Editorial

Looking back to the editorial in the very first edition of BJME, back in 1984, there are a number of striking resonances which belie the thirty years which have passed since Volume 1, Issue 1. Take this paragraph as an example:

> Many problems in music education are the result of the insularity of our practice. In Britain music teachers are often hesitant about sharing their ideas. Then again, the roots of our teaching methods reach back far into the past, so that we tend to function on the basis of precedent; we do things because they have always been done, and only rarely perhaps do we make the effort to reflect upon what is done. Now, perhaps because of economic restraints, we are becoming more aware of the need to justify the place of our subject in the educational curriculum and the need to examine closely the reasoning behind our teaching methods. (Paynter & Swanwick, 1984)

So much remains the same, yet at the same time the music education landscape is entirely different from then! In the UK since that editorial was written we have had, *inter alia*, new examinations at 16+, a National Curriculum (in a number of very different versions), changes in governance of schools, an entirely different financial scene for schools, the establishment of music hubs, changed relationships for music services with pupils and schools, a diminishing role for Local Authorities, the establishment of new types of schools – Free Schools and Academies, the removal of the requirements for teachers to hold a teaching qualification, and the shifting of teacher training out of universities and into schools. Quite a list! And there is a lot more besides that has not been included. Also important to note is that the BJME is now, and has been for a while, very much, as its strapline says, 'an international journal', and so there are interactions and synergies with many other national systems and music education types across the world.

But to return to the specifics of that first editorial, let us examine some of the statements therein: 'Many problems in music education are the result of the insularity of our practice.' This insularity is not a characteristic of national systems, as previously noted, as we are now more connected than we have ever been, but is a symptom of school music departments being very lean in full-time staffing, often with only one or two people. With that leanness, insularity follows, not just due to size, but also because it is very difficult to release a teacher without there being knock-on effects on colleagues, which, understandably, many teachers are reluctant to impose upon their friends. But added to this, the league-table culture has brought the issue of performativity to the fore in ways which would have shocked our 1984 colleagues (and selves, perhaps, should we have been there!):

> Performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). The performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection. As such

they stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual . . .
(Ball, 2003, p. 216)

So although insular, the music teacher is now subject to internal scrutiny, sometimes in minute detail, sometimes to the detriment of their musical selves (Fautley, 2012).

Let's look at this line again: 'In Britain music teachers are often hesitant about sharing their ideas.' The notion of performativity comes into play here too. In England at least, increasing competition between schools has resulted in a reluctance by some school leadership teams to share good practice. This they see as being akin to Manchester United holding a training session for Tottenham Hotspur to help improve their goal defence! So now, even though they may wish to, some music teachers cannot get out more.

And what about this: '. . . the roots of our teaching methods reach back far into the past, so that we tend to function on the basis of precedent; we do things because they have always been done, and only rarely perhaps do we make the effort to reflect upon what is done.' The 1984 authors would probably be surprised by what goes on in classrooms today. In the UK, and elsewhere, classroom composing by all pupils is now an entirely normal activity. Indeed, it has been a significant part of the National Curriculum in all its various iterations. We know that in some national contexts music education is still a largely performance-based modality, but here in the UK, composing has well and truly taken root. Which is not to say that there are not still issues with it, as recent articles here in BJME have explored (*inter alia* Francis, 2012; Lewis, 2012; Winters, 2012). The challenge for today is moving pedagogy forwards. With the introduction, in England at least, of non-qualified (in education) music teachers we run the risk of such teachers being rooted in the pedagogy that they themselves received. They may have had no chance to explore what a former editor of BJME referred to as '. . . what is understood as valued and legitimate music subject knowledge' (Spruce, 2003, p. 317), or to have explored Shulmans notion of Pedagogic Content Knowledge (Shulman, 1986). This is a significant change from 1984.

Reflection too, is problematic, and not just for untrained teachers, but for all. In many national jurisdictions neo-liberal ideologies are currently prevalent, and these actively discourage reflection in and on education in favour of compliance. As the American education commentator Diane Ravitch has observed, 'Can teachers successfully educate children to think for themselves if teachers are not treated as professionals who think for themselves?' (Ravitch, 2011, p. 67). This is a serious issue, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to reflect on practice in *musical* ways. As another former editor of BJME has written, 'teaching music musically' (Swanwick, 1999) should be central to practice. Without good reflection it is difficult to move this forwards, and as Stenhouse observed, 'there is no curriculum development without teacher development' (Stenhouse, 1980, p. 5).

If in 1984 there was an issue with 'economic constraints', the global financial crises of recent years have really had an impact. 'Now, perhaps because of economic restraints, we are becoming more aware of the need to justify the place of our subject in the educational curriculum . . . ' but it is not only because of finance. The same neo-liberal agenda mentioned above has also impacted upon the relative importance of subjects at school, with an emphasis on STEM areas, and those which will enable economic activity.

This is ironic, as creative industries earn a huge sum for the UK, as they do in many other countries, but nonetheless these are significantly downplayed, and we know of many examples of school music programmes being cut back or scaled down. In the UK the move towards in-school training of teachers has led to a number of university music education departments being axed completely. This will have a knock-on effect, as these academics are the ones who research, write, and think about music education, and with their passing we lose some important voices, and powerful thoughts.

Music has for many years felt it has had to justify in the curriculum, and advocacy has become an almost full-time occupation for some. This difficult position, along with the other factors mentioned above, is not yet a looming crisis, but the situation is considerably worse than it was thirty years ago.

The final part of the cited editorial, 'the need to examine closely the reasoning behind our teaching methods' is now needed more than ever. The changes in technology, the access young people have to all sorts of music, the shifting patterns of the internet, and the ubiquity of musical availability are far beyond the LP record, the 7-inch single, and open-reel tape which would have been common in 1984.

But thirty years on, and now looking to the future, the changing landscape of music education locally and globally will continue to be discussed, described and argued over in the pages of BJME for, we hope, many years to come.

The cyclical but dynamic nature of the issues described above are exemplified in the current issue, beginning with **Andrew Fowler's** multi-trait, multi-method analysis of composing and performing at Key Stage 3 in England. Often regarded and assessed as discrete disciplines, Fowler argues that in practice, composing and performing are found to be integrated in a more fluid and musical way than what might have hitherto been believed. **Dan Stowell** and **Simon Dixon** also focus on the issue of integration, but this time in relation to formal and informal music learning, music technologies and authorised or unauthorised activities in secondary school music lessons. Their observations point to the availability of a rich, multimodal ecosystem of technologies, and more specifically, to how teachers plan for and use these technologies in the classroom.

Presenting a view from Victoria, Australia, **Harry Burke** outlines the inevitable impediments to development that occur when the cycle of curriculum reform is unsupported in its implementation phase, thus leading to teacher frustration followed by reversion to more conservative curriculum approaches.

Elizabeth Haddon analyses the student learning that takes place in what might be regarded as a supreme learning context, namely the music masterclass. Despite the overt opportunities for learning that are presented, she suggests that there is potential to enhance these opportunities through focusing on developing skills of perception and systematic observation, as well as thinking about how processes observed might transfer to the learner.

Paul Louth explores the philosophical work of Paul Feyerabend and considers its implications for music education, ultimately arguing that we should seek to reconcile our veneration for method with the desire for development of musical knowledge, finding a balance between the two.

Finally, **Tim Patston** discusses the nature of music performance anxiety (MPA) and its prevalence among the various populations of music makers, from student to professional. He deems it essential that music educators gain an understanding of MPA in order to

assist their students and he concludes his paper with useful pointers which may inhibit the development of MPA trajectories.

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