minds of children regarding the end of the world:

> There are growing concerns about the impact of despair, worry and hopelessness on the emotional and psychological well-being of children (Ojala 2012). One study carried out with Australian children, for example, found that a quarter of children questioned believed that the end of the world would take place in their lifetime (Tucci, Mitchell & Goddard 2007). It follows that an ethic of hope is vital in [early childhood education for sustainability], and that hopelessness is nurtured and strengthened from an early age. (p. 111)

Part of the conversation regarding music education for sustainability must then be this aspect of emotional and psychological well-being. At the end of the day, changing a society so affected by capitalism in every one of its appendages might never happen. There have already been great changes made. However, not on the scale needed, and thus the arts, in addition to assisting in the attempt to change society, can also serve as a comfort; a distraction and an internal peace-maker. Beyond the individual, I argue that music can help entire communities cope and heal.

Music can help communities cope with injustice and build community. Mark (2016) found, through his ethnographic research, that the bands on the small island of Hornby helped "residents cope with injustice by advancing community building, which happens both through musicians making music and audiences experiencing music" (p. 133). The bands did not "magically produce justice in the face of injustice" (p. 133), but by musicking (Small, 1998), "Hornby musicians [developed] collective and cooperative skills and social bonds that help them improve the capacity of the larger community to confront the social and environmental issues facing the Island" (p. 123). Mark's work supports his claim that, "Musicking helps with sociality, which in turn can help the environment" (p. 123).

Music: The Instrument or a Part of One?

People and music educators, specifically, might have reservations about instrumentalizing music and music education programs for social change. An argument could be that art should be made for its own sake. Willingham (2009) acknowledges such tension, writing, "Competing rationales for articulating music's contribution to public education–in particular music-for-music's-sake verses music for extrinsic values—present a challenge for fostering social change through music education" (p. 55). Another argument could be similar to a view that Niknafs (2021) reminds readers is in existence, "Paul Woodford laments music education in school education reducing to mere 'polite entertainment or skill building and thus only a frill and not particularly important in the preparation of children for life'" (p. 181). Has music education been more than this? Should it be? Philosophers as early as Plato recognized the potential of art to be influential beyond aestheticism and pleasure. Regarding art of Plato's time, Günes (2021) writes:

> Just as there was no distinction between art and craft in antiquity, there was also no "aesthetic" attitude that we talk about today in branches of art such as painting, sculpture, music and poetry. In other words, these arts were not approached with a separate aesthetic feeling specific to them. The same admiration could be felt for a political speech as for a statue. There was no perceptual difference between them yet. Because at that time, all of these arts were assigned a more ethical duty, both in form and content. Almost all of what we call fine art today had such a daily function at that time. For example, sculptures or paintings that evoke aesthetic feelings and are now in museums were produced for religious or political purposes at that time. For example, the famous Dionysus festivals of Ancient Greece, where tragedy and comedy plays were performed and a choir was formed, were dedicated to worshiping the Gods or commemorating those who died in wars. It consisted of religious and political ceremonies such as commemoration. Therefore, art was not made just for art's sake, this concept could not even be considered apart from a practical purpose (Shiner, 2020, p. 56) ... aesthetic perception in the ancient period was not separated from moral, religious and political functions, and there was no separate use to characterize the category of fine arts. The function of art at that time ... [was a] ... purely practical function and is different from the arts encountered in museums, exhibitions, concerts and theaters where aesthetic pleasure is felt and where this sensation is aimed. (p. 75)[13]

Also, it is unrealistic to pretend as though music education and music are alone in the world, free of context and relation to everything else in existence. Gould (2009) writes:

[13] Günes (2021) was translated with Google Translate.

> Music education…like all disciplinary studies, exists in and of the social and natural worlds, making it inevitably implicated in—and susceptible to—the socio-political forces of inequality, inequity, and injustice … Music educators at all levels cannot ignore the world in which we all live and work and its concerns if, for no other reason, than the world has come to us. It not only sits on our doorsteps, peering in the windows, it pounds on our doors, shaking the walls and fixtures of classrooms and concert stages, as it resounds through the breath of each singer and instrumentalist. Indeed, it is us, and it is both wondrous and dangerous in its richness and power. (p. xi)

Instead of limiting the arts and arts education as only to be created and enjoyed for their own sake at all times, their uniqueness can be embraced and freed to make society and the pupil(s) better–more attuned to the world and its immeasurable joys in a way that leads them to love it and protect it. Should not society and education utilize all its avenues and disciplines to connect with students and to connect students to the world?

Connecting students to their world is not foreign to music education and musicking. As stated earlier, musicking is "the present participle, or gerund, of the verb *to music"* (Small, p. 9, 1998). Small (1998) writes, "To music is to take part, in any capacity, or in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing" (p. 9). Willingham (2009) writes:

> …Christopher Small (1998) [and others], believe that the cultural meaning of music "lies not just in musical works but in the totality of a musical performance" (p. 13). For Small, *musicking* established a set of relationships with other people, and the act of making/performing music becomes the starting point through

> which insights and understandings are formed. Music is intrinsically valuable because it is performed in the context of relationships between person and person, individual and society, humanity and the greater cosmos. He stops short of declaring musical performance as a means of acting outside of its own processes and practices. According to Small, music is a verb, not a noun, and it is a cultural practice imbedded contextually within the respective and universal conventions of performance. (p. 55)

This way of thinking about music making is not without roots in music education.

Consider a common approach to music education, Dalcroze, which Juntunen (2016) explains was developed by:

> … Swiss composer Émile Jacques-Dalcroze (1865-1950), a professor of harmony and solfège at the Geneva Conservatory after [he identified] problems in music education practice. He was concerned with why music theory was generally being taught as abstraction disconnected from students' emotions, sensations, and experiences and why students seemed to perform mechanically without expression, understanding, and sensitivity. (p. 141)

Juntunen (2016) further writes:

> Jacques-Dalcroze suggests that we come to know the musical world and ourselves through meaningful mind-body exploration and experiences that combine music and movement and take place in interaction with others and the world. Thus, in Dalcroze teaching, knowing and doing, theory and practice, self and others are blended together to form a holistic entity. Emphasizing this holistic view of the body-mind connection and the importance of action and experience in learning

> echoes the ideas of the American pragmatist John Dewey, who stresses how we only know the world through our active orientation toward it. (p. 151)

The Dalcroze approach is a reminder that the happenings within the music classroom should not be disconnected from reality and from the world. It is a reminder that musicking can provide a worldly and connected experience for students if they are guided in such a way.

Studying music should be a whole-body experience with additional focus on connection to others and the world. Scholars of the Dalcroze approach have explored its ability to do such. Van der Merwe and Habron (2019) discuss both the connection to others and connection to the environment as among the core concepts related to Dalcroze. Van der Merwe and Habron (2019) write:

> connection to others, interaction and interpersonal relationships emerged as very prominent themes. According to Bogdan (2010), the community and relationship between self and others that music educators strive for 'has the potential to change the world, one molecule at a time' (124). Jaques-Dalcroze ([1921] 1967) advocates that rhythm has [the] ability to unite people and to bring them in harmony with each other. (p.434)

Similarly, regarding connection to the environment, Van der Merwe and Habron (2019) write:

> Jaques-Dalcroze ([1921] 1967) believes that music can connect the individual with the universe. Similarly, Boyce-Tillman (2007) found that music connects the experiencer with 'other beings, people, the cosmos' (1413). Both the Dalcroze teachers and Dalcroze students in our previous studies say the Dalcroze approach connects them with their environments. Anna sometimes uses pictures of trees in

> her Dalcroze teaching. 'When I pass a tree, I can see emotion in that tree.' Emily feels that through her Dalcroze practice she developed a great sense of presence and experience 'that profundity, being part of the great turning.' Ella tells a story of a Dalcroze lesson where the group had 'gone to the cathedral [to prepare for an activity], we had all taken pictures of it, we have all gotten that feeling of that space so … we were able then to work in a very, very earthy kind of way.' For Lucy, an experience teaching Dalcroze outside brought about 'integration of music and, kind of, that earthy connection with nature. It really felt like it was bringing another dimension to the class.' Transcending time or space can also be considered sacred experiences (Williamson 2010). (p. 435)

These concepts and values of connection to others and the world/environment found in the Dalcroze approach will prove beneficial to teaching for the climate emergency within the general music classroom because as I have tried to demonstrate in this thesis—education for sustainability includes an attempt to lead students to connect to each other, to their community, and to the world. It is not only about a simple stewardship of the earth, but also about building democratic and social skills necessary to transform society.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I argued that schools ought to educate for sustainability because of what I endorse as the purposes of schooling: to provide a commonality in the education of the young people entering society; to provide an opportunity for the community and greater society to set goals for the future. I argued that the elementary school is an appropriate place to begin education for sustainability because of how education is scaffolded, how consistent exposure to sustainable ideas will prove beneficial, and because of the capabilities and understanding that young children possess. I have argued that every discipline and subject should incorporate such education for sustainability, especially my beloved field of general music education. I leaned on Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019), who—when differentiating between political endeavors and education—write, "education can be conceived of in terms of an unconditional love for this world" (p. 2), "in which there is something that is important in and of itself – something we should care about, and that is worth of the effort of study" (p. 55). I add that there are things (the many arts and sciences) that we should care about that are worth not only the effort of study, but the preservation of a world in which to continue study and growth in such fields and disciplines.

In conclusion, I want to make a sort of "call" to researchers and practitioners within education. We all have a part to play in response to what I believe is the emergency of our time. I believe there is power in the knowledge we can share with each other and with our students.

This thesis was born from knowledge I have accumulated from the social movements of climate and sustainability activists and from the books and articles which

I have read during my graduate studies– the authors of which, too, likely were led to include discussion of climate change and the anthropocene because of their accumulated knowledge from such social movements. I believe this speaks to the power of writing, speaking, and teaching—regardless of subject or discipline—education for sustainability. It is a social movement through education for the betterment of our society. In regard to movement knowledges and education, Niesz (2019) writes:

> [Education] is fundamental to the production and promotion of movement knowledges. Movements both require and promote learning and education (of varied types, informal, nonformal, and formal) at every stage in their lifecycle, from the articulation and framing of the movement's vision, to organizing, to engaging in collective action, to influencing policy, law, institutions, and social life. (p. 227)

What happens as the movements grow and the knowledge spreads further into schools via the faculty and community members? What happens when districts encourage and embrace such? Besides the resistance that capitalism gives to the social movement of building a more sustainable future for our society, also contributing is the collective action problem and– ironically–the democratic procedures of our communities and institutions. I believe that it takes the majority to say, "This is what we want to do." Or, more accurately, perhaps it takes the resistors to fall just below 50% of any decision-making group.

Of course, I believe we have seen throughout history that power does not always work like this. A select few can warrant more power than a majority of ordinary people. A minority of citizens can wield power enough to resist the will of the majority through systems such as the electoral college in the process of electing the president of the

United States. However, in a democracy—on issues of educational initiatives at the state and local levels—progressive initiatives (like education for sustainability) can have come to fruition through focused organization and deeply-held convictions (for an example, see Ketteler, 2023).

Beyond this, there is still conflict considering the historic competing ideas of education: private vs. public; individual social mobility vs. social efficiency? Included in the decision-making made in every level of influence (ie. state legislative bodies, school boards, school administrations, and teachers themselves), must be the consideration of what schooling is for. Is it solely to perpetuate our societal traditions of capital accumulation by corporations, nations, and individuals (in some cases at the cost of our environment)? Or, is the purpose of schooling to also offer a space for imagining a new future through enjoying both the arts and sciences; a more sustainable and healthy future in terms of nature and our environment? Frankly, I say that the social efficiency aim in which the purpose of schooling is to create workers for industry will always be (and arguably *must* be) a *part* of the purpose of schooling. The exploration and discussion as to *why* that is the case is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, what is within the scope is to argue the following: in addition to a social efficiency aim, space can be made for students to imagine a new future through enjoying both the arts and sciences; one that is more sustainable and healthy in terms of nature and our environment. Levinson (2016) reminds us that:

> the idea that responsibility to others (heteronomy) is both prior to and ought to take priority over the development of the self qua self (autonomy) is at odds with the legacy of the Enlightenment within which schooling is situated. (p. 113)

It is difficult to teach something that is at odds with foundational aims of schooling and education in general. And, teaching for sustainability requires ethics of care, listening, participation, and collective hope. Perhaps starting early (elementary school) and utilizing the arts can better connect students to each other, the greater community, and the world around them in a way that leads to a love for all of it and thus an inclination to protect it with consistency and persistence. That is why this is a part of education for sustainability; a vital part—utilizing every subject including the arts. I argue that education for sustainability must exist within schools and consistently throughout all the classrooms and operations of the schools.

In this work of arguing for education for sustainability in schools—specifically beginning in elementary school and within the general music classroom—it was important to discuss Blacker's (2013) idea of compartmentalized pessimism. When studying education and society and the competing aims of the world, the activist reaches a point when acceptance of the unchangeable is necessary in order to change that which is possible. And always there is more to consider. For example, part of this thesis discussed the teaching of social, political, and democratic skills in the music classroom. However, Niknafs (2021) writes:

> Unwillingly, I linger on the idea that the discourse on democratic music education is only a modification of the same hierarchical mechanisms of power over the "people for whom living means continually standing up to death, and doing so under conditions in which death itself increasingly tends to become spectral."[65] Reading democracy and global liberal order through necropolitics exposes the preoccupation with truth, reason, and creating democratic citizens as becoming subjects and is an insufficient perspective toward the current global

> situation. Such discourse does little to dismantle the sufferings and deaths of thousands and is ill-equipped to challenge the status quo and societies infected by the democratic order. Such conversations have the inadvertent ability to legitimize the hidden agenda of the First Capitalist World that "has left in its wake a multitude of destroyed subjects," and "the implacable will to know nothing."[66] (p. 183)

This is reminiscent of Woolf's (1938) theme in *Three Guineas* arguing for women to not enter the war-mongering professions and spaces of the world which had traditionally belonged to men. Instead, society needed to be rebuilt. Change it from within its current structures. However, this is macro-level thinking. It is worthy of consideration, but it lies beyond the control of an individual or a community. What does lay within control, or at least near control, are the school and local communities. There is an ability to transform these spaces into more sustainable operations. And, democracy occurs at these levels too. Preparing students to be democrats in these spaces is a necessary part of education for sustainability including within early childhood education and across subjects like music.

In addition, Geir Johansen (2012) supports analysis, accommodation, and activism on the part of the music educator to "work actively and seriously – with verve and spirit – to utilize the assets of the prevailing regime along with minimizing its shortcomings, to the benefit of their institutions," while also "point[ing] to those shortcomings by taking part in the public debate on education" (pp. 228-229).

While discussing Arendt (1958 & 1961), Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019) write, "Education is also the passing on of the existing world to the next generation in such a way that the young can begin anew with this world" (p. 14). They go on to say,

"education is about the possibility of transformation in a radical sense of that word – not about the continuation of an established order of things…"(p. 14). Such a transformation and a beginning anew with the world would require a confrontation with the flaws of the current world, would it not? Willingham (2009) writes, "The arguments for a relevant education that brings students face to face with the issues of war and peace, poverty and starvation, the systemic abuse of women and children, ecological stewardship, and political corruption are irrefutable" (p. 53). However, almost contradictory to their quote above, Vlieghe and Zamojski (2019) later write while referencing Arendt:

> next to the rigorous separation between the domains of the household and the political, there is a third sphere in-between the private and the public (Arendt 1961, p. 188), which needs also to be strictly opposed to the private and the public. This is the sphere of education, skholé. The school is not an extension part of the family, nor is it the preamble of political life. It is something altogether different. It is an exceptional time and place where children were taken away from their family and temporarily gathered with others (unlike them) and with a representative of the elder generation (a teacher) – without having to be preoccupied with any worry about the good of neither the family, nor the city. Children literally had to move to another, new and perhaps uncomfortable place, at a distance of the safe and cozy place the family offers to take care after them together with those of the same ilk. At the same time, the world of adult responsibilities and the risk of political life (agon) were also placed at a distance, so that students had the opportunity to fully and truly devote themselves to the study of particular subject matters. (p. 19)

There is tension with this discussion because the climate emergency is so politicized. It is so interwoven within “political life” that such an attempt to keep the students from this sphere will be challenging. How can “the world of adult responsibilities and the risk of political life [be] placed at a distance” (p. 19). Perhaps “the distance” entails no discussion or instruction as to the anthropocene and what caused it, but simply an attempt to lead the students to love nature and the world. But is this fully educational? And what about the teacher? What implications does this philosophy have for them as professionals and citizens? With similar questions, Levinson (2001) writes the following:

> How then can educators prepare students for political action in ways that better allay Arendt's concern about the conflation of educational with political spaces? And, to attend to Schutz's Deweyan concerns, how do we ensure that the political not be so cordoned off from education that we lose sight of the need to facilitate a transition from the relative safety of educational spaces to the risks of the wider world? One way to do this is through the curriculum via the telling of stories that leave the kind of testament that was not available to members of the resistance and thus had to be discovered anew by them. In the spirit of Arendt's ruminations on teaching in "the gap between past and future" in "The Crisis in Education," rather than monumentalizing the past as education tends to do, such a testament would have to "preserve newness," by no means a simple undertaking.[8] (p. 335)

And, too, it is important to remember that not everything is within the control of the educator. Perhaps this is where knowledge from political spaces occasionally enters into the classroom via the students through their comments depicting their experiences of

the outside world. Instead of squashing any comments relating to political spaces and the world beyond the educational, an educator only moderate student discussion.

The school truly is the point at which the old and new generations meet (Vlieghe & Zamojski, 2019). Both learn from the other. The old generation brings knowledge and experience the entirety of which they should not share; perhaps for the ultimate reasons of seeing what the students create themselves. van Poeck and Östman (2020) advocated for educators "bringing something to the table and making it free, that is, creating opportunities to learn from the old world as a means for renewing the world" (p. 1011). This connects to Willem Postma and Smeyers (2012):

> As representatives of the present world, educators mediate between the old and the young by balancing between that which is 'no longer' and that which is 'not yet', or, as Levinson notes: 'To teach in this gap is to take on the twofold task of introducing students into a world that precedes them, while preserving the possibility that students might undertake something new in relation to this world' (Levinson, 1997, p. 450). According to Levinson, this gap is not mainly to conserve and preserve the past, but occupies a provocative space as well, one which opens the possibility of interrupting social processes that appear fixed and inevitable. (p. 404)

The gap is where the table is. What is brought to the table at the first meeting of the generations in the elementary school is different from that at the middle and high schools or universities. Perhaps this first meeting at the table has an agenda only of love for the world and for all life (human and non-human); for all the sciences and the arts, so much so that we educators teach for newness and for betterment of our society coupled with the sciences and arts we love for continuation of such and ourselves.

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[14] *Illusion and Reality* was originally published in 1937 by Messrs* Macmillan. Christopher Caudwell is a pseudonym for Christopher St John Sprigg (1907–1937).

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