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Movement in the Elementary Music Classroom: Good Citizenship in Action(s)

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COLLEGE OF MUSIC

MOVEMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY MUSIC CLASSROOM:

GOOD CITIZENSHIP IN ACTION(S)

By

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For the Children's Association for Maximum Potential,
my star and guiding lamp.

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ABSTRACT

The pairing of children's songs with games, dances, and visually representational motions is an important part of the elementary general music classroom and is used especially frequently with the youngest age group (which I am defining here as spanning from preschool through second grade). Teachers cite a variety of reasons for incorporating these songs into their curricula: gestures can be used to reinforce musical or academic concepts, increase student engagement, and decrease problematic behaviors by providing productive outlets through movement. To all of these ends, teachers combine music with movement in equipping children with socially appropriate adaptive behavior. The particular ways in which these movements are used in the classroom, as well as the teachers' motivations for doing so, are, moreover, indicative of value systems that are emphasized and reinforced within the curricular agendas of American public education.

This thesis primarily investigates ways in which musical movement activities are used in elementary classrooms for the purpose of teaching social, behavioral, and academic skills. I also address the social functions of physical gesture in the elementary music classroom and how teachers employ them intentionally to manage behavior and teach class-relevant skills. I explore implications of the competencies learned through movement in elementary music classrooms for enculturating acceptable behavior and shaping children into socially healthy adults. This thesis delves into the elementary music classroom as a stage for reinforcing social synchrony and experimenting with the boundary between creativity and deviance.

My case studies for this thesis center on the classrooms of two elementary music teachers in Tallahassee, Florida, where I observed and conducted interviews with teachers and some of their students. Through this thesis, I explore ways in which both planned and habitual modes of

enculturation through music and gesture are conceived of in the classroom and in pedagogy texts. Theories contributed by microsociologist Randall Collins serve as a lens for interpreting the experiences of these teachers and students and for recontextualizing skills learned in music classrooms as contributing to students' social development.

PROLOGUE

USKAGING WITH THE BLIND FIGHTING LLAMAS

I walked into work to find Cherylanne and Amelia sitting at the table chatting with day staff. Cherylanne was wearing my favorite t-shirt of hers—black with roses, two crossed revolvers, and a healthy smattering of rhinestones. Amelia wheeled over to me, gave an earsplitting laugh when I signed "WHAT'S-UP+BUTTER+CUP[1]," and complimented me on my skirt. It was 2011 and I was working at a residential school for the blind in the southern United States. Rather than naming the school, I'll just say that Andrew, one of my students, often proposed we change our mascot to the Blind Fighting Llamas. I don't think that ever happened, though I secretly wish it would.

Most of my students were young adults with multiple impairments who were preparing to enter the world (or, for most of them, return to live with their families) as they aged out of many of the services and schooling available to young people with special needs. As their instructors, we were expected to prepare our students to interact with other adults in appropriate and constructive ways and to be as independent as possible in their everyday lives. In most ways, this involved what you might expect: teaching life skills like cooking and cleaning, along with social skills to make their relationships with future co-workers, friends, and caretakers more fruitful.

But to some degree we were also teaching conformity, not for the sake of conformity

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[1] This is a joke, similar to English visual puns, like this one:
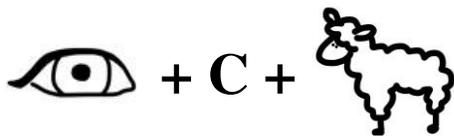
Figure P.1 Visual pun

Note: all illustrations are drawn by the author, unless cited otherwise

itself, but as a survival skill. By reinforcing behavioral norms, we hoped that we could help our

students fit in when their physiology made them "exceptional" already. That meant instructing

Cherylanne to limit the use of her favorite invented words like *uskage* (to hang out) and *luskage*

(something distasteful, sometimes used as a mild profanity). It meant teaching Amelia to curb

her demands for perfection and getting Andrew to recognize the appropriate time and place for

jokes. It meant redirecting Janelle's insecurities and helping her seek out interaction in positive

ways.

Cherylanne heard a staff member enter from the other side of the dorm. As he passed,

she turned to him and said in a robotic voice, "X...D...D..." matching each letter with its assigned

motion: arms held in front of her shoulders, first crossed at mid forearm, then wrists touching,

then wrists apart and elbows together. In reply, he said, "Hey, Cherylanne. What's up?" (This

was certainly an acceptable response, but bliss for Cherylanne was when a staff member replied

with her phrase, especially if they added their own spin to it.) Agitated, Amelia threw her

intervenor's[2] hand a few inches in the air as a way of demanding she interpret what Cherylanne

said. The intervenor signed "X+D+D" and Amelia smiled, calling out, "Cherylanne, you're

silly!" She threw her head back in a spastic, full-body laugh that tossed her strawberry blonde

hair and jangled a dozen bracelets on her wrist. Andrew came skidding out of his room in floppy

socks at full speed, screeching, "No, you're silly, Amelia!!" His computer continued to spew

dictation, sounding like a demented Stephen Hawking stuck in fast-forward. I could barely

understand the words, even without the joyous cacophony in the kitchen.

The Blind Fighting Llamas are the main inspiration for this research. Each is such a

unique individual in ways far beyond their diagnoses. And each has encountered a well-meaning

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[2] An intervenor is a person who interprets both dialogue and narration of people's actions for a
deafblind person. (e.g., "Jon just walked in the front door. He is carrying his baby, Brynn. 'Hi,
Amelia,' he says.")

slew of instructors who attempt to mute some of that uniqueness so they will better fit in socially. Likewise, when I worked at an Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) clinic, I saw how the idiosyncrasies of children with autism were treated as symptoms of a greater "disorder" and targeted, ideally obliterated, in order to help them pass as neurotypical. The process of deprogramming "maladaptive" behavior like stimming seemed draconian at times, and the children who received ABA therapy got little interaction that wasn't for the express purpose of correcting them (setting them up in an artificial situation, responding to their behavior, setting them up again).

In recognizing this, I came to wonder how normative behavior is reinforced in more subtle ways. How is the "norm" maintained in the mainstream? What role do music classes, in particular, play in enculturating typical behaviors? Could it be that music and movement in early childhood education serve a function beyond preventing preschooler mutinies? What if the act of moving and sounding together in both imitative and creative ways is a framework for the mediation of individuality and group membership, belonging and constructive exceptionalism? The following chapters explore the elementary music classroom as a stage for reinforcing social synchrony and experimenting with the boundaries between idiosyncrasy, ingenuity, and deviance.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

My interest in this subject stems from my experiences teaching people who have special needs, especially at a residential school for the blind and visually impaired. In the years I have worked with neurodiverse populations (e.g. children with autism and other neurodevelopmental challenges), I have also become interested in conceptions of "adaptive," "appropriate," and "good" behavior. Each of these three terms is used in a different setting. The concept of "adaptive" behavior is from Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy, through which people with autism are forcefully trained to abandon stigmatized self-stimulatory behaviors in favor of "adaptive" behaviors which draw less attention. Behavior management, which is focused on maintaining order in institutional settings, employs a dichotomy of "appropriate" and "inappropriate" behavior. The ideal outcome is full participation in class activities, with smooth transitions from one to another. From everyday speech outside of the realm of education and therapy, the concept of "good" behavior or "being good" correlates with a societal ideal of "good citizenship." All three terms seem to idealize synchrony—the ultimate non-disruption—through which social interactions are ordered out of chaotic individuality.

Though modern pedagogical theory ostensibly emphasizes honoring and accommodating students' individual needs and idiosyncrasies, the image promoted is ultimately at odds with the widespread enforcement of normative, uniform behavior. Proper management of behavior is widely seen as a precondition of effective content instruction (Garrahy et al. 2005). Teachers carefully organize their presentation of musical concepts to have a balance of variety and

repetition; concerted focus and play; and exposure, conceptualization, and practice. This balance is central in maintaining "engagement," by which students remain enmeshed in the tasks of learning, performing, and playing in a teacher-led sequence. Musical movement has a special place in this structure, serving as a particularly engaging activity that, by virtue of its kid-appeal, can be used as a tool for managing the classroom.

Pedagogical texts, however, rarely address this relationship between content and behavior management. Instead, they typically have the singular focus of subject area instruction and leave teachers the task of inserting suggested methods into their own teaching in effective and engaging ways. Songs involving gesture in the elementary general music corpus are performed both with and without those gestures at various times, with teachers using their own discretion in choosing when to incorporate the performance as a whole or otherwise strip away all but the song, melody, or rhythm for emphasis on a particular musical skill. These reduced musical experiences clearly serve a different purpose in the classroom than the full performance of paired music and games/motions, yet the significance of *including* gesture and movement in musical experiences is largely left out of pedagogical texts.

Purpose and Significance

This study is significant in that it approaches movement and gesture in music education from an ethnographic and sociological point of view rather than a pedagogical one. Studies on movement and music exist in music education, but generally with a focus on "best practices." Conversely, sociological and linguistic studies of gesture and music are almost all about gestures used by conductors, not the gestures and movements that accompany children's music-making activities or those used by teachers to manage behavior and teach academic skills. None of the

literature I have read discusses music teachers' experiences teaching academic and social skills through movement or their motivations for employing such activities on a daily basis are largely muted.

The purpose of this study is to explore ways in which gestures, movements, and games associated with children's songs function within enculturation processes in school settings. I seek to delineate ways in which movement may be intended to promote "adaptive" synchronized behavior functions as reinforcement of cultural morals and norms through students' engagement in successful musical ritual. By studying ways in which behavioral expectations are enforced or otherwise relaxed in response to student action, I seek to unveil indices of communal wisdom and social expectations. In this way, the study will show how the established corpus of songs with movement games and motions in the general music classroom are incorporated by teachers not only for pedagogical functions and behavior management, but also to enforce normative behavior and foster children's development into socially healthy and competent adults.

Survey of Literature

For this study, I am drawing from the research of ethnomusicologists, music educators, and social theorists to construct an understanding of how movement and gesture functions within music instruction as a tool for enculturation in North American school settings. This is chiefly a study of the "best practices" of major pedagogical approaches. Among music education texts that illustrate "best practices" in the Kodály pedagogical system, my point of entry to this study, is *Kodály Today: A Cognitive Approach to Elementary Music Education*, by Michael Houlahan and Philip Tacka (2008), which delineates pedagogical functions of gesture in the classroom from the teacher's perspective. My main text on Orff-Schulwerk is Arvida Steen's *Exploring*

Orff: A Teacher's Guide (1992). This thesis also relies heavily on research in music education, like that presented in *The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* (Colwell and Richardson ed. 2002). For additional sources on educational best practices, see Edwards 2009, Goble 2010, and Hightower 1995.

The research of Patricia Shehan Campbell is a middle ground between the scholarly approaches of music education and ethnomusicology. Her book, *Songs in Their Heads: Music and Its Meaning in Children's Lives* (2010), is an ethnography of children's lives in various settings, including music classrooms. This book is a valuable model for interviewing children on their musical practices and understandings. Campbell also edited *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Musical Cultures* (2013), which has sections on both socialization and enculturation through musical practices, and on music education and development. Further readings on ethnography in teaching contexts include Bresler 1995, Jeffrey and Troman 2004, and Levinson 1999.

Ethnomusicological approaches also contribute to this study, and John Blacking's study of enculturation of Venda children through music making is the foundation on which so many other scholars based their work. More recent contributions that are relevant to my thesis are *A Cultural Psychology of Music Education* (2010), edited by Margaret S. Barrett, which addresses enculturation through music education in various world cultures; and *The Musical Playground: Global Tradition and Change in Children's Songs and Games* (2009), written by Kathryn Marsh, which focuses on child-guided socialization. I also built much of my analysis from Thomas Turino's *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (2008), which further explores music-making as an inherently social pursuit (see also Minks 2002).

Publications in kinesics, the sub-discipline of linguistics which deals with gesture, also

contribute a few ideas to my research. Articles published online through the McNeill Lab (headed by David McNeill) have been the most helpful in building my general understanding of gesture and morphemes, with articles and links to external resources on several aspects of gesticulation. Martin Remland's *Nonverbal Communication in Everyday Life* (2008) and Mark Knapp and Judith Hall's *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction* (1997) explore gesture and other modes of nonverbal communication (eye contact, touch, prosody) from the viewpoint of social psychology. Additional sources on gesture and movement in teaching contexts include Stam and Ishino 2011, Birdwhistell 1990, and McGregor 2008.

My analysis draws heavily from Randall Collins's book *Interaction Ritual Chains* (2004), a microsociological work which investigates why humans seek out certain interactions over others, and seeks to explain a wide variety of social situations and behavioral trends.

Theoretical Approach

Randall Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains begins with a very broad definition of "ritual," calling it "the mechanism of mutually focused emotion and attention producing a momentarily shared reality, which thereby generates solidarity and symbols of group membership." Rituals comprise all human interaction and instances of shared attention. Interaction ritual chain theory is based on the idea that each of these interactions leaves a residue on individuals' consciousness, positively or negatively, strongly or weakly (this residue Collins dubs "emotional energy"). As we interact in more rituals, these experiences come together in our minds to create impressions of different situations, predictions for future interactions; and are the basis on which we make decisions about which rituals to further seek out and how to participate within them. Because humans naturally seek out those situations which they predict

to be strongly positive, rituals and institutions are built to elicit those intense positive emotions in order to draw in more participants and shape their behavior in certain ways (Collins 2004).

I apply Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains to explain the ways in which elementary school teachers structure their curricula and interact with students in order to ensure the success of children's musical experiences for the purposes of increasing student engagement, managing behavior, and sending kids home thinking "music is fun." In essence, musical movement enhances children's experiences in music class, motivating them to participate again. This reflects Collins's idea that individual interactions leave an impression on participants, and that these impressions accumulate to influence people's decisions regarding whether to seek out similar interactions in the future. In this thesis, I explore day-to-day applications of interaction ritual chain theory in the music classroom (i.e. behavior management) vis-a-vis musical movement, as well as long-term social implications of this theory as teachers attempt to build students' confidence and competence in music so that they might engage in music socially as adults. I expand this idea in view of Thomas Turino's research and writing about the social aspects of musical participation in *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (2008).

My approach to notating and describing gesticulation comes directly from sign language, especially my preferred sign dictionary, the third edition of the *American Sign Language Dictionary* by Martin L. A. Sternberg (1998). This method describes handshapes, their placement in space relative to the body, dynamic elements of a gesture, and accompanying facial expressions to capture the full effect of each sign. I provide an appendix of ASL handshapes referenced in the text (Appendix A, p. 102) from Dr. Bill Vicars's website, Life Print (www.lifeprint.com) to aid non-signing readers. Gestures are notated alongside lyrics and simplified Solfege notation as used in Kodály sourcebooks like *First We Sing!: Songbook One,*

Songs and Games for the Music Class by Susan Brumfield, and as taught to me during a Level 1 Kodály course hosted by the West Texas Kodály Association.

My analysis of movement and gesture is influenced in part by Matthew Rahaim's approach in his book *Musicking Bodies: Gesture and Voice in Hindustani Music* (2012). In it, he explores gesture as a musical action tightly wound into performance practice and pedagogy in India. He demonstrates how gestures are used to communicate sonic properties, just as one of my informants describes utilizing movement in her own classroom. My notes resemble his in that they note movement along with shifts in facial expression that accompany performance.

Patricia Shehan Campbell's critical, ethnographic reading of pedagogical texts—as in *Lessons from the World: A Cross-Cultural Guide to Music Teaching and Learning* (1991)—is another model for my thesis. In this book, she ethnographically and neutrally presents "best practices" of various systems of music pedagogy that are used in America, then compares them to teaching methods in other parts of the world. Her work, especially *Songs in Their Heads: Music and Its Meaning in Children's Lives* (2010), also exemplifies effective ethnographic methods for observing and interviewing children which I employed in my research.

My own emphasis on elementary music teachers' voices springs from other research in parallel studies. In particular, Mark Robin Campbell's article "Learning to Teach Music: A Collaborative Ethnography" (1999) provides a point from which to spring into a slightly new direction. This article presents the voices of first-year elementary music teachers on effective teaching practices; but while Campbell uses surveys to gather this information, I collected information through conversational interviews and classroom observation.

The approach that I take is chiefly ethnographic. While I introduce some implicit challenges to the conception of "ideal behavior," this thesis is not meant to valuate current "best

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practices," nor to suggest any new ones. My goal is merely to voice the intentions and practices

of my informants, as well as those of the broader field of music education, in terms of behavior

and movement in the elementary general music classroom. Concordant with Michael Bakan in

his ethnomusicological work with autistic people (2013), the goal is not to "fix" the subjects of

my investigations, but rather to learn from them.

Method

I observed two elementary general music teachers who work in Tallahassee, Florida, then

interviewed them about their motivations for incorporating paired motions and music (through

improvisatory and compositional activities, established song-gesture performances, visual

dictation, dances and movement games etc.) in their teaching. I also conducted individual

interviews with students focusing on their perceptions of movement activities from their

classrooms.

I used critical ethnographic readings of pedagogical source books and music education

research to determine "best practices" in the field regarding the use of movement to teach

musical and academic concepts and to optimize the social environment of the classroom. I drew

from sources in ethnomusicology, music education, and sociology to construct an understanding

of intended function and models of good citizenship present in movement that is paired with

music.

These methods have led to a set of propositions, drawn from the ethnographic data, on

how the integration of music and movement can facilitate goals of good citizenship through

reinforcing social synchrony and experimenting with the boundary between creativity and

deviance. Implicit is a critique of the institutionalized norms of behavior reinforced through

music education. By viewing clearly the behavioral expectations in this system, we might move forward from this study by asking in what ways divergence from normative standards might be deemed acceptable, and beyond that perhaps even commendable, charming, and enriching. As my experience teaching exceptional students has shown me, the ideal of synchronous behavior tangibly influences what we choose to teach our students, and how we impart that knowledge.

My Informants

This is the story of two elementary music classrooms. Both are situated in private schools in Tallahassee, Florida. Both teachers have completed Master's degrees in music, in addition to some continuing education courses in music pedagogy. They are members of professional music education societies like OAKE (Organization of American Kodály Educators) and FOA (Florida Orchestra Association). Their classrooms feature tidy shelves of Orff instruments, hand drums, and recorders along with posters of music terminology and children's artwork proudly on display.

Natalie[3] is in her second year of teaching elementary music at the Alman School[4], a secular not-for-profit college preparatory school which serves children from 3 years old through 12th grade. Alman is the largest private school in the city of Tallahassee, and is nestled amongst the trees in the northern, most affluent part of town. It has, among other things, its own pool and competitive crew team. The campus is immaculate, with broad hallways and covered walkways between buildings. There are 3 classes per grade in the lower (elementary) school, with anywhere from 15 to 20 students in each. Natalie is one of two music teachers at the school, and teaches through grade 5. In addition to teaching general music, she also leads the Glee Club and

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[3] Pseudonym
[4] Pseudonym

beginning strings classes.

Natalie is in her late twenties, and came to elementary music a year ago after graduating with a Master's degree in ethnomusicology. She also holds a Bachelor's degree in instrumental music education from Ohio State University. She says she never imagined herself as an elementary music teacher, but openings for orchestra directors were scarce during the recession when an opportunity opened for her in general music. She quickly came to like elementary music because she gets to have fun with the kids and guide them as they explore new music. Natalie uses online sources for inspiration in writing her curriculum. Her curriculum for early grades involves many active games, as well as videos that teach musical terminology with original songs and have "kid appeal" by virtue of their accompanying silly cartoons. The children sing and move along with the videos and also play prescribed and free movement games with both recorded music and Natalie's own performances. Natalie frequently sits with her students on the floor as they play games together, her blue eyes twinkling and ponytail bouncing along.

Marsha[5] teaches at Cornerstone Learning Community, a self-identified "progressive" school serving children from 3 years old through 8th grade. The school is located in a middle-class part of midwest Tallahassee. Above a wooden walkway that connects the campus's various buildings are what look like faded Buddhist prayer flags hanging over the walkway. (Marsha later tells me that these are the middle school students' hopes and aspirations for the year, which they wrote and hung in August.) Under the walkway is a garden where children as young as six learn about science and horticulture. The older kids' playground includes a structure, maybe 13 feet tall, that has a rock-climbing wall and a decently steep slide. Marsha tells me that Cornerstone has a strict cap on how many children may enroll, so that there is only one class of

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[5] Pseudonym

each grade, and no more than 20 children in each class. In addition to her general music classes, Marsha teaches a percussion ensemble and chorus. She is the only music teacher at Cornerstone. However, she has the advantage with the younger children of having their homeroom teachers stay throughout the class period. Not only are these teachers available to help with behavior issues, but they participate in music making and serve as behavioral models for the children.

Marsha started teaching at Cornerstone after her eldest son had attended for a year. She now has two children who attend the school, and has been teaching there for 8 years. Marsha is in her forties and has a warm, smiling face that is framed by salt and pepper hair which she keeps tied back. She started teaching nearly twenty years ago in a private school located in inner-city Chicago. In addition to her two degrees in Percussion Performance and a Master's degree in Music Education, Marsha has also studied Orff and Kodály pedagogy under Jill Trinka and John Feierabend, though she does not consider herself to be an orthodox practitioner of any approach. True to these pedagogical approaches, her classes feature a lot of folk songs and games, and almost every song that she does with the younger kids involves movement. She typically sings with the children, sometimes accompanying herself with an autoharp or hand drum.

Randall Collins, Interaction Ritual Chains, and Ritual in Music Education

In this thesis, I use Randall Collins's aforementioned theory of interaction rituals and interaction ritual chains to frame a discussion of music education and its function of entraining adaptive social skills. Collins is a microsociologist who expands on the ideas of Emile Durkheim (Collins 2004: xi), Erving Goffman (Collins 2004: 17), and George Herbert Mead (Collins 2004: 81)[6]. At a convergence of these ideas, Collins creates a theory of how and why

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[6] Those ideas specifically cited and expounded upon are that culture is generated by the moral and emotional patterns of social interaction and group membership, proposed by Emile

humans make decisions in their everyday lives, especially concerning social interactions. Collins defines ritual as "a mechanism of mutually focused emotion and attention producing a momentarily shared reality, which thereby generates solidarity and symbols of group membership" (Collins 2004: 7). This definition encompasses practically every interaction people have with one another.

Collins further explains that rituals can be understood by elements shared between them: *situational copresence*, *focused interaction*, *sacred objects*, pressure towards *social solidarity*, and *moral uneasiness* if ritual proprieties are broken (Collins 2004: 23). Or, said more simply, rituals require people to share space and social values, have mutual focus, experience a sense of belonging to a group, and register reticence at the prospect of having their established, communal social values subverted.

Using Collins's definition, the songs, dances, and musical games performed in elementary general music classes would be considered rituals because they manifest social interactions between humans who are (1) *situationally copresent* in the classroom, (2) engaging in a *focused interaction* of mutual focus on the proceedings of the classroom, (3) experiencing pressure towards *social solidarity* through shared expectations of behavior and participation in group games, (4) honoring socially valued *sacred objects*—in this case, a well-performed song or game, and (5) subject to *moral uneasiness* when shared expectations are broken or social values are not honored through refusal to participate, inappropriate participation, or the breakdown of the sacred object that occurs during a sub-par performance[7].

Durkheim (Collins 2004: xi); Erving Goffman's proposition that the self is situationally enacted and constructed in ritual (Collins 2004: 17), and George Herbert Mead's idea that social interactions give rise to group identity, as well as individual identity through a third-person lens (Collins 2004: 81).

[7] Marsha, on the sacred object of a well-performed song, and moral uneasiness at its breakdown: "It's the one situation where everybody's really, really working on the same thing together at the

According to Collins, rituals contribute to an individual's choice-making process by charging up both symbolic objects and their participants with "a special kind of energy" which he dubs *emotional energy* (EE). Building on Durkheim's idea that symbolic objects are charged with significance through ritual (Collins 2004: 36), Collins suggests that moments of collective effervescence (where ritual participants experience shared emotion and "heightened mutual awareness and emotional arousal") charge individual participants with emotional energy. This energy must be periodically recharged through more ritual interactions, but EE continues to influence individuals on an everyday basis, long after rituals have ended and their participants have parted ways (Collins 2004: 35).

A successful ritual results in attunement of participants' emotions, which leads to feelings of group solidarity and emotional energy that inspire people to seek out similar experiences, so as to further bond with others and experience that moment of shared emotion again (Collins 2004: 158). But an unsuccessful ritual will have the opposite effect, making a person feel disenfranchised, drained, and upset. He or she will more likely avoid similar situations that might likewise make him/her feel depressed and disconnected from his/her cohorts (Collins 2004: 108). Collins conceptually organizes these experiences into "interaction ritual chains" consisting of a series of similar rituals. He theorizes that individuals make predictions about future rituals from a collection of similar experiences, then base their decisions on whether to

same time, and that the final product really is dependent on the group effort—even more so than a soccer team or something. Because if you aren't attending one hundred percent to your soccer game, that's one thing; and it might be a little disappointing, you might not win or you might not get as many points, but if somebody zones out or starts doing something totally different in the middle of a piece of music, you've lost your piece of music. It's just not there anymore. And they know that. And without me having to teach that, specifically. I don't have to say, 'Hey, *you* did this.' They kinda know, and they self-correct. Because they know that the outcome depends on everybody's part."

participate or not upon past experiences and their effects on emotional energy[8].

This thesis hinges on the idea that a succession of elementary music classes is a type of interaction ritual chain, as Collins describes them. As stated above, the music games and other activities practiced in general music classes constitute ritual in that they involve situational copresence, focused interaction, sacred objects, pressure towards social solidarity, and moral uneasiness when shared expectations are subverted. The repetition of similar ritual structures that happens with weekly elementary music classes, then, is a prime example of an interaction ritual chain.

One major focus of this thesis is how each teacher's series of elementary music classes functions as an interaction ritual chain—with ritualistic elements and resultant effects from students' experiences on their future decisions—and how teachers conceptualize their place in this relationship and shape their classes accordingly.

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[8] For instance, a person who has had seven great experiences at Friday night contra dancing at the local senior center would probably choose to go again, even if they had another experience that left them feeling embarrassed and "out of the loop." But a person whose only two experiences with contra dancing have been negative is not likely to return for a third try.

CHAPTER 2

BUILDING SOCIAL SKILLS

This chapter concerns teachers' use of singing and musical movement in elementary classrooms to engender lifelong social skills. Elementary music classes build these skills in two primary ways: by teaching musicality, which makes people both more able and more willing to participate in musical social rituals; and by teaching modes of sociability through practicing appropriate touching and face-to-face interaction. I present these skill building practices here in accordance with both how they are understood by my informants and music pedagogues. I additionally interpret them through the lens of ethnomusicologist Thomas Turino's ideas about making and reinforcing social cohesion through participatory music making, and microsociologist Randall Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains. In particular, this chapter focuses on the way a series of experiences (in this case, music classes from childhood) may influence an individual's decisions in the future. I use Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains—and his assertions about how rhythmic entrainment contributes to them—to support and expand my informants' ideas about how their weekly interactions with children may impact those students as they grow older and socialize with others in both musical and nonmusical contexts.

In establishing the theoretical premises outlined in this chapter, I establish a context for interpreting and understanding the ethnographic descriptions of classroom activities in this thesis's subsequent chapters. This frames virtually all competencies and knowledge taught in elementary music classrooms as contributing to students' successful present and future integration into social groups.

Musicality as a Social Skill

The elementary music classroom may be conceptualized as a site of ritual in the sense proposed by Collins (2004: 7). In the classroom space, children engage in social interaction via group dance, music games, singing, and playing instruments. While this educational space is the primary concern of my thesis, it is important and relevant to this exploration to note that there are many other types of musical rituals that people encounter over the course of their lives. Elementary music teachers entrain their students with skills that transfer not only to future music classes and nonmusical academic settings, but also other types of ritual activities featuring music with which they will be involved: dances at proms and weddings; the singing of lullabies to their children; performances of religious hymns, school alma maters and national anthems. In addition, the music itself becomes indexical to those interactions, imbued as it comes to be with associations and emotional energy from past rituals in which it played a part.[9]

As my informant Marsha marveled: "Music accompanies all the big, important stuff we do as people." Perhaps there is good reason for that. In *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Collins highlights the role of rhythmic entrainment (very detailed, close synchrony beyond conscious ability) in building group solidarity (Collins 2004: 77). Synchronization of movement both results *from* a successful moment of solidarity, and feeds into further successful interactions. Collins uses laughter as an example, where multiple individuals experience emotional attunement, finding humor in an object of shared focus, and share physically synchronized behavior: laughter. The laughter itself reinforces group solidarity by creating another level of synchrony. Not only has the group been (emotionally) *moved* together, but it (physically) *moves* together. Collins says that,

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[9] As an example, if a person shared a special song with a former partner, hearing it again might recall a memory of dancing to that song and revive feelings of affection from that moment and/or pain from the eventual breakup.

Laughter illustrates both the collective and rhythmically entraining aspect of micro-interactional ritual. It also points up a central reason for why people are attracted to high-intensity interaction rituals: perhaps the strongest human pleasures come from being fully and bodily absorbed in deeply synchronized social interaction. (Collins 2005: 66)

Turino echoes this idea in *Music as Social Life:* "Through moving and sounding together in synchrony, people can experience a feeling of oneness with others" (Turino 2008: 2).

Marsha speaks to this effect in terms of human evolution:

Some of the theories [about the evolution of music] were, if you're going off to battle, you have to feel this sort of connection to each other and that you're in this together and you're going to protect each other and protect the village. That feeling of connection to people—well, it happens in bands and choirs where when a performance is over, everybody knows how it went and everybody kind of has the same take on it. And I used to get that feeling the most strongly when I was in a drum corps, because when you finish, it's almost this tangible thing and everybody knows how it went and you know what your score's going to be from the judges... For me, it's just anecdotal, meaning I can't prove it and I can't point to the causality of it, but I witness it. I see it.

She extends this idea from musical ensembles to dance:

There's something scientific about moving in synchronicity with other people, about creating music where there's all this stuff- your brain is connected left to right side, and you're also connected to other people. It's just sort of fundamental to who we are as a species. And if all you ever do is just stick in your earbuds, it's not quite the same. It's not the same- it's a very passive experience of music. And so, I guess that would be another argument for why we need to do movement and why we need to have a lot of gesture or movement that goes along with a song, or body percussion, or instruments, or whatever it is. Because there's so much passive music consumption that's so easy now.

If the experience of group synchrony is this powerful, it is no wonder music is so present in our everyday lives. Music-making and dance represent some of the most interpersonally and rhythmically coordinated human actions that exist. As such, they offer music educators a unique position from which to teach their students skills for forging strong social bonds through synchronized movement and vocalization.

A few music education texts speak to the potential social functions of elementary musical instruction. Some, such as *Music Education for Changing Times: Guiding Visions for Practice,*

edited by Thomas A. Regelski and J. Terry Gates, suggest teaching about the varied functions of

musics in social contexts as a way of revealing its multivalent importance. In his contribution to

that volume, for example, John Shepherd writes:

> It is important for those who teach music to understand this connection of music to other cultural and social phenomena because only then, in the classroom, will music's full affective, cultural, and social potency be revealed. Contrary to the dominant model of study and research in music and music education that takes for granted music's autonomy from life—its supposed purity—other disciplines demonstrate instead that music connects powerfully to all other forms of human awareness, expression, and communication. Music's true power and significance cannot therefore be grasped by students if music teachers are insular in their approach in regarding music as autonomous and purely musical. (Shepherd 2009: 118)

The purpose of bringing children's attention explicitly to the social functions of music

may be political, too, as it is presented by J. Scott Goble in *What's So Important About Music*

Education? He advocates for this approach as a way to remind the public of music education's

worth (and in turn, save it from the chopping block):

> In order to address [the incongruity between diverse populations and homogeneous musical practices in schools and the lukewarm or inconsistent support for school music classes], it seems advisable that U.S. public-school music educators should now expand their teaching to attend to the tremendous variety of musical practices manifested in the nation (and throughout the world), working specifically to raise students' awareness and understanding of their personal, societal, and political *effects*, and the way those effects are conceptualized in the culturally diverse communities in which they are undertaken. (Goble 2010: 264)

There is one striking difference between the philosophies of these pedagogues and those

of my informants. While Natalie doesn't seem to prioritize bringing children's attention to the

role of music making and musical movement as a social ritual, this is specially highlighted by

more philosophical pedagogues. Marsha does bring children's attention to social aspects of

music, but differently than is suggested in the quotes above. She mentioned at one point,

> [I want] for them to see that things are ancient and part of humanity and they're evolving and they're changing, but it's still part of what we do; and music and movement and dance can take on many different forms, but they're expressing a lot of the same things. They're

expressing joy, sadness, fear, excitement.... *and* I like to point out to them: pick one major human event or function that doesn't have music attached to it. You can't go to a football game or a soccer game, you can't turn on the TV, you can't go to a wedding, you can't go to a funeral, you can't even go to the grocery store. Music accompanies all the big, important stuff we do as people. So what does that really say about music and why is it so fundamental to us as a species?

Marsha brings children's attention to the pervasive *presence* of music, as well as its

adaptability to different contexts and modes of emotional communication, but she doesn't

explicitly teach about the social effects of music on interpersonal and communal relations in

ways advocated by the philosophical pedagogues cited above. Rather than getting deeply into

the social implications of music, she seeks to show children the universality of music: that it

endures through time and space and is, most of all, *relevant.* That music is not encapsulated in

the radio, to be turned on and off at will; but that it surrounds us and colors every major aspect of

our lives (even in those settings that don't feel particularly 'social').

Music and dance are used in a variety of settings to promote social cohesion—from the

spirit songs at a college football game to the dances at a wedding reception. The act of moving

and sounding in harmony charges these interactions with emotional energy, creating a powerful

incentive for individuals to seek out similar experiences in the future. The ability to fluidly

participate in musical rituals, then, translates to an ability to connect with other human beings. A

music teacher, in teaching children how to sing and move harmoniously with other human

beings, is preparing them to function within a society that values musical ritual. Along these

lines, Marsha describes the way John Feierabend, a major leader in Kodály circles, addresses this

aspect of music education within his tripartite model of pedagogy—"tuneful, beatful, artful."

> 'Tuneful,' meaning they can sing in tune, they can match pitch, they feel comfortable with their singing voice, with their instrument. And so, what does that mean as they become adults? Can they sing a lullaby to their child? Can they sing "Happy Birthday" in tune? Can they sing the "Star-Spangled Banner"? Whatever social situation they're in... if it's church, do they feel confident that, 'Yeah, I can sing. Of course I can sing! And even if

I'm not a performer, I can still sing, and I can still share music.' Because it's the one thing that we've all got...we have a voice... And then 'beatful' is, are you able to feel a steady beat and can you produce a steady beat? Whether it's clapping along [or] dancing... if you're going to dance at a wedding, are you comfortable moving your body to a steady beat, and can you move your body in different ways? You might not be comfortable just dancing to Top 40, but dancing with a partner and not feeling that it's just this foreign activity because you know where the steady beat is. And then the last thing was 'artful,' which is being able to discern if music is aesthetically pleasing. And the foundation for that is matching pitch or things being in tune, and then steady beat and rhythm as it relates to steady beat. Because if those things aren't in place, it's not going to be aesthetically pleasing... If you think about what John Feierabend talked about, what is their adult music life going to look like? And I think that's a valid thing to think about with infants and toddlers and 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds, because that's where the foundation is being laid. Are they going to be comfortable interacting with their child in a musical way? (And even if you don't have children of your own, you're going to be in social situations [with them].) But as a parent, your child is going to be playing and experimenting with music intrinsically. They're going to be playing and they're gonna start singing. They're going to be playing and they're gonna start moving and dancing. That's just what [in] early childhood, what we do. Are you going to be able to appreciate it? Are you going to positively reinforce it, or are you going to tell them to quit? It makes me really sad, kids will tell me, 'Well, my mom told me I had to stop singing that.' That's so sad, right?

In this quote, Marsha speaks to the variety of settings and relationships in which the functions of music are important. We use music to connect to our children, to friends and family, to fellow members of our worship communities and to other citizens of our nation. In *Music As Social Life*, Thomas Turino states, "Ideal human relationships emerge only in those special moments—of music making and dance, or lovemaking, or sports teamwork and timing, or seamless conversation, or comprehended silences, or ritual *communitas*—and then they are gone" (Turino 2008: 20). According to Randall Collins, the bonds built in moments of communitas in turn strengthen the cohesion of these social structures by reinforcing in-group status and building emotional energy that will inspire members to continue to invest in the group (Collins 2004: 158).

Participation as a Social Skill

The first step in building the kinds of bonds Collins describes is simple participation. Only those people who are willing to participate, confident in their ability to make or move to music in a social setting, will benefit from these opportunities to strengthen relationships and group membership through music. Not only do music teachers build skills so that their students are able to participate in musical social situations as adults, but they also try to give their students confidence in their own abilities so that opportunities for musical participation will not intimidate them. The hope is that they will choose to participate in musical rituals as these opportunities arise. Natalie explains:

> I know adults who cannot sing in tune to save their life. And it's because when they were little, they never sang. They never developed that ability to listen. And I know adults who have absolutely no sense of rhythm. So in preschool we do a lot of moving to the beat. And I don't tell them that's what we're doing, exactly. I don't say, 'We're putting our feet down whenever you hear the music thump in the bass.' I'm not explaining it that way, I'm just saying, 'Move your feet like mine,' boom, boom, boom. I'm trying to instill some of those basic understandings of music so that when they get older, they'll be able to do it and not feel lost beyond belief. Because I know adults who are like, 'I can't dance, I'm just not a good dancer.' And it's like, 'No, it's just that during your formative years, you never developed a sense of rhythm.'

I ask, "What do you think that does for them as adults, to be able to move to the beat or sing in tune?"

> Well, to be honest, as far as on a daily basis, I'm more concerned about what that means when they're just slightly older children... when they're in third grade and I want them to learn how to play the recorder and play at the right tempo and not rush ahead of everybody else. I'm a little more practical in my mind about why I'm doing it. But there's also that little part of me that thinks, you know, I have friends who have just given up on themselves. They're young adults, they're in college, they're in their twenties or maybe their thirties; and they'd like to be able to dance at their wedding, but they're never going to admit it, and they just write off the possibility, like, 'No, no, I'm not a dancer. I don't dance.' And you know if they had half a chance, they'd enjoy it. And you know that somewhere deep down in them they'd like to be able to. But they've given up on themselves, because they're missing some of those basic fundamental bits about music and they've decided, 'You know, it's just too hard, it's too scary, I'm not good at it. I'm just not good at it, that's just not me.' And so they don't give themselves a chance. Or

someone who says, 'You know, I always wanted to learn to play the violin. I'm so glad my daughter's learning to play the violin now. I always wanted to, and now it's too late.' And I'm thinking, 'No, it's not too late. But you feel defeated because you never... You think in your head that you're not good at music because you've never been good at music, when unfortunately you just missed out on the chance when you were younger. When it was natural, when every kid sings on the playground. You missed out on that somehow, and now you feel like you couldn't possibly do it. So I'm trying to avoid that. I don't expect my kids to be amazing musicians or go into a [music] career or anything. But I want them to feel comfortable with those things, where they wouldn't be afraid to try it.

Failure to participate in these social musical rituals results not only in a lost opportunity to benefit from that interaction or enjoy moments of flow and communitas. Additionally, as Thomas Turino explains, opting out of these rituals may signal to others that one is out of sync with the group, either willfully (perhaps defiantly) or due to personal shortcomings or outgroup status:

> During participatory music and dance occasions there is a subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle pressure to participate… A general sense is created that people who do not participate at all are somehow shirking their social responsibility by not being sociable. Imagine attending a small party among close friends where everyone is playing charades with the exception of one friend who refuses to play and sits alone in the corner. A similar range of reactions to such a person might be experienced in a participatory music setting—everything from direct invitations to join in, to teasing and cajoling, to ignoring him, to worrying that something might be wrong. (Turino 2008: 30)

Connecting Turino's ideas to Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains, failure to participate in a participatory music setting is tantamount to severing group solidarity and sabotaging the sense of communitas by refusing to contribute appropriately to the sacred object of communal dance or music-making. The inability to synchronize with other ritual participants indexes a lack of solidarity and results in a failed ritual for that individual, as well as the feelings of dejection and disconnection that accompany such experiences.[10]

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[10] A few years ago, my aunt and uncle attended a fundraising event hosted by my undergraduate university's Celtic Ensemble. The event, called Dancing with Mr. Darcy, was a period-themed

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Practicing Modes of Sociability and Affection through Musical Movement

Not only are interactive music activities useful in giving children tools and confidence to participate musically in social situations, but they are also spaces in which students can practice non-musical skills that are transferable to other types of social interaction. Some of these skills are very rarely practiced in other instances, and are even "against the rules" in virtually every other setting other than music activities.

One such boundary that is explored in music classes is appropriate social touching. Whereas typically children are expected to "keep their hands to themselves," in general music children may experience not only interacting socially with their peers, but dancing and playing together and experiencing skin-to-skin contact in a way that is sanctioned, often guided, by teachers. Marsha leads her preschool class in hand-clapping games and songs which they sing while holding hands or scarves in a circle. The songs are old and familiar: "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" and "Skidamarink" among them. They are practicing how to sing and play and touch gently, in preparation for an outing the following week.

Every other Friday the preschoolers go to a local church, where they play and sing the songs partnered one-on-one with elderly people who have Alzheimer's Disease, as part of the Alzheimer's Project in Tallahassee. The activity is at once a kind of community service which helps Alzheimer's-affected adults connect socially and engage in activities which stimulate their

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dance in which attendees were taught how to do a few English contra dances. Both of them had little experience with dance, and quickly became confused and frustrated with trying to keep up with the group as we learned the steps. After the first or second dance, my aunt excused herself, her eyes welling with tears. I think back to that moment now, understanding that my aunt has always felt she was bad at music, that in that moment she was painfully aware of being in a room of people who could participate in this social dance while she struggled, that she probably imagined everyone would recognize that she "couldn't dance" and think less of her for it. I know, as Natalie said, that "that somewhere deep down… [she would] like to be able to [dance]," but getting over the feelings of deficiency is difficult for adults. But, like Natalie, I also think it's never too late for my aunt to learn how to feel comfortable dancing.

minds, and is also a great teaching moment for young children to learn how to interact with elders and how to modulate their behavior to be gentle and sensitive to others' needs. I got the chance to attend one of these sessions and help lead the children in their songs. The children and adults (their "grandfriends") alike had a wide variety of reactions to interacting with each other. A few kids shied away from strangers completely, and did not want to sing, even though in the classroom they were rambunctious and loved making music. Most of the children were a little shy to be interacting with these new people, but opened up after a few minutes, especially as the warm, grandmotherly participants smiled and sang playfully. Two little girls started to riff off of each other when one did a play-fall and made her older friend laugh. The girls began falling down, one after the other, giggling up a storm and thinking of ridiculous new ways to fall and inventive inflections of the word "ouch." One of the girls' grandfriends, whose Alzheimer's condition was quite advanced, seemed perplexed, perhaps disoriented, and began to withdraw into himself.

For both the children and the adults, physical touch was a marker of their respective development or retention of social skills. The youngest of the children shy away or needed reminders to be gentle with their older friends, while the older children (marked by a surprising height difference, for only being a year apart) exhibited intentionality and openness in interacting with their partners. Likewise, those adults who moved about more independently also made more eye contact and were more willing to touch, joke with, and move musically with their young partners.

Soon after observing the outing to the Alzheimer's Project, I asked Marsha how social dances were significant in her classroom. She replied,

> Human beings have a need for touch. Some people call it 'skin hunger' I think... That's how we evolved. We need to be in physical contact with each other. And little children

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are much more open about; when they're happy, they want to hug you or they want to hold your hand. But as children get older, and of course, obviously, middle school they're getting awkward because now all of a sudden touching is starting to mean something different to them and they're going through all these changes. Having a place where it's healthy and safe and acceptable and genuine is really good for them. So, I think one of the things I had mentioned was, we do folk dance as young as preschool, but we still do it in middle school here. And you can tell they like it, they have fun. Two middle school boys grabbing each other's hands and sashaying down the middle and sashaying back... and they're having a great time. And it's not something they would choose to do out on the playground, obviously, but it has provided them with this setting in which we are affirming—even without being explicit and without saying it—that we as people, socially, we need to be able to touch each other appropriately, we need to be able to have some contact. Everything can't be so isolated and distant.

Marsha speaks to a universal human need for social proximity, and especially physical touch. She uses circle games and folk dances as a stage for teaching socially appropriate touching that reinforces healthy platonic relationships. Her preschoolers learn how to touch grandparent figures in friendly, sensitive ways via the Alzheimer's project; and children from preschool through middle school at Cornerstone Learning Community engage in dances in which they connect with peers through physical touch. She highlights the need to expose children to social and musical interactions beyond those with technology, which are so prevalent and "easy," in her words.

Conclusion

The elementary general music classroom is a space where basic musical skills like beat-keeping and tuneful singing are learned. These skills have implications not just for these students' future musical abilities, but for their ability to meaningfully participate in social rituals that involve music. In addition, other important social skills like teamwork and self-moderation are learned indirectly through making and moving to music. These skills are necessary throughout life, not just in childhood. In this way, musical play trains children not only with the

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ability to perform and conform according to society's standards, but also to build and maintain

meaningful relationships with individuals and as members of groups.

CHAPTER 3

BEHAVIOR DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The preceding chapter centered on roles of music instruction—especially that of musical movement—in shaping students into socially functional individuals. This chapter expands upon this idea, honing in on normative behavior as a crucial prerequisite of group solidarity. Drawing from classroom observations and interviews with my informants, as well as pedagogy texts that describe "best practices," I explore how teachers model, modify, and otherwise manage behavior[11] in elementary general music classes, especially through activities involving coordinated movement. I also investigate how the teachers' own bodily movements factor into this process. This discussion continues to be shaped by the ideas of Randall Collins, as I explore the bounds of group membership and shared communal values as they pertain to "appropriate" and "inappropriate" behavior in the elementary music classroom. In addition to the practical

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[11] The term "behavior management" can carry two related but distinct connotations, depending upon the setting in which it is used. The first is associated with operant psychology and behaviorism, and refers to a precise, systematized approach to documenting and responding to behaviors. Based on research showing that extrinsic rewards do indeed change incidents of both sought and discouraged behaviors, this approach involves meticulous documentation of specific behaviors in relation to incentives and disincentives given by the instructor(s) (Abeles, Hoffer, Klotman 1984: 225). In my own experience, I have come across this quantitative, analytical application of behaviorism only twice: both experiences involved individual students who consistently exhibited violent or sexually predatory behaviors. In both cases, a behavior specialist prescribed specific methods for responding to such behavior and requested comprehensive documentation of incidences of these behaviors and accompanying reports describing staff interactions before and after each incident. When used in common parlance, the term "behavior management" is often used as a synonym of "classroom management," to describe the ways in which teachers encourage preferred behaviors and discourage less preferred ones. It is built on the same assumptions as codified (behaviorist) behavior management: that reinforcers like teacher praise or rebuke, points systems, prizes and preferred activities can influence students' behavior if delivered contingently.   When used in this informal sense, teachers adjust their responses in the moment rather than meticulously gathering and analyzing data about student behaviors. While I acknowledge the roots of this phrase in educational psychology, I employ chiefly the second sense of the term in this thesis.

methods and motivations of behavior management, this chapter explores the place of creativity and "alternative" behaviors within a larger context of institutionalized, relative conformity.

I have divided this chapter into four sections, reflecting some of the varied approaches teachers take toward the management of behaviors through movement and gesture in the general music classroom. The section on behavior modification examines ways in which teachers kinesthetically respond to students' behaviors after they happen—either praising desirable behaviors or correcting less preferred ones—by moving their own bodies, moving students' bodies, and using codified gestures to communicate directions. *Behavior modeling* explores methods for pre-teaching or modeling appropriate behavior. This section includes both teacher demonstration and student rehearsal of sought behaviors. *Engagement* refers to different methods of capturing students' interest in order to keep them involved in appropriate ways. This section highlights how activities incorporating musical movement in particular are used to engage students, especially for the age range that I am studying, preschool through second grade. In *Behavior Inclusion* I explore different contexts in which allowances are made for behaviors that are divergent from the "ideal" model sought through other behavior management techniques. This section discusses the place of creativity in contrast to mimicry and conformity as they are used in general music classrooms, and how interpretive musical movement is used in particular to teach improvisation to very young children. It also explores the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate variations in children's musical performances as they are perceived by educators.

Behavior management techniques encompass all instructors' actions aimed at enhancing "the probability that children, individually and in groups, will develop effective behaviors that are personally fulfilling, productive, and socially acceptable" (Walker, Shea, Bauer 2004: 7).

Furthermore, as Marsha explains, classroom management is a necessary prerequisite to positive, effective learning environments. Not only must students be prepared to engage appropriately in groups later in life, but a requisite level of compliance in the present is needed so that classes run smoothly and children are in a suitable environment to learn other important skills:

> I mean, it's huge. It's kind of the starting point. You need their focus, you need their attention. It's not fair to expect a child to listen to you when another child is poking them or getting in their face, or whatever. *Without stifling their spirit.* I think that's the fine line that we walk as teachers. Because you don't want them to feel like you're always just sitting on them. There's this Jerry Seinfeld routine where he talks about, when you're a kid everything is "No. Sit Down. Do this. Stop running. Do this..." And you don't want them to feel that way, because they're *children*. They need to be happy and energetic and have that sort of free associative thinking going on, with all the cool things they can come up with. But, you have to constantly remind them where that line in the sand is. "You've now crossed from having fun to being disrespectful or inappropriate." And that's part of what we're teaching them.

To Marsha, this basic need for order in the classroom makes early entrainment of appropriate behavior all the more important. The behavioral skills learned in preschool are applied to later schooling, when academic skills come more into focus. Then those behaviors learned throughout schooling apply to other (if not all) situations in life. The ability to behave in accordance with a group's expectations within music class is directly transferrable to any other situation in which one participates as a member in a group and is held to group behavioral standards.

> So that one girl—I think you were there—she just looked at me and went, "NO." No, we're not accepting that, even from a three-year-old. Because this is school, and that's why they're in preschool. That's one of the most important things they learn in preschool, is that you follow directions. That's the whole point… Being able to be a part of a group, following directions, understanding that sometimes you have these limited choices, sometimes you have fewer choices. Other times you have no choices, these are the things we need you to do. These are the things that preschool's about.

> I mean, obviously we have this scope and sequence and we have these objectives and we have these things we'd like for them to get. But ultimately, I'm not teaching music only, I'm teaching *children* and I'm teaching them... I'm hopefully *helping* them, not teaching them, but *helping* them figure out their most comfortable way of being themselves and

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giving them skills that can apply in multiple settings throughout their life… So if we're sitting down and we're listening, there are a million settings where you have to sit down and listen in life and in school. So my music objective might be, I want them to be able to appreciate these things. But my broader objective might be, "You need to be able to listen to people. You need to be able to think about what you're hearing, whether it's music or language." Those are things they do everywhere.

This relates back to ideas explored in the last chapter, namely, that there are certain skills individuals must have in order to participate in group-cohesion-building rituals. Behaving according to social standards is a skill which enables individuals to successfully engage in social rituals. This is reflected, too, in a statement from Marsha. Via email correspondence I asked, "Why is it important for individuals (children and adults) to know how to behave according to society's standard rules? Practically/ Socially?" She replied,

> [Practically] so that they can participate with others and not suffer negative consequences, such as isolation or, more formally, society's punishments/repercussions; [and socially] so they can derive joy and satisfaction from social interactions and feel a part of groups and things which hold deep meaning and value to themselves and others who they care about.

She hits on one of the points introduced in the last chapter: that in learning to conform one's behaviors to a code within a social group, individuals gain access to group membership and benefit from those interactions in a myriad of ways (psychologically, materially, legally). Social institutionalization is a necessity, promoting, as sociologist Krista Paulsen explains, "rule bound and standardized behavior patterns...that allow people to meet biological, psychological, or social needs" (Paulsen 2003, 668). Its benefits include a codification of shared values and a promotion of collective identity, which are desirable for the cohesion of communities and larger society (Cavicchi 2009: 103).

The "rule bound and standardized behavior patterns" as described by Paulsen may be framed in relation to Randall Collins' conception of ritual, and are integral to the success of ritual in creating solidarity among members of a group, whether it be a second-grade class, a church, a

professional society, or a nation. Because solidarity is dependent on both synchronized action

and focused attention on shared group values, conforming behavior is both a necessary

ingredient and result of social cohesion. As stated by Collins:

> Society is held together to just the extent that rituals are effectively carried out, and
> during those periods of time when the effects of those rituals are still fresh in people's
> minds and reverberating in their emotions. Society is held together more intensely as
> some moments than at others. And the "society" that is held together is no abstract unity
> of a social system but is just those groups of people assembled in particular places who
> feel solidarity with each other through the effects of ritual participation and ritually
> charged symbolism. (Collins 2004: 41)

Classroom rules created and imposed by teachers, from Collins' perspective, do not

necessarily reflect a greater societal structure, but are conditions meant to facilitate successful

rituals. Rule and ritual are dialectically entwined, with the exact manifestation of rules shifting

in each specific context. Because of this, they tend to be stated very vaguely, but applied

specifically to the particular happenings in the classroom and the needs of the classroom activity

at that moment. Both Natalie and Marsha describe their rules, and specific ways in which they

might be interpreted and applied in their classrooms:

> Natalie:
> I try to keep it super simple. I just have three rules: be respectful, do your best, follow
> directions. And I believe that everything humanly possible could fall under those three
> rules. So if they are hitting somebody, they're not being respectful. If they're not treating
> an instrument nicely, so if my 5th grader drops a guitar because they're being lazy, well
> that's not being respectful to Alman and to Alman's property. If my direction was "stand
> on your square" and the kid runs across the room, then they're not following directions.
> So I don't have a lot of rules for... "come into the classroom, sit on your square, be quiet,
> raise your hand, blah, blah blah..." I've been in those classes where there are 20 different
> rules. They can't remember them all! And the teacher can't remember them to enforce
> them. So I just keep it to those: be respectful, do your best, follow directions. And most
> of the time, if there is behavior that's not following the rules, it's because they're not
> following directions. Most things fall under that category.

> Marsha:
> So [my rules] are "Always raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged," because that
> addresses all talking out of turn or talking over someone else. Then I also have, "Handle
> all materials appropriately," and in the beginning of the year I talk about what are

materials for music. And it's not just when we get out the xylophones, it's your feet, your hands, your body, your voice, your posture. I mean, everything is a material for making music. So it's this one statement, but it covers every infraction they can come up with. And then there's "follow directions when they are given." So I gave a direction, it doesn't say, "follow directions in five minutes when you feel like it." It doesn't say, "Blow that one off." And I talk with them about that one a lot... If I ask them to sit down in the circle, I will point out, "I didn't say, 'sit down and have a conversation,' I just said, 'sit down.'" So we talk a lot about—as it comes up—that doing something you haven't been invited to do is also another way of not actually following directions or rules.

The flexible structure of both Natalie's and Marsha's rules allows them to address whatever behaviors that might warrant correction. But it also gives them leeway to make judgment calls and *not* enforce rules, as they see fit. Natalie and Marsha approach classroom management with the expectation that students will have their "bad days." These can occur for any number of reasons: a bad night's sleep, a rainy day that keeps them cooped up inside, an empty belly. As Natalie says, "When a little 3-year-old is hungry for a snack or ready for a nap, I understand if I'm not getting what I want." Teachers try to stay attuned to these factors and adjust their behavioral expectations accordingly.

Likewise, classroom management must be attentively adjusted to match the needs of each group of children. While "best practices" describe in broad strokes ways that teachers can foster appropriate behavior in their classrooms, the actual effectiveness of any given technique depends on the group dynamics of individual classes, each their own small community of learners. As Marsha describes it,

> That's an ongoing process. You get in a groove and then you realize, "Well, that's not working anymore." So you kind of figure out what else you can do and how to work with them. Because every class has its own group dynamic, and what'll be great with a class one year... like say with a class I do this, this, this, and it's working great; next year, pffft. It might be totally different. And they might be different when they get to fourth grade. We get a couple new kids, a couple kids leave, and it's a whole new dynamic. It's interesting how that works, but it really matters.

To match the unique needs of each class, teachers experiment with different

combinations of classroom management techniques, here divided into behavior modification, modeling, engagement, and behavior inclusion.

Behavior Modification

Behavior modification encompasses all the ways in which teachers respond to student behaviors after they occur, using behavioral consequences. This includes verbal praise or admonishment, points given or taken away, eye contact, touch, and other methods. Behavioral consequences are categorized by the desired effect on a target behavior[12] and the teacher's approach to effecting that change. Positive reinforcement rewards positive target behaviors with desirable reinforcers. Punishment is a response to negative target behavior with an undesirable reinforcer. Negative reinforcement is the withholding of an undesirable reinforcer after positive target behavior, while extinction is the withholding of a desirable reinforcer after a negative behavior (Walker, Shea, Bauer 2004: 64). Behavior modifications that employ bodily movement include eye contact, gestures, touch, and proximity; each can be used to give praise (a desirable reinforcer) for on-task appropriate participation (a positive target behavior), or to give admonishment or warning (an undesirable reinforcer) for inappropriate participation or lack of participation (a negative target behavior)[13]. This section explores behavior modifications utilized

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[12] Target behaviors can be either positive or negative, but refer to any behaviors the rate of incidence of which a person seeks to change. For instance, raising a hand to speak in turn might be a positive target behavior, while blurting out would be its correlating negative target behavior. Teachers, parents, and behavior specialists try to increase incidences of positive target behaviors and decrease incidences of negative ones.

[13] Some behavior modifications fit less neatly into this model of behavioral consequences. For example, when teachers get the attention of a student whose mind has wandered, the targeted behavior to which they are responding is "zoning out," and may be categorized in this framework as negative; but teachers approach this behavior understanding that, as Natalie puts it, "we all zone out from time to time." Likewise, their response—like getting a student's attention with eye contact and an encouraging smile—constitutes neither punishment nor extinction. Rather, they seem to give a small desirable reinforcer (perhaps in "response" to an expected behavior of

in elementary music classrooms that involve movement through space, including proximity, gesture, physical touch, and out spaces.

Proximity

Proximity—the positioning of one's body in relation to another's—is one of the most common ways teachers use movement to respond to targeted behaviors. Teachers manipulate both the placement of their own bodies in relation to students, and students' bodies in relation to one another in order to discourage negative target behaviors and reward positive ones. As Walker et al. note:

> Very frequently, the proximity of an authority figure (teacher, parent, police officer) results in the discontinuation of unacceptable behaviors. Even college professors find it useful to walk about the classroom in an effort to reduce the level of conversation and side comments. In addition, proximity can have a positive effect on children experiencing anxiety and frustration. The physical presence of a teacher available to assist has a calming effect on troubled children. Shores, Gunter, and Jack (1993) suggested that teacher movement in the classroom may effectively control student disruptions by bringing the teacher into closer proximity to all students, thereby increasing the effectiveness of their interactions. (Walker, Shea, Bauer 2004: 227)

While the research cited in this passage attributes the effectiveness of close proximity to individual students in "discontinuation of unacceptable behaviors" to increased efficacy of teacher-student interactions, both of my informants view close teacher proximity more in terms of negative reinforcement used as a consequence for these unacceptable behaviors. Their approach to drawing in an inattentive student might be viewed as "increasing the effectiveness of their interactions," but the discontinuation of negative target behaviors in their view is a reaction to punishment, not simply better engagement.

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appropriate participation?). While this action constitutes a response to a given behavior, it does not fit into any one of the four categories of behavioral consequences as proposed by Walker, Shea, and Bauer.

Natalie:
Proximity? Oh, *every* teacher does that. That's Teacher 101, first day of school...
It's your first line of defense. I think it's subconscious for the kid. Maybe not,
maybe not. Sometimes they might realize, "Oh, she's moving my way." But
sometimes they don't even really think about it, it's just subconscious. If they're
misbehaving or doing something you don't want them doing—or the opposite, if
they're not participating, and you really want them to join in (actually, I end up
doing more of that. Where there's that kid who I can tell is sleepy and it's been a
long day, but I really want him to join in and sing with us or play with us, or
whatever we're trying to do)—yep, proximity, that's the very first line of defense for
a teacher. You get closer and they either sit up straighter or wake up a little more,
or if they're doing something bad, they realize, "Uh-oh, maybe I better pull it
together."

I saw an example of proximity during one of Natalie's kindergarten classes as they

played "The Drum Game", one of the students' favorites. In this game, Natalie plays

particular rhythms on the drum and the children move freely around the room using the

corresponding movements to each rhythm. The rules for this game are: (1) no touching

each other, and (2) no touching the floor with your hands (Natalie later tells me that this

rule resulted from a problematic trend of kids trying to "breakdance" during the "Freeze

Dance" Game and posing a physical threat to other students). On this particular day, one

little boy was constantly making noises of passing gas and airplanes blowing up, and

moved about the room while staring at his friend, getting very close to his face and

sometimes touching him. He continued to engage his friend after "The Drum Game" was

over, as they were sitting on their adjacent assigned square mats. Natalie went on with her

lesson as planned, but shifted her body to be in closer proximity to the boys. They

continued to play. While maintaining eye contact with the rest of the class, Natalie shifted

closer—now, about two feet away—and stretched a downturned "5" handshape (refer to

Appendix A, p. 107) in their direction as correction. The boys ceased playing and she

continued with the next game.

This particular scenario seems to reflect Natalie's assessment of the function of proximity more than that of Shores, Gunter, and Jack as referenced by Walker, Shea, and Bauer. One might expect an increase in teaching intensity with increased effectiveness of teacher-student interactions. This would be evidenced by an increase in eye contact, intensity of facial expression including raising of eyebrows, and magnitude of gesturing (Yarbrough, Price 1981: 215). But Natalie's application of proximity in modifying the behavior of two chatty little boys included none of this. On the contrary, Natalie actively *avoided* making eye contact with the boys and instead intentionally directed her teaching intensity towards those students who were already participating appropriately.

Marsha, too, views the function of proximity more in terms of warning a badly behaved student than of engaging with that student more effectively. She notes that the arrangement of her classroom, in which she sits at the front leading, results in a slightly different application of proximity.

> Proximity is a big tool... It signals to them that they need to make different choices, I hope. They usually do… I'll trade places with somebody or have the kids trade places to change who they're by… So yes, but it's a question of moving *them* a lot of times. It's more of moving them closer to me, since I'm in front and they're on the rug. I'm not going to go sit in the middle of the group. I'm going to still be up there, especially if I'm using visuals. So it'll be more of moving a child closer to me than me going over there.

Natalie described how proximity can be a neutral stimulus, bringing a "zoned out" student back into the fold of classroom activities. And both instructors note the use of proximity in decreasing undesirable behaviors, in Marsha's words, "[signaling] to them that they need to make different choices." I also observed in their classrooms how proximity to a teacher can be highly sought by students, especially the youngest ones. In preschool and kindergarten, some students vie for placement close to their teacher, showing pleasure when they get to interact

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closely with her and hold her hand during a circle game.

One mid-December day, Marsha walked Mr. Liam's[14] kindergarten class into the music room, marching the line in a curve and eventually into a circle. After the first activity was done, one of the students next to Marsha reached up and held her hand. Another student stepped in and poached the hand to hold it herself. The first girl pouted and looked indignant. Without acknowledging what had happened or making eye contact with either student, Marsha moved to another part of the circle and took a little boy's hand, starting the next activity. The first student's pout turned into a slightly satisfied smirk, and she quickly joined the game.

Eye Contact and Coded Gestures

Just as bodily proximity can bring inattentive children back into the fold of classroom activity and influence students to change their behaviors if they are otherwise participating inappropriately, eye contact serves as another manipulation of the body which achieves some of the same ends. This technique, as Natalie explains, is even less disruptive to the lesson than proximity and allows teachers to address problems while doing other tasks:

> A nice little pointed glance across the room will do wonders. Especially if for some reason you're tied down—if I'm pushing buttons on the Smart Board or if I'm playing the piano and I don't have the freedom to walk across the room to try to get little Joey over there to be more involved, then a nice little glance in his direction, and, "oop, just made eye contact and he knows I'm watching him." And if I want him to join in, then I give him a little eye contact with a smile and an encouraging nod like, "You can do it!" And if he's starting to cause trouble, like I can see he's pushing the person next to him, then there's the eye contact with the sort of "nu-ungh" face. "Don't even think about it." Yep, those work wonders. Those are the things you try first before you resort to things that interrupt your teaching. Taking points away, giving points, time outs, talking to a child.... all of those things interrupt teaching. The more you can manage without interrupting the flow of teaching by just walking somewhere or looking somewhere, then you're not getting

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[14] Pseudonym

in the way of yourself.

Eye contact, and especially the facial expressions that accompany it, are coded communications[15], so the particular way that teachers "perform" pointed eye contact convey very different messages. As Natalie notes, eye contact accompanied with a smile and a nod would be taken as a friendly gesture, a desirable reinforcer for good behavior; whereas eye contact when accompanied by a frown, deadpan, or a slight shake of the head conveys warning, an undesirable reinforcer for inappropriate behavior. Pedagogue Lewis R. Hodge also makes a distinction between neutral eye contact and that performed with an unfriendly facial expression (what he calls the "eagle eye"):

> The "eagle eye" is one corrective measure, but it may be just as effective to stare with a neutral expression at the student, especially if the teacher is able to continue his role in the classroom discourse without interruption. Such a stare says, "I see you. I am continuing to look at you for a special reason. That reason is because I know what you are doing." (Hodge 1971: 267)

I had an opportunity to see several examples of coded eye contact, facial expression, and gestures used for behavior modification in a matter of minutes within one preschool session at Cornerstone Learning Community.

Marsha starts her preschool classes with a greeting song (note: the eighth notes are "swung" in the following transcription):

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[15] Gestures and facial expressions are "coded" in that they nonverbally convey ideas which are understood by many individuals within a culture. As Susan Goldin-Meadow points out, "Gesture allows an undercurrent of conversation to take place below the surface of awareness," meaning that both the generators and observers of gesture may understand its meaning without explicitly acknowledging it or translating that meaning into words (Goldin-Meadow 2000: 236).

3

S M S S M M F S F M R

Hel- *lo,* *how do you do?* *It's* *good* *to* *be* *with* *you.*

3

F R F F R R M R M F S

Hel- *lo,* *how do you do?* *It's good* *to* *be* *with* *you.*

3

S M S S M M F S F S L T L

Hel- *lo,* *how do you do?* *It's good* *to* *be* *with you.* *It's——*

S M F R M D R T, D

good *to* *be* *to-* *geth-* *er* *here* *with* *you.*
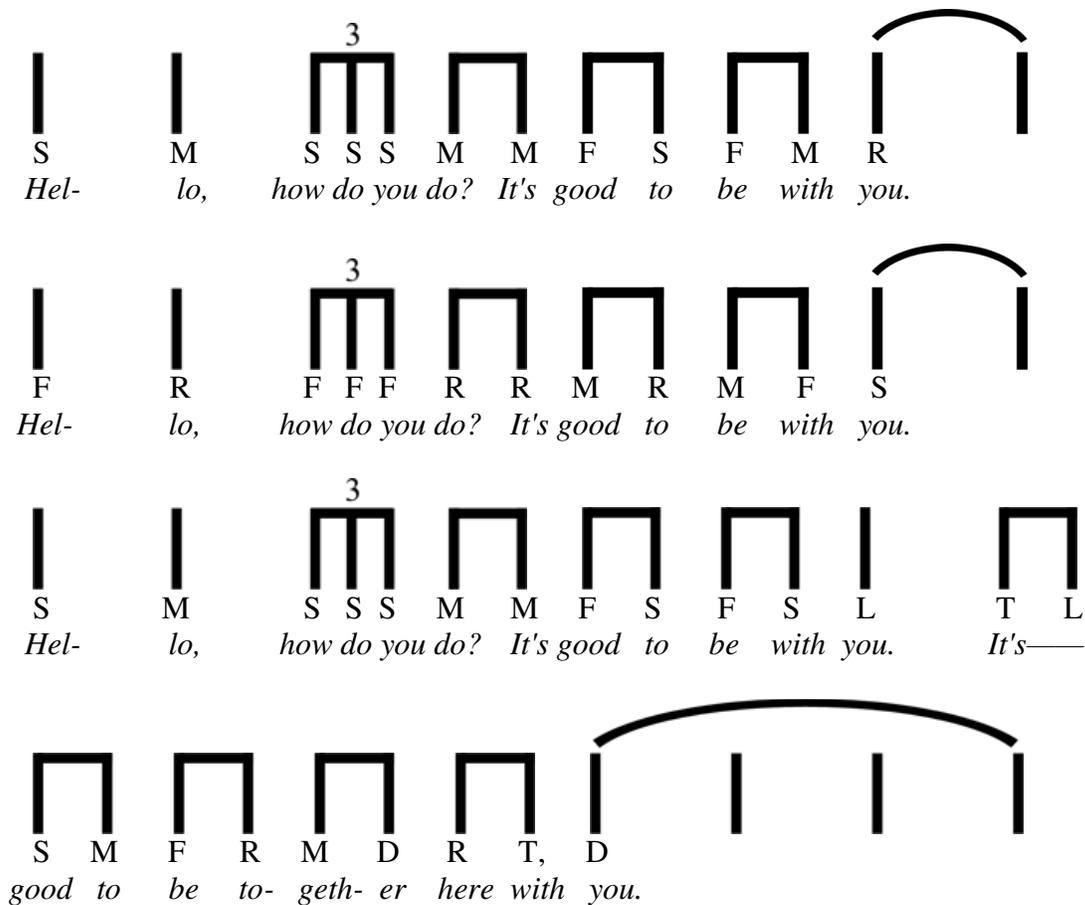
Figure 3.1 "Hello, How Do You Do?"

It takes a few seconds for the children to transition into music-making, but by the second line most of them are in an acceptable spot on the rug and following along with the motions of the song. Three-year-old Olivia[16] is still transitioning, flopping about on the floor, giggling, and fighting with other children over which leaf on the patterned rug she will sit on. Marsha makes eye contact with her, smiles, and raises her eyebrows while continuing the song. Olivia settles down a bit, seeming to realize that the song has been going on without her, and begins singing and performing her preferred motions.

In the transition between songs, some of the class begins side conversations as Marsha is

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[16] Pseudonym

talking. She responds by lifting her eyebrows, smiling, and shaking her head as she holds an

index finger to her lips. Logan[17] puts a small hand on Marsha's arm and asks her a question as

she gives instructions about an upcoming performance. Marsha holds up her index finger

towards him at shoulder level in front of her body, bending it a few times into the "X" handshape

(refer to Appendix A, p. 102) while accompanying that motion with a slow shake of her head:

Figure 3.2 The wiggle finger

She later explains that this motion is an established one that the children know to mean, "wait":

> That's not mine, that's the preschool teachers'. They call it the "wiggle finger" and it's so
> they can keep eye contact with the child they're talking to and if another child comes up
> all they have to do is just show them the wiggle finger, and it means, "Wait a minute."
> And it kinda sticks. We end up doing it, the teachers that see everybody like Drama, Art,
> PE, Music, Library… So some of those things that get started when they're really little,
> those of us that see all the kids, we kind of keep doing. Because I think all the way
> through 3rd grade I use that. Because they know what it means and it's just so
> convenient, it's just like, [wiggles finger, laughs]. And it's not as offensive to me as the
> "talk to the hand" sign, "stop." It's a little gentler. And it kinda gets their attention, too, I
> mean, someone wiggles their finger at you, you're gonna stop and go "What? Oh
> yeahhh."

Marsha expands further on this topic, describing different coded responses to behaviors

that she borrows from the students' homeroom teachers. Her view is that behavior modification

is easiest if, rather than trying to train the kids on her own system for weekly classes, she adopts

their main teachers' methods and applies them within her classroom. This is consistent with

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[17] Pseudonym

commentary on "best practices" from Arvida Steen's *Exploring Orff: A Teacher's Guide*:

> Another way to learn about the school environment is through conversations with other teachers... These discussions may help you identify some possible useful teaching practices which you may match with your own to increase teaching efficiency. Children learn with more confidence when behavioral expectations are similar as they move from classroom to classroom. (Steen 1992: 13)

In this exchange, Marsha uses a few coded tools for communicating with students and modifying their behavior. First she uses eye contact paired with a smile and raised eyebrows to engage a student who has not yet joined in with a class activity. Later, she uses the "wiggle finger," a coded gestural response that she and the preschool teachers use to remind students to wait their turn. Another common example of such a coded gesture is the "shhh" sign, where a person places their finger on their lips with the "index" handshape (refer to Appendix A, p. 102):

Figure 3.3 "Shh"

These gestures have utility only insomuch as they are established with and understood by all who form or interpret them. It makes sense, then, that coded gestures in particular would be borrowed from students' daily interactions with homeroom teachers rather than invented for the weekly interactions with their "special area" teachers. These coded gestures, especially when directed at a particular student, are typically not accompanied by any verbalization and are categorized as types of signal interference. The function of nonverbal signals is explained well in *Behavior Management: A Practical Approach for Educators*:

There are a variety of nonverbal techniques that a teacher may use to interfere with unacceptable behaviors (Bacon, 1990). Nonverbal techniques or signals, such as eye contact, a frown, finger snapping, toe tapping, book snapping, light flicking, and so on, can alert a child or group to their unacceptable behavior. Often, nonverbal behavior influence techniques help the disruptive child "save face" with his or her peers, and thus the disruption is not escalated. They also save the shy child from unnecessary embarrassment. Conversely, nonverbal signals can be used to reinforce acceptable behaviors in the classroom. (Walker, Shea, Bauer 2004: 227)

This aspect of "saving face" may be the most important of coded nonverbal behavior

modifications like eye contact and gestures. While behavior modifiers like verbal reprimands

call the class's attention to the target student, unverbalized gestures can be made without

attracting attention or disrupting the flow of a lesson. In this way, the desirable reinforcer of

musical play can be maintained, and the student can easily fit back in with appropriate behavior.

More disruptive techniques that stop the activity not only inhibit social musical play as a

reinforcer, but can charge classroom activities with negative emotional energy by associating

them with humiliation. Randall Collins highlights the cyclical nature of interactions inciting

humiliation and disconnection with the group, as proposed by fellow microsociologist Thomas J.

Scheff:

For Scheff, intact social bonds (which, from the point of view of IR theory, are the result of carrying out a successful IR) give participants a feeling of pride; broken social bonds (an unsuccessful IR) give participants a feeling of shame... Scheff goes on to point out that shame—the sense of broken social attunement—can either be immediately expressed and brought into the interaction as a topic; or it can be by-passed, repressed from conscious verbal attention. By-passed shame, he argues, is transformed into anger. This sets up a cycle of repeated failed interactions. (Collins 2004: 110)

Once an activity is negatively charged for that student, they are less likely to seek it out

by behaving appropriately, and more likely (as implied by both Walker et al. and Scheff) to

escalate the disruption. In this way nonverbal responses like pointed eye contact and coded

gestures help to maintain music activities as positive reinforcers and ensure that the music

classroom is a place where children want to be and will willingly participate.

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Physical Touch

Teachers sometimes use light touch as a way to modify behaviors as well. Most often, touch serves as a desirable reinforcer, rewarding children for positive target behaviors like sitting as instructed in the circle, or performing a musical task well. For instance, I noticed that when Marsha led her kindergarten class in one game, "Charlie Over the Ocean"—a "Duck-Duck-Goose" sort of game, where the child who is "it" sings solo while going around the circle—she recognized students who sang particularly well and in tune by patting them on the back or giving them a high-five while she gave verbal praise. During another class, she told her 4-year-old pre-k students, "I want you to pat yourselves on the back for being such a good audience."[18]

In her article "Teaching Without Talking," Jacqueline Hansen describes how touch builds rapport with students, and why it should be used in the classroom:

> Children learn to use touch to establish friendly relationships, reduce social distances, and declare a level of intimacy. Appropriate touching evokes comfort, reassurance, and pleasure. (Hansen 2010: 40)

I suggest that the comfort and intimacy fostered by touch not only builds positive relationships between teacher and students, but is also used as a desirable reinforcer. If positive social interactions are the consequence of good behavior, Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains implies that children who have experience with these successful interactions will be more likely to seek them out through compliant behavior.

Touch can also be used, as Natalie describes, to engage a student whose attention

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[18] When teachers instruct children to pat themselves on the back, they utilize the established symbol of a pat on the back (indexical of warm social interaction) to quickly recognize an entire group of students. In this moment, the emotional energy associated with social touch is recalled and reinforced, even if the teacher does not come in physical contact with each individual student at the time.

has lapsed, similarly to the way eye contact and coded gesture are used to the same ends. Both touch and coded gesture/eye contact engage students in a brief moment of social interaction with the teacher to pull their attention back to the positive reinforcer of musical play:

> It's very much like the walking closer, physical proximity thing. If you've got a kid who's looking the wrong way, pulling strings out of the carpet instead of clapping his hands to the beat while you sing a song; if I'm walking closer to him, trying to make [eye] contact with him and it's still really not working and he's still really lost in la-la land... maybe he's not being bad on purpose, maybe he's just zoned out for some reason. But I might, walking closer to him, just put my hand on his shoulder, like, [in soft, friendly voice] "Come on." And "oop, okay." That just wakes him up, snaps him out of it.

In view of Hansen's assertion that touch builds friendly, comfortable relationships between teachers and students, we might apply the theory presented by Walker et al. that I previously challenged (that proximity increases the effectiveness of instruction) instead to the use of touch as a behavior modifier. That is, the power of touch to reduce social distance and encourage more trusting, friendly relationships does seem to translate to more effective interactions between students and teachers. Teachers, in turn, use touch most often to recognize good behavior and to bring distracted students back into the fold of classroom activity. Whereas proximity's potential for improving the effectiveness of instruction seemed overshadowed in practice by its application as a mildly punitive warning, there is no such contradiction between the relationship building potential of touch and its application in my informants' classrooms.

"Who's sitting on a number and being good?" Natalie whispers, surveying the kindergarten class. Several of the kids snap to attention and obediently situate themselves with crossed legs on their assigned numbered carpet, quietly raising a hand. Natalie starts at one end

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of the semicircle and passes each student, using her flat hand to gently tap the heads of those who are following her instructions in the way she wants. "Good," she says, each time she taps a head. Of those whose heads are left untapped: a girl who is sitting nicely except for the monster face she is making at her friend, and a pair of boys who are animatedly imitating jet noises while gesturing wildly in the air what looks like a flashy takeoff sequence. This is the third or fourth activity in this class period, and the boys have consistently talked during every transition. Natalie asks one of the boys to pick up his number and move to a different given spot. He resists, so she gives him the choice between moving his number and sitting on The Wall. Legs and arms folded, he sticks out his tongue to Natalie's turned back as she moves to another area of the room, but complies in moving to the new assigned spot.

Natalie used her own body as a tool for behavior management, in this case both through physical contact and her proximity. When she moved toward a child, it was understood that they were probably being evaluated in some way. In one case, she moved methodically from one end of the room to the other, evaluating each student's behavior as she passed them. Those who "passed" this test got a light touch on the head and verbal praise- a sanction of their behavior via physical touch from a power figure. Those who were not following directions but whose actions did not constitute disruption got no positive feedback, while the two boys who continued to talk and gesture animatedly got a direct intervention. Previously in the class, Natalie had used her proximity as a warning, using the common understanding of proximity as evaluation to her advantage. By moving closer to the boys and outstretching a hand towards them, she communicated that she was aware of them, evaluating their behavior, and wanted them to change it. When they continued to exhibit nonconforming behavior through the one-by-one evaluation, Natalie separated the two boys. In this way, she used the proximity of children to one another as

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another tool for behavior management. When the boys resisted behavioral correction, she limited their ability to interact with each other by physically separating them- a common tactic of teachers of all subjects and age groups. This is another method by which social interaction is used as a privilege which may be revoked if students fail to meet behavioral expectations.

Out Spaces

Natalie describes behavior modification techniques in terms of their level of disruption of the flow of teaching and intensity. Eye contact is an ideal intervention because it takes little time and energy out of teaching, but if that tool is not effective in a particular situation, Natalie increases the intensity of the negative reinforcer. Each escalation has the potential to disrupt class a little bit more, so behavior modifications are given judiciously and incrementally.

For both of my informants, the most intense and disruptive behavior modification tool is the "out" space. Natalie calls hers "The Wall," and Marsha's is "The Thin Ice Chair." Both spaces are physically and socially removed from the area of activity. Children who are placed in these out spaces face the area of activity where their classmates continue to sing and play music games, but both The Wall and The Thin Ice Chair are situated behind the backs of participating children. Thus the out space is a place where students whose behavior has been deemed particularly disruptive are placed so that they can watch appropriately-behaving classmates play, but cannot participate and also will not be watched by their peers.

The practice of modifying behavior by putting a child in an out space is called antiseptic bouncing, and is promoted by pedagogues and behavior specialists as a method of positive behavior support:

> When a student becomes agitated and frustrated with an activity and before he or she is physically or verbally disruptive, it is prudent to remove the student from the work

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setting (Bacon 1990)... It is viewed as a positive behavior influence technique and not as a punishment. Antiseptic bouncing, properly applied, provides the student with an opportunity to avoid embarrassment, calm down, reorganize thought, and begin the task anew. (Walker, Shea, Bauer 2004: 229)

This way of framing out spaces—as positive behavior support that allows children to reassess and re-approach their task away from the pressure and potential embarrassment posed by an audience of peers—is also reflected in Marsha's description of her Thin Ice Chair:

In this classroom the drama teacher and I have a chair—it's called The Thin Ice Chair—it's basically a cool-off. We don't ever use the word time-out, really. But where they can sit and reflect and come back and make better choices. And the third strike, technically, is to send them down to the office…, which I rarely do. I always try every single other thing I can think of; including sometimes cajoling or just looking them in the eye and saying, "Sweetie, I'm really trying to help you make better choices, because I want you to stay today, because we're going to do something really fun." I *hate* sending them out when I only have them once a week... And if somebody's just really not getting it together, I will send them out. So that's the opposite of proximity, they have to walk all the way to the office. But The Thin Ice Chair is always kind of in the back, where everybody else is not looking at them.

In practice, however, out spaces seem to have a blended function in music classrooms. The out space, as stated above, is both a physical and social removal. As both Marsha and my behavior modification sources note, this social removal can have the effect of de-escalating a child, helping him or her to "avoid embarrassment" (Walker, Shea, Bauer 2004: 229) by placing him/her back where other students will not stare at them. But children's reactions to being placed in an out space reveal another effect: whether its intent was punitive or not, children seem to understand antiseptic bouncing as punishment. I asked one of Marsha's students, Reiley[19], about his view as a student who has experienced The Thin Ice Chair:

Michelle: "If you were put in The Thin Ice Chair, would you feel like.... do you want to participate, or do you want to take the time to gather yourself together? How do you feel about being out?"

Reiley: "Well, if I was sent out then I would feel bad. Because I really don't want to go down to the principal's office. If I got put in The Thin Ice Chair, then I would

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[19] Pseudonym

probably.... actually, I can't explain. If I got sent to The Thin Ice Chair, I'd know I shouldn't do what I did again."

Their removal represents not only a chance for them to correct, but also a removal from the enjoyable social interactions of playing games and making music with their peers. In out spaces, children view the "in group" of appropriately behaving students and are acutely aware of their own exclusion from that group and its activities. Reiley, in particular, views The Thin Ice Chair as an undesirable reinforcer of his own behavior. He seems most cognizant of the implicit warning that goes with this out space: that a repeat offense will lead to his complete removal from the classroom, and is motivated to change his behavior so he can stay.

Natalie's view of out spaces holds more true to this more punitive model. She uses The Wall as a space where children are reminded of the fun activities they get to enjoy when they behave according to the classroom rules through a short period of exclusion from those activities.

> If they're to the point where they really don't want to do what I'm saying and they're refusing something, then they're kind of giving themselves a time-out already, they're refusing to do it. So I usually phrase it as more of a, "I'm not going to play with you... until [after] you go sit on The Wall." Or "You can't play with us until [after] you go sit on The Wall." Because *then* they're like, "Oh, well I want to play... Don't leave me out, come on!"

The out space as Natalie describes it, and as both her and Marsha's students seem to understand it, is a place where a student is removed from the social interaction of musical play and allowed only to observe it, removed from the fun. With that said, such a tactic is only effective insomuch as the child who is removed to an out space *wants* to take part in the activity they're missing. Just as the first chapter explored the effect of social musical experiences on a student's willingness to participate in similar activities as an adult, so do social experiences influence how effective the punishment of removal will be. If a child is not sufficiently motivated to participate, the intended negative reinforcer of losing the

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privilege of playing with the group will hardly be a negative reinforcer to that student.

We see this logic reflected in teachers' programming choices while a student is in an out space. Both of my informants seemed to gravitate slightly towards students' preferred activities in the rare instance that a child was put on The Wall or in The Thin Ice Chair. For instance, when one student got "out" during "The Drum Game" for being too rowdy and moving in a way that was disrupting the activity, Natalie played the rhythm that signals the students to run—a favorite of that student who was placed out. When he recognized the "running" rhythm, the student's eyebrows immediately crinkled into an expression I interpreted to mean, "That's not fair!" Then his face settled in a slight frown and he gazed longingly at his classmates as they ran around the room. Natalie allowed him back in the game only after switching to another rhythm so that student missed out on his favorite portion of the activity.

Natalie's choice to lead the class in that student's favorite portion of the activity while he was "serving his time" on The Wall seemed intentional and jibes well with the idea that the enjoyable experiences of social interaction and ritual are also used as motivation for members of a group to behave according to that group's social code. Not only did Natalie momentarily exclude this student from playing with his classmates, but she used his favorite activity to reinforce for that student that participating is something he *likes* to do, and to make losing that privilege all the more poignant.

Natalie introduces The Wall to her students in the setting of a game called "Freeze Dance". In this game, students dance freely about the room while the music is playing, then freeze in position when the music stops. Those who freeze after the music stops are out and go to The Wall. As I was watching the students play one day, I noticed that a small

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number of them seemed to be getting out purposefully. There were a few who did so on

their own, giggling as they theatrically "lost their balance" after the music stopped. Most,

though, got out in pairs; after one student in a pair of best friends had gotten out by

accident, the friend would do something to get out and cheerfully go sit by his/her friend on

The Wall. I asked Natalie why she thought kids got out purposefully at times. She

responded,

> Sometimes they're too little to understand that 'out' is a bad thing, and you have to teach them that "out" is a bad thing. So if they're doing it a lot because, "Ooh, I'm out, I'm out, yay"—it's kind of like being "it," that sounds like a good thing—I'll make them sit there for extra-long. And I'll wait until they ask me, "Can I go back in and dance again?" And then I'll look at them and say [with a sorrowful face] "No, you broke the rule..." And you see their little face go from a little I'm-being-silly-and-I'm-being-out-on-purpose smile, a little smirk, and it falls. It goes, "Ohhh nooo. What did I do?" And you see the little light bulb click, like, "Oh no, I thought this would be funny. It's nooooot." I'll let them wait another couple seconds there once their face falls, and then say, "Okay, now you can go. Don't do that again."

Of the pattern of best friends getting out intentionally to be together, she said,

> In preschool and kindergarten, they're learning how to make friends, and they get really clingy. They'll find one special friend and go everywhere together, hold hands all the time, they have to sit next to each other. And if you break them up—heaven forbid—the world will end. So if one of them gets out, the other one will get out on purpose, do something wrong to go sit on The Wall with their friend. So with them, as soon as that [second] friend gets sent out, I'll send the other one back in and make the friend sit there and wait by themselves for a while to break them up on purpose. Because I'm not going to let you mess with my system that way. Nuh-ungh.

For Natalie's out space to be effective, she has to train her students to view it as

something to avoid, even in the space of the game in which she introduces it. She reinforces The

Wall as a place where students are removed from the fun of one of their favorite games, without

the control to decide when they will start participating ("And you don't go back in until who

says? Ms. McDonald."). More importantly, The Wall is a space where students don't get to

interact with their friends. So when students get out intentionally for the purpose of interacting

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with a friend who is also sitting on The Wall, Natalie breaks them up intentionally, preserving the element of isolation integral to this model of out space.

Musical activities that incorporate movement or dance play an important role in behavior modification simply because they tend to be the kids' favorites, serving well as desirable reinforcers (or negative reinforcers, if participation in them is withheld). This is substantiated by Yarbrough and Price, who conclude from their research that "music performance or active, rather than passive, tasks may be intrinsically reinforcing (Yarbrough and Price 1981: 210)."

Because most composition and improvisation activities in early childhood are based around the original creation of musical movement (Campbell 1991: 219) the most free and individualized activities in the music classroom tend to be movement activities. Within these spaces, children can express themselves and interact with their classmates in a minimally restrictive way. During free movement activities I noticed that the children made significantly more eye contact with each other. "Freeze Dance" is a free movement activity that both Marsha and Natalie use with their preschool and kindergarten students, and a highly preferred activity among all groups. I observed the same type of interaction happen during this game in every class, at both schools: some children would interact in groups of two to three children, trying to impress or humor each other with their inventive dance moves. These might take the form of a caricatured motion or a novel combination of movements. The children seemed to eagerly anticipate their friends' reactions. I suggest that this type of activity is a powerful positive reinforcer for appropriate behavior *because* it facilitates engaged, active, and social interaction between peers. This is supported by Randall Collins's assertion that group solidarity is best created with active rather than passive interactions (Collins 2004: 83). In other words, the social interaction itself is what makes free movement activities so much fun for students, in turn

making them effective tools for behavior management.

Marsha's direct plea to a student on the brink of being sent to the office, "I want you to stay today, because we're going to do something really fun," sets up the use of preferred activities as desirable reinforcers in a very direct way. This statement communicates to the child that making "good choices" (behaving according to the class rules) is the condition upon which being able to participate in fun group activities hinges.

Behavior Modeling

While behavior modification is a reaction to behaviors after they happen in an effort to shape children's' future choices, behavior modeling and pre-teaching approach target behaviors before they happen. Positive target behaviors are modeled by teachers and practiced by students, while negative target behaviors are highlighted in similar ways as "what not to do." Modeling exposes students to the ideal behavior or performance technique directly, so that they have a solid conception of what is expected of them.

> If the behavior does not exist in a particular student's repertory of pre-rehearsal activity, the teacher may try a technique called 'modeling,' in which the desired behavior is demonstrated for the student. Once an approximation of the desired behavior is part of the student's repertoire, it is systematically reinforced, or shaped, until the desired behavior is achieved. (Abeles, Hoffer, Klotman 1984: 226)

Music pedagogy often uses modeling in teaching musical performance skills. Teachers provide demonstrations or high-quality recordings to help students understand particular musical skills and to develop an aural conception of good musicianship. Research suggests that students perform best when given a performance model *and* led through multiple imitations of that model (Rosenthal et al. 1988 cited in Sink 2002: 317)

The same principle is applied to the performance of appropriate behavior. Just as a

teacher might model for her students a beautiful tone in head voice with light vibrato and strong

air support so that they know what a good tone sounds like, so she would model restraint and

orderly conduct so that they know what appropriate behavior looks like. And following

Rosenthal et al.'s research and communal wisdom, she would then have them repeatedly practice

emulating those sounds and those behaviors to further reinforce them. In both of these

processes, it is the continued rehearsal of ideal behavior which solidifies concepts and makes

them habitual. Patricia Shehan Campbell further argues that imitation and rehearsal is most

effective when applied to observable behaviors:

> Bandura (1972) suggested that rehearsal may be the key to acquisition and long-term
> retention of a behavior in an imitative situation. The conditions necessary for the
> occurrence of imitation as a learning device include the ability of the observer-listener to
> discriminate and attend to the model and the importance of seeking behaviors that are
> visible and thus observable. (Campbell 1991: 104)

This explains why movement in particular would be an effective tool for pre-teaching

appropriate behaviors. Movement is easily observable, and students can imitate and rehearse

those motions. As an illustration of this, Natalie uses modeling to remind her students how to

behave when participating in movement games. With a drum slung over her shoulder, Natalie

taps out a rhythm and asks her students, "When you hear this:

Figure 3.4 Ta ti-ti

...you _____?"

"Maaarch!" A few kids do an exaggerated, stomping march. One little boy puckers his

lips while stiffening his limbs in a caricature of a stern, powerful military figure. Natalie reviews

the other rhythmic cues of ""The Drum Game"," in which the children move freely about the

room in a particular manner—marching, tiptoeing, running, or skipping—corresponding to its

characteristic rhythm. During the review, some of the kids get a little louder, and Natalie

responds by assuming the same sort of frowning caricature as her student did, using a goofy,

low-pitched voice to say "No yelling in music!" while shaking her finger and putting her other

hand in her hip in a cartoonish rebuke. The kids, as they know they are meant to do, repeat her,

caricature and all. She then reviews the rules of the game in a call-and-response style:

"When the druuuum stops, where should you be?"	"On your square!"
"If you're making too much noise, you're _____?"	"Out!"
"-and you go sit by The _____?"	"Wall!"
"If you touch the floor, you're _____?"	"Out!"
"-and you go sit by The _____?"	"Wall!"
"If you touch somebody else, you're _____?"	"Out!"
"-and you go sit by The _____?"	"Wall!"

And with that, they begin the game.

Earlier in the year, Natalie would review the different corresponding motions and

rhythms, doing demonstrations herself and expecting the students to emulate. As they become

more familiar with the activity, the role of modeling appropriate behavior falls more and more to

the students. Natalie explains her motivations for pre-teaching this behavior each time they play

the game:

> They know to march, they know to run, they know to skip, they know to tip-toe
> when we do "The Drum Game". So I don't need to teach them how to march, but I
> do it anyway. I stand up before we start- I stand up in front of them, I march for a
> second, I say, "What's that called?" "Marching." I'm not teaching them that this is
> called marching. They already know that. I'm modeling that as a behavior, as in
> "This is how you march, this is how I expect you to be doing it. This is a kind of
> reminder, visually, so that in a second, you do it this way."

The short preparation for "The Drum Game" is a time for the children to recall and

physically walk through the appropriate way to move and behave during the game, and functions

to decrease problematic behaviors during the activity proper[20].

Modeling through musical and nonmusical movement is also used to teach behavior skills in the music classroom that are not unique to music games. For instance, Marsha models orderly entry into her classroom with kindergarten by leading the class in a greeting song while marching to the beat. She guides the class in single file around the room to form a circle, then at the end of the song, the group sits down in the circle formation to begin class. Not only does she model the appropriate way to enter with her own actions, but she guides her students in rehearsing this appropriate behavior each time they come to her classroom.

By second grade, the students are expected to have these skills and use them independently. Orderly entry is no longer modeled by Marsha, and the classroom is no longer arranged to be quite so intuitive. Instead of entering in single file and walking around the circle to find their places, second graders are expected to walk in an orderly way (though not necessarily in single file) and find an undesignated place on the large rug closest to Marsha's chair, without Marsha leading the group in a musical ritual to get there. More recently, the second graders are coming in rowdily, running, wrestling, and not sitting where they should until they are verbally reprimanded. Marsha reflects on this, saying,

> Sometimes you have to take a step back. Like I was telling you yesterday with that second grade, I think we are definitely going to have to take a step back and really practice it again. I'm thinking I'm going to have to meet them at the door next week and not let them walk through my door until I like how they look standing there waiting. But that's just the gig. Especially with little kids, you have to go back and reinforce and remind.

Though the structure and routine Marsha has for second grade shows that she considers

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[20] Free movement activities, as Marsha pointed out in an interview, involve not only moving musically and appropriately, but also negotiating space. This is a skill that requires practice, especially in early childhood. By reinforcing appropriate behavior, teachers also isolate the skill that is most challenging for preschoolers and kindergarteners in free movement games: space negotiation.

them developmentally ready to monitor their own behavior while entering the classroom, she

acknowledges that sometimes children need to rehearse known behaviors to continue to use

them. Modeling is not only a way that teachers demonstrate new behaviors, but also "reinforce

and remind" students to continue using those behaviors once they are firmly in their repertoire.

Student modeling, or rehearsal, is an especially useful tool for this.

Modeling and rehearsal are also used to help maintain ideal behaviors during distracting

events like performances. I got to see Natalie's classes as they prepared for an all-school

performance for Grandparent's Day. She led each class through a verbal walkthrough of what

would happen in this performance, with cues for how to walk onto risers, how to stand, and how

to behave during other classes' performances. Each class did at least two rehearsals of these

behaviors. For the first, Natalie gestured while giving verbal instructions:

"Hands by your side"   "Eyes on Ms. McDonald"   "Be very, very quiet"
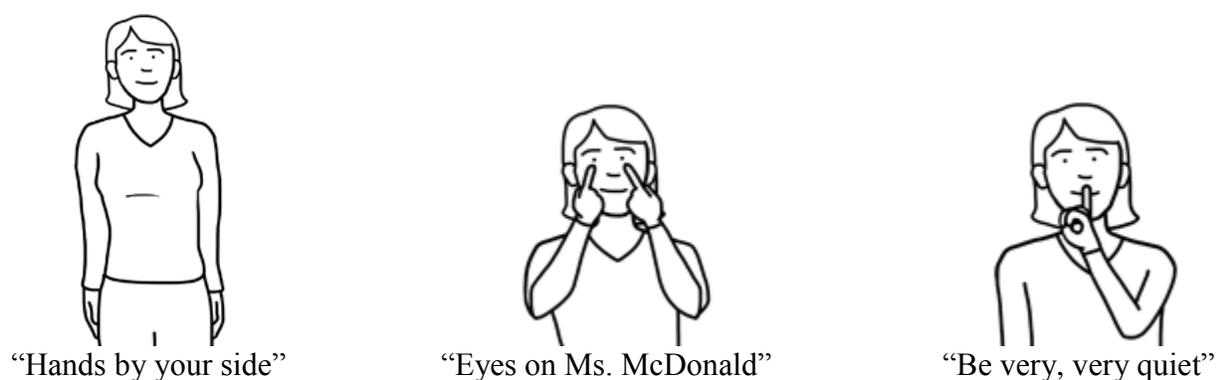
Figure 3.5 Natalie gives directions

During the second rehearsal, Natalie used the same gestures and modeled appropriate behavior,

but gave no verbal cues. She later told me about this process of modeling and rehearsing concert

behavior:

> For the last month they've learned [appropriate concert behavior]… At the concert,
> and even at the rehearsal for it, I don't want to be saying, "Eyes on Ms. McDonald."
> By the time we got to the concert when the kids were up on stage and that one up

there wasn't paying attention, I just did the gesture in his direction and he was like, "Oh yeah." Or I had a kid with his hands in his pockets—because we had talked about how that makes you look silly, like you don't have hands—so the couple kids at the concert who forgot, I just looked their way and did that [snaps arms to her side] and they were like, "Oh yeah." And they were able to fix it without me interrupting the concert… I find that it doesn't matter what your gesture is, as long as it's consistent. Like it doesn't matter what my words are or what my motion is, or anything. Just as long as I do it the same way every time, then I've trained them well.

Not only does Natalie model and rehearse correct behaviors, but she uses the modeling of negative target behaviors as a way of reinforcing positive target behaviors. She explains her reasoning:

I often demonstrate, "Let's do it the wrong way." I do it a lot, with all grades, with the older kids especially…So I show them wrong, I show them right, I explain *why* we do it this way, and then I have them all show me the right way to do it. "Good, now show me the wrong way. Good, now show me the right way again." I always make sure to end with the right behavior. But to really get you to process something... what something *is* is often defined by what it is *not*.

With this tactic, Natalie targets negative behaviors that she expects to happen (like "breakdancing") and explains why they would make it hard to perform well, or otherwise appeals to the children's desire to be socially accepted by saying it would make them look silly.

Marsha uses modeling and rehearsal not only to show appropriate normative behavior, but also to teach children how to monitor their own behavior and master themselves when they are excited. To do this, she leads the children in a silly song, then teaches them how to calm down and transition into another activity. "My Poor Hand is Shaking" is a chance for the kids to get really silly. In this song, the children shake different body parts as they appear in the song.

My poor <u>hand</u> is shaking, I can't make it stop (x2)

Oh help me, ma—ma, can't make it stop

My poor <u>hand</u> is shaking, I can't make it stop

Marsha directs most of the transitions, instead of inviting the children to improvise movements. They shake their elbows, tongues, ankles and heads. Marsha focuses much less on getting the kids to sing, and they become very visibly invested in the game of the song, giggling and making eye contact with each other. In fact, there is a lot more giggling going on than singing during this song. As the song comes to an end, Marsha brings the group back together: "Oh my *goodness*! What can we do to stop the shaking? Maybe a few slow, deep breaths." She puts her hands on her knees with crossed legs and models a meditative breath. In this way, she guides the children through the process of calming down and returning to normative behavior, while making it part of the game; not correcting or chastising, but moving the social group activity through an almost role-played experience.

This interaction in particular is very interesting to me when viewed in the context of interaction ritual theory. One way of teaching children to take control of their silly behaviors would be to socially isolate or physically remove the child from the group for a period of calming down. Time-outs and similar spaces are designated places where children "get control" of their behavior before they are allowed to rejoin the group for social interaction. Both Marsha and Natalie have spaces like this in their classrooms: The Thin Ice Chair and The Wall, respectively. The motivation for having such spaces in the classroom seems to be correctional: when a child is behaving too far and too consistently outside the norms of "good behavior," they are pointedly removed from the group. They sit in a place where they can watch their well-behaved classmates engage in fun, social activities with the explicit knowledge that they are excluded. The moral? *People who behave badly don't get to have fun.* Or, stated in terms of interaction ritual chains, *Only the well-behaved people get to be in our in-group, and only the in-group gets to participate in our high-emotional-energy games.*

Marsha's transition out of "My Poor Hand is Shaking" has a different message. The deep breaths are taken as a group, as part of the game. Instead of being punitive, this method transforms the recollection to normative "good" behavior into a social ritual. The children leave the space of "good" behavior together and likewise return together so that as long as children continue to stay in sync with the group action, they are allowed to stay in the in-group—even when their specific actions might normally prompt their removal.

While The Thin Ice Chair communicates a stark dichotomy between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, "My Poor Hand is Shaking" models the division of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors within specific *contexts*. Marsha not only allows silliness during this song, but models it by widening and rolling her eyes, lolling her tongue, and shaking parts of her body with barely-controlled vigor. The transition of deep breathing exercises recollects the children not only into a calmer mental state, but also physically synchronizes their movements into polite ones once again. Marsha talks about this to the children as a way to "stop the shaking," though it is understood by all that the "shaking" was performative, and that the transition from a silly mindset into a calmer one is just as willful as that into the wiggling of the song. There is a time for shaking and a time for being still; which is to say, there is a time for being silly and a time to calm down and act normally. When straggling children continue to giggle through the breathing exercise, Marsha simply points out that the class must need to take another breath, because "a few friends are still shaking." Marsha's tactic of initiating silliness then teaching the children how to calm themselves down is a way of modeling and rehearsing a life skill these children will need throughout their lives: the ability to master their emotions and conform to appropriate behavior at will.

Just as nonverbal communication allows teachers to discourage negative target behaviors

without humiliating a child, thereby preserving the positive music game as a positive experience, modeling allows teachers to promote preferred behavior without making children feel chastised. Teachers acknowledge that appropriate behavior is not innate, but must be learned like any other skill. When they teach and rehearse good behavior with children, they create a space in which it is okay to make mistakes and learn from them. This leaves more space for engaging in fun, social music-making and musical play that will charge students with emotional energy, and less need for punitive measures that would leave children with negative associations about music.

Engagement

One other aspect of behavior management within music classrooms is the *engagement* of students in class activities. As Marsha defines it, engagement in the music classroom means that,

> They are participating willingly and happily and they're liking what we're doing, and they're feeling good about being musical… So engagement equals not only being able to teach what you're going to teach, but it's a much more pleasant experience because they're happy to comply, so to speak, they're happy to do what you're asking them to do, because it's fun.

Helen M. Marks similarly defines engagement as a measure of "the attention, interest, investment, and effort students expend in the work of learning." "Defined in this way," she says, "engagement implies both affective and behavioral participation in the learning experience" (Marks 2000: 155).

Because engagement involves not only a psychological investment in lessons, but "behavioral participation," teachers reason that in capturing children's full attention in the happenings of the classroom they circumvent behavior problems stemming from students' boredom and discontent (Hodge 1971: 267). In other words, a student who is fully participating

is too busy to misbehave; or as Margaret Merrion says in "How Master Teachers Handle Discipline," "The intensity of instruction is engaging and does not permit off-task behaviors. There is simply little room for discipline problems" (Merrion 1990: 27).

Pedagogues cite several approaches for achieving engagement in elementary music classrooms, including varying the types and energies of activities throughout the class period (Rossman 1989:13) and minimizing "down time" during transitions so that children are constantly engaged in music-making (Rossman 1989: 10). R. Louis Rossman suggests:

> A fast tempo song that includes physical movement may be a good way to create class unity after an exciting game at recess. Use a quiet song to get the class ready for a library activity. Plan periods of rest within a period of strenuous activity. After working for ten minutes on a new song, sing a familiar song before moving to another new composition. After a period of working on a strenuous movement activity, have students sit on the floor and sing a quiet song before continuing the work with the movement. (Rossman 1989: 13)

Margaret Merrion likewise touts variation in programming as a tool for fostering engagement. She adds that a "rewarding musical experience" for both teacher and students is integral to the achievement of student engagement in music classrooms (Merrion 1990: 27). This approach to engagement is reflected in an interview with my informant, Marsha, who views the selection of music in her curriculum as "the lion's share" of engagement:

> [One of the most important things is] understanding your age group so that it's developmentally appropriate; and when you're working on your lesson plans you are thinking about, first of all, what will work for that age group, but also making sure that the music is fun... Basically, you need to know the age group and you need to make sure that what you're choosing is developmentally appropriate and that the music that you choose is going to be aesthetically pleasing to them so that it's something they're going to enjoy, something they're going to have fun with. If you have all those things in place, the discipline will be a lot easier and you won't have as many children that you'll have to redirect.

For Marsha, choosing high-quality, age-appropriate music is the first step in managing behavior. When I asked her about the difference in her programming for

younger children and older children, she said,

> I think that the younger kids… have a shorter amount of time that they can attend [pay attention] to one thing... Like, for example, when my kindergarten class comes in, I might have 8 different songs that we're going to go through and 8 different kinds of activities. But when 4th and 5th comes in, we might only have 3. And sometimes we might only have one, but that's because we're doing so many different things with it. For example, there's a recorder piece that I do in 5th grade. It's a version of Mary Mack, and it's in la pentatonic (because they have E, G, A, and B... those are the notes)... so we might spend a whole class period on that piece, but it's because the whole process of warming up on the recorders, doing some call and respond, letting them do some call and respond, then we're singing the song, then we learn how to play the notes, then we add some Orff, then we add some improvisation, then we take turns... It can take a whole class period to evolve something with that many layers... It's just where they're at, developmentally.

In this quote, Marsha addresses a few different aspects of programming which contribute to age-appropriateness. Because younger children have shorter attention spans (Murphy-Berman, Rosell, Wright 1986: 26), teachers plan shorter and more varied activities for them. As they get older, children are expected to be able to attend to a longer and more complex lesson, as Marsha describes with the expansion of "Mary Mack" into a multilayered activity.

When I was observing Marsha's classes, I noticed another difference in how she approached teaching younger students versus older: the amount of movement employed for each. Marsha's preschool and kindergarten music classes were engaged in movement—be it dance, manipulating a scarf, or gesturing along with a song—in every single activity they did. By second grade, however, there was more of a mix. Marsha led the second graders in a lot of musical movement, but they also did stationary singing and seated activities involving music notation. When I asked her about the transition from exclusive programming of musical movement activities for early childhood to a more mixed curriculum, she explained:

I think with the younger children, especially, they have to really feel like we're just playing a game... To me, especially with little children, the more they're moving, the more they're engaged. I mean, I haven't really given it a second thought, because it's just what we do, it's how I was trained. When you're teaching kindergarteners, you move, you do something while you're singing, unless there's a reason to not do it, to stop… As they're older, I feel like you can expect them to just isolate what they're hearing more. But when they're younger, it's the idea of always having kinesthetic, auditory, and visual happening all the time. As much time as possible, hitting all those modes of learning.

Marsha's assertion that young children enjoy and need to move is echoed by several writings on "best practices" for teaching. Here are a few examples:

Children love to move; in particular, they love to move rhythmically. Such movement is both a delight and a need. The need is apparent in the child's functional movement, since rhythmic movement is necessary for efficient performance of gross and fine motor skills. (Pangrazi, Dauer 1981: 207)

Young children learn by interacting directly with the subject matter. A developmentally appropriate music curriculum for young children must be highly experiential and hands-on, providing many opportunities for children to make and respond to music. (Sims 1995: 1)

The main purpose of including music and movement in the classroom is enjoyment. Through music and movement, young children express themselves, explore space, develop language and communication skills, increase sensory awareness, and express themselves through rhythm, gesture, time, and space. (Edwards, Bayless, Ramsey 2009: 4)

These educators highlight children's impulse to move, as well as practical developmental reasons for musical movement to be so prominent in early childhood education. They suggest that young children learn best experientially, and also enjoy themselves most when in motion. Not only are movement activities the most fun for children, but they play to their strengths, allowing them to experience music-making as a highly successful and satisfying ritual. This in part explains why movement activities so strongly dominate the preschool through second grade curricula of my informants.

For Natalie, the focus in programming age-appropriate music is less about the

developmental level of skills practiced in each song, and more about its content and how it

will be received by students.

> I guess it's just part of growing up. If you're a fifth grader singing a song about the cute little fluffy bunny, that just doesn't happen, you know? And I don't know exactly what that is, but somewhere between preschool and fifth grade the fluffy bunny goes from being the most amazing thing in the world to, "I'm not singing that." Around third grade they're still willing to do the real cute "little fluffy bunny and the purple cow" and the motions that go with it, and "The Farmer and the Dell," but they're a little more sophisticated by that point [fifth grade], I guess… In fifth grade, we did 'Home' by Phillip Phillips because, well, that's what they're listening to on the radio.

While her youngest students, from preschool through second grade, mostly play

music games and sing while doing motions, Natalie's curriculum for her older students (as

in Marsha's classes) focuses more on playing instruments. Natalie also makes an effort to

include music from the radio into the programming for her older students (she notes that

finding school-appropriate pop music is often difficult, but "I do it, because I think it's

important that music is relatable to your life").

Natalie's approach reflects another tenet of pedagogy in regards to engagement: that

music should be age-appropriate and of high quality, but should also reflect the interests

and tastes of students. This process of incorporating students' interests (especially familiar

songs from their lives outside school) is consistent with an attempt noted by Daniel

Cavicchi "to recognize the enduring role of popular music in people's lives and... legitimate

that shared experience" (Cavicchi 2009: 102).

Not only does including students' musical interests in curriculum "legitimate [the]

shared experience" of mainstream culture and popular music, but Natalie argues that in

making music relatable to her students, she reduces the number of behavior problems in her

classroom. Students who are more interested in musical selections, she argues, will also be

more willing to apply themselves to earnestly learning musical skills to perform them well.

She explains,

> If they like something, then they're probably going to be better behaved and do what I want them to do. If they like it, then they're probably going to go home saying, "Music class is so much fun!" And they're going to want to come the next week. And when they're happy to come to music class, they behave better for me, and it's a treat. But then, also, if it's something they really like, then it's so much easier to teach them things… They're more willing to learn. If they're like, "Hey, Ms. McDonald is teaching us this boring stupid song that sounds like it's fifty years old and not cool at all," they're not going to want to come to class, they're not going to be happy while they're here, and they're *certainly* not going to want to learn musical skills like phrasing or dynamics, or anything else. But if it's a song they like and care about, then they're plenty happy to learn those things. And on top of it, again, I'm not trying to create professional musicians who will grow up and that will be their career. I'm trying to create kids who can take these skills and use them later on in life.

This statement also recalls concepts from this thesis's first chapter, namely that successful ritual experiences in elementary music lead individuals to seek out musical social interactions in the future. Natalie highlights the role of enjoyment of activities in motivating students to participate and learn musical skills in the process. As she points out, her students will only build the musical skills applicable later in life if they "buy into" her selections in music class. In this same vein, Patricia Shehan Campbell describes how children decide which school-taught skills are worth learning and retaining:

> Since children are influenced by their own personal and cultural worlds, they typically will examine information they receive from their teachers, match it to their needs and interests, and discard the parts they do not find relevant... The standard school curriculum and its manner of delivery are appropriate for the prototypical "normal" student, but many children's interests and needs are not well served by middle-of-the-road, standard, or sometimes even elitist curriculum. Thus... some children allow only the relevant, intuitive, and environmentally influenced knowledge into their lives—knowledge embedded within their communities. (Campbell 2010: 231)

Though a significant amount of ink has been spilled on the topic of engaging students through their interests, there is also a sense that this effort can go too far and

diminish the quality of music making. Margaret Merrion in particular warns that while

teachers should keep up to date with students' musical environments, they must balance

these against the priorities of music instruction:

> With the master teacher, the balancing act is critical. Not only the interests but the needs of the students must be factored into the program. Master teachers determine curricular needs and weigh these needs and interests to arrive at stimulating, challenging, and rewarding experiences for their students. That balance, strangely enough, keeps their students making music, not trouble. (Merrion 1990: 28)

Natalie actively strives to make her music classes relevant to her students, though it

is apparent this is more of an issue with the older ones. She talks at length about the shift

shortly before middle school, when students stop participating as readily and are much

more reticent to sing and move their bodies, for fear that it might make them look silly or

uncool. Before third grade, children sing and dance with abandon, and programming is less

of an issue.

Still, they have their moments.

I was observing one of Natalie's kindergarten classes when she brought out a guitar.

She played a chord progression, then came in singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

Keeping the progression going, she also sang "Baa Baa Black Sheep" and "The Alphabet

Song." After pointing out that all three were the "same song," Natalie started switching

between the words of each, singing four bars of "Twinkle, Twinkle" followed by the

second four bars of "The Alphabet Song," and so on. I was duly impressed. At first the

students were thrilled to listen to the guitar, but the tone quickly shifted when one

rambunctious little boy, Greg, blurted out, "Hey, that's a *baby* song!" Maria still swayed

with a wistful smile on her face, singing along, but other students began repeating Greg's

battle cry. "That's a baby song!" "That's for *babies.*"

Natalie's kindergarteners had determined that this activity was irrelevant and inappropriate for their age, and so, as Campbell described, they disregarded that lesson. Disinterested and disengaged, they quickly fell into problematic behavior, rudely interrupting their teacher in a quite uncharacteristic way. In general, that class seemed pleased with Natalie's choices of musical activities, cheerfully singing, dancing, doing gestures along with songs, and being generally compliant. At least once per class, a cheer would erupt in response to an announcement of the next activity. Perhaps, for whatever odd combination of social and environmental factors, rituals just fail sometimes.

Some teachers, like those at Cornerstone Learning Community, employ "student-led" instruction in attempts to minimize these ritual failures and optimize children's engagement in and benefit from lessons. This approach involves finding out the children's interests and incorporating them into the existing curriculum, allowing them to guide how necessary competencies are attained. Marsha describes the process:

> So what student-led means to us is that we have these big themes that we have to teach, but then within that we can put it in the context of what their interest is. So, for example, every year in kindergarten, the kindergarten teacher's going to do nocturnal creatures as one of her science things. And I know she's going to do that, so I will tie into that, too, with certain songs and things. But within that context, if they want to focus more on owls, if somebody's really into bats, if they really want to talk about possums and 'coons and stuff like that, there's a lot of student choice as far as what the specifics of the unit might look like… just whatever the predominating interest seems to be of the group, they will tap into that.

This resonates with "common wisdom" collected by educator R. Louis Rossman, who advises in his booklet, *Tips: Discipline in the Music Classroom,* to

> Plan lessons around your students' interests and aptitudes. Employ self-directed learning, in which the student takes the initiative and responsibility and the teacher provides activities and experiences that permit the student's achievement of personally set goals. (Rossman 1989: 10)

Marsha incorporates her students' interests into her curriculum, and gives children

opportunities to make choices about what activities they will do. Usually, this comes at the end of class, when Marsha says, "We have five minutes left of class. Which would you like to do?" then gives them two or three options to choose from. She also has a reward system with some of her groups, where a class gets an entire period of activities of their own choosing if they earn a certain number of tokens for compliant behavior over a period of weeks.

It's a special day for Mr. Liam's Kindergarten class at Cornerstone Learning Community. After weeks of good behavior and participation, the kids have finally earned enough stars for a "choice day" in Ms. Marsha C.'s music class. She asks the group if anyone has a favorite song or music game, reminding them of some of the activities they have done in weeks prior. "Let's see, there's Staten Nyegveg, I See the Moon…" She takes suggestions and writes about ten choices on the board, then asks the children to vote for their 3 favorites. Dublin, an enthusiastic little girl with meticulously beaded braids, votes for every single song. Marsha counts up the tallies for each song and circles the six most popular.

The kids choose to play Detective, Charlie Over the Ocean, Staten Nvegveg (a guessing game and two chase games), plus a few others. Mr. Liam is well over six feet tall and towers over the children comically as he sits in the circle singing and playing the games along with Marsha and the students. Some students' favorites are not among those chosen, but I never hear a single protest. All of the children seem thrilled to play class favorites, and I sense that just having the chance to vote is gratifying for them. The only conflicts that arise are brief waves of whining when an activity ends without every child getting a turn. "Remember," Marsha says kindly, "we can't all have a turn in every game,

but we will *all* get a turn in *something*." Reflecting on this conflict, I think, "If the kids are clamoring to participate, it must be a success."

Behavior Inclusion and Variant Behaviors

Thus far in this chapter I have discussed ways in which teachers uphold classic models of good behavior through movement in music classrooms, instructing students in self-control, staying quiet and orderly, participating when and as asked, and using "inside" behaviors like walking and hand raising. However, there are definite instances when these expectations are altered and children are allowed or expected to upend those models of conformity. Some activities call for behavior outside of the polite norm, as in "My Poor Hand is Shaking," while others require children to exercise even more restraint than is typically expected of them. These models are also defied by the spontaneous creativity of students and elected nonparticipation, both of which technically constitute noncompliance. In this section, I explore what variant behaviors teachers accept in their classrooms, especially regarding musical movement, and why they choose to do so.

The introduction to this chapter provided a view of rules from the perspective of Randall Collins's interaction ritual chain theory. From this viewpoint, rules are not the natural scaffolding around which society is based, but are rather formed for and by the rituals which they enable. If rules are representative of conditions which people expect to enable successful social rituals, then the bending of rules is done to the same ends. The ways in which teachers make allowances for variant behaviors illuminate their views of successful classroom rituals because it is in bending those particular rules that they ensure success of those rituals. In other words, intentional leeway given to students does not bring the class closer to chaos, but further

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reinforces order by enabling successful ritual participation for participants who might otherwise be severed from the group for their nonconformity.

In some instances, teachers not only accept, but expect variant behaviors to achieve the success of a particular musical activity. Natalie gives as an example "The Drum Game," in which students are expected to move in different ways, including running (which is generally against class rules).

> I *do* let them run in that game because I'm trying to get them to hear that the rhythm's going faster, that the tempo's picked up. And they latch onto it really quickly. Because it's a drum and that's the only thing they need to be hearing. They can hear that even if they're running around. And because of where I'm standing and where the kids are, I can keep an eye and make sure no one's falling over. If a kid does fall over, I can stop the drum right then, and they all know to stop running. So I can kind of manage the running in that activity. I think that's the trick of it. When I can manage the running, and it's not getting in the way of learning, and it's actually helping learning, then it's cool.

For this game, running is not only accepted, but necessary to the success of the activity. As Natalie explains, the academic objective of "The Drum Game" is for the children to differentiate between different rhythmic patterns and demonstrate their understanding through movement. While children are typically disallowed from running in Natalie's classroom, running is essential to this activity for the instructor to see that her students can hear the difference between a drum roll, swung eighth notes, and other recognizable rhythms. Natalie also notes that within this activity, she is in relative control of the running so that if the running gets to be a hazard (thereby diminishing the effectiveness and success of the musical ritual), she can rein it in or stop the action entirely to reestablish order. Likewise, Marsha teaches her students a distinction between "inside running" (where children run on the ball of their feet in a sort of meld between running and tiptoeing) to keep control of the action when an activity such as a chase game requires

running.

Conversely, other activities require children to exercise *more* control than usual. Just as some rules are relaxed momentarily to enable the success of certain activities, these instances of tightened restrictions reflect the conditions required for the success of the activities to which they apply. When Marsha brings her preschool students to visit elder participants of The Alzheimer Project, she instructs the children in how to interact with their grandfriends. They learn to be extra gentle when interacting in this context, and to refrain from improvising during their visit. In Marsha's words:

> When we go to grandfriends, we don't let them start making up all kinds of stuff. We tell them, "We don't want our grandfriends to feel confused or feel like they don't know what to do, because then it won't be as much fun for them. Because the grandfriends haven't practiced it like you have, so you're kind of like their teachers and you're showing them how it goes." That's the flip side. It could go in all kinds of crazy directions if you open it wide open.

"Do they seem to get the idea that you act in a different way when you're with grandfriends?" I ask. Marsha says, "I think they do, yeah. I think they definitely do. They're really *sweet* when we go over there."

In this instance, spontaneous improvisation is specifically discouraged because Marsha worries that too much variation and rambunctiousness on the part of the children would make the participants affected by Alzheimer's disease feel confused. That confusion would make for an unsuccessful ritual for the grandfriends, and their likely withdrawal from social contact (like the instance I described in the second chapter) would result in an unsuccessful activity for all.

In other circumstances, improvisation is encouraged, and is even part of the Florida Sunshine Standards in music at all grade levels (www.cpalms.org).[21] Just as running in music

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[21] The Florida Sunshine Standards are guidelines for content and competencies that students should master at each grade level. Standards are divided by grade level, subject, and then into "benchmarks," which are specific behavioral objectives such as, "[student will be able to]

classrooms is structured with a certain degree of teacher control to ensure the success of

activities in which it is used, teacher-led improvisation—especially with younger students—is

executed within constraints designed to set children up for success (Odena, Plummeridge, Welch

2005: 13). My informants both use "Freeze Dance" in their classrooms, which involves moving

improvisationally to music played by the teacher and freezing in place when she stops the

recording. Both teachers have a version of the game in which they change the music between

pauses, so they can see how their students respond to different sounds that they hear. This

activity is constrained to promote success for both academic and behavioral objectives. On one

hand it isolates the improvisation to gross movement to a given piece so that students are not

overwhelmed by too many choices and variables; and on the other, teachers control the music

and give students additional guidelines to circumvent problematic behaviors.

During the song "Clap Your Hands Together," Marsha encourages limited musical

improvisation by asking the children what body parts they'd like to move, and how they would
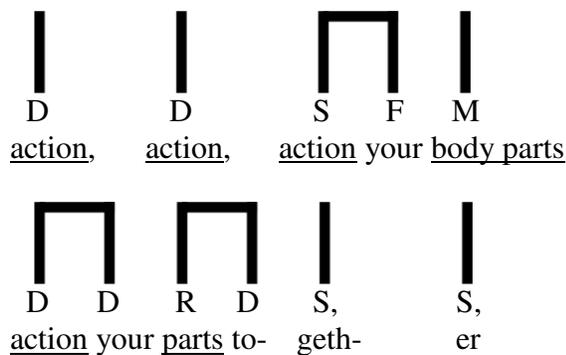
like to move them within the fill-in-the-blank form:

D   D   S   F   M
action,   action,   action your body parts

D   D   R   D   S,   S,
action your parts to- geth-   er

Figure 3.6 "Clap Your Hands Together"

D　　　D　　　S　F　M
action,　　action,　　action your body parts
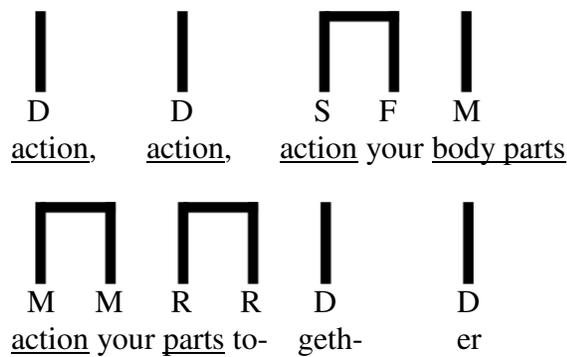
M　M　R　R　D　　D
action your parts to-　geth-　　er

Figure 3.6-continued

The children take turns suggesting different actions, which the whole group then sings and performs with their bodies. Some suggestions include "tap your elbows together" and "pop your lips together." There is a noticeable spectrum of approaches used by the children in how they come up with their improvisatory fills. Some seem to go back to old favorites like "knock your knees together."[22] Others seek out unusual pairings that showcase their sense of humor or ingenuity, like "roll your feet together," which results inevitably in a mass of tottering, madly giggling preschoolers.

This framework allows children to engage creatively with music within bounds, structured and monitored by teachers. The children are first invited to contribute, their contributions are then mediated by an adult authority figure, and finally the action is incorporated into a coordinated group effort.

In other instances, children spontaneously improvise during coordinated group activities. Teachers decide in the moment whether this variation is disruptive, neutral, or beneficial to the activity and its targeted learning objectives, then respond accordingly. Disruptive behavior

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[22] While perhaps commonplace in some sense, this phrase demonstrates an awareness of common English phrase one might not expect from a 4-year-old. When I heard a student suggest this pairing, I silently wondered if Marsha included this particular pairing during one performance of the song.

would most likely be responded to with behavior modification techniques, and a neutral variation

ignored. An improvisation that the teacher deems beneficial to the goals of an activity might be

ignored, praised, or even incorporated into the group action.

In an interview, Natalie described her thought process in responding to her students'

spontaneous variations of activities. First, she told me about a hypothetically-framed instance in

which a child added an action that had a neutral-to-mildly-positive effect on the musical activity

"Presto, Largo"[23]:

> So if the kid, on his own, comes up with the idea of, "Oooh! I'm gonna jump at this
> spot in the song. Every time I see that rabbit run by, I'm gonna jump!" Some kid
> thought that'd be fun, and that doesn't get in the way of learning, they're still getting
> the concept I'm trying to teach them, it's not being destructive to my classroom, so I
> let it happen, and if the other kids latch on (which they usually do) then great, that
> means they're involved and active.

I asked if she could think of a time when a student spontaneously added something that was

unacceptable.

> Oh sure, when we do that song, "Presto, Largo," where it's running in slow motion
> and running in place and stuff, EVERY year in just about every class, there'll be a
> kid who runs right off their square. And sometimes it's on purpose, 'cause they're
> like, "I want to see what happens if I go running around the room, even though I
> know I'm not supposed to..." It causes trouble where either the students can't see
> what's going on because you're blocking the other kids' view. Or if one person runs
> around the room off their square, then everybody wants to. And when they're
> running around the room, they tend to make a lot of noise because running in a little
> kid's mind usually equals yelling. So those are things [to which] I would say, "No,
> no, no. Stay on your square, remember? If you don't stay on your square, then
> you're going to have to sit down and I won't let you play with us..." If I don't let
> you play with us, that's a big deal.

For Natalie, spontaneous variations made by students are acceptable, and will be allowed

to continue, so long as she does not deem them disruptive to her classroom. In this quote, she

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[23] "Presto, Largo" is one of Natalie's activities sourced from www.MusicK8.com in which
children watch, sing, and move along with an animated video. This short video features a song
that explains and demonstrates the difference between slow and fast tempos, and is illustrated by
a cast of characters inspired by the fable "Tortoise and The Hare" (though in this iteration, their
roles are reversed, with the tortoise speeding around a track while the hare struggles).

gives a few examples of elements which might make a variation "disruptive," including if it got in the way of other students seeing or hearing the activity or if it made too much noise. In another portion of the same interview, she also described variations that pose physical threat to other students or to materials in the classroom as being disruptive. Once again, those variations which Natalie foresees getting in the way of a successful musical activity are those she targets for discontinuation, while anything that still allows for the success of the ritual is tolerated or encouraged.

As discussed in previous sections of this chapter, in structuring behavior management to minimize punishment of students, teachers make a more positive classroom environment, in turn inspiring students to comply and to seek out pleasurable social ritual through music. The allowance of non-disruptive spontaneity in classroom performance can be seen as another facet of making a minimally restrictive environment for children to make music. This process also allows for the children to express themselves as individuals, even while participating in group activities not explicitly focused on improvisation or creativity. This balance between group performance/participation and individual expression is addressed by Bennett Reimer in *A Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision*:

> I acknowledge the composer-work-conductor-performer hierarchy of decision making in Western (and other) musics, and its requirements of conformance to several levels of demands if performance is to be successful within this particular cultural system of musical expectations. But within this reality of ensemble performance, creativity in a genuine sense is, I claim, achievable. The key to this claim is that no matter how coordinated the playing and singing in groups must be, every performer can and should experience her or his contribution as one of individual selfness as integrated with the selfness of others. This is a paradox—the achievement, simultaneously, of selfhood and mutuality. This paradoxical yet very real experience pervades all group artistic creation. The term most apt for describing it is "communion" ("unity together"). In the act of ensemble performance individuals "commune" in joint creativity, a self-combine-with-other-selves experience in which individuality and community are fused in service of original musical expression. (Reimer 2003: 115)

I hear echoes of Reimer in another statement from Marsha, in which she describes a time when an American "cultural system of musical expectations" that exalts performance was temporarily given priority over children's creativity. She said,

> When we did our concert in December and we had some movement incorporated, it was pretty choreographed. It was like, "Okay, here's what we're sticking with." And they'll still raise their hand and say, "Oooh, but we could also do this," and I'll say, "Yeah, you know what? That is an awesome idea if we had more time to teach it to everybody or to switch what we've been doing... but for now we're going to stick with what we've done. The concert's next week.

I asked her whether the difference was that she had had to do it across the grades, to which she replied,

> Yeah, it's 3rd, 4th, and 5th combined, and *that's* our performance experience. Whereas I didn't consider going to Hope Community[24] strictly a performance experience. It was more of sharing music with some other people in the community and having fun.

Marsha regularly incorporates her students' spontaneous ideas into class music making, but in the case of this performance experience, the implementation of their ideas is limited. The ideas themselves are not evaluated to be disruptive, as Natalie's examples were, and in fact Marsha makes a point of telling her students that she appreciates their input. In this particular instance, children's spontaneity is stifled not because Marsha anticipates behavior issues or a divergence from good music making, but because in her view this special activity requires a different sort of preparation for it to be a successful ritual. Marsha's conception of a successful performance experience apparently requires a period of practicing a stable version of the program, since the reasoning she gave for not incorporating students' ideas was a lack of time before the concert.

In other instances, Marsha tries to incorporate her students' spontaneous ideas and natural

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[24] Marsha periodically takes some of her students to a shelter for homeless and displaced Leon county residents. During these outings, the third grade class sings some of its music, and the kindergarteners deliver simple desserts they have learned to make.

movement tendencies. In her view, doing this helps make music class a more joyful experience

for the kids. Needlessly denying the children opportunities to do those actions that come

naturally to them makes them feel stifled, she notes. Marsha presents this as a mote of wisdom

which she got from another talented teacher and adopted into her own teaching style (a common

theme among Marsha's personal "best practices"):

> When I first started teaching, somebody that I was observing (a really wonderful teacher) said, "If there are certain behaviors you know they're going to want to do, you have to find a way to fit it in to what you're doing." So find a context for them to sit and spin, if you have a lot of kids who want to sit and spin... or jumping around. Find a song or a game where it's okay to do that, so they do get to do it…. On the most basic level, I guess [it's effective] because it helps them enjoy your class and it helps hook them into music in general. The idea of coming to music class, you want that to be, "Oh yay, we're going to have fun," not, "Oh God, she's going to make us sit down and shut up and sing…" If you're seven or eight years old, you need to move your body.

Patricia Shehan Campbell outlines a similar approach to incorporating children's natural

tendencies in *Songs in Their Heads*. She observed a lunchroom in which children burst into song

and drummed out rhythmic patterns on the lunch tables in groups. Staff members repeatedly

apologized to Campbell and tried to silence the children. In her book, Campbell stated,

> I found it intriguing that no one had considered a way of bringing music into the realm of mealtime as a means of focusing attention, coalescing behaviors, and socializing children in an orderly fashion—particularly due to evidence of its widespread coupling by children with their lunchtime socializing. (Campbell 2010: 40)

The children had their own rituals associated with mealtime that they evidently found to

be successful and satisfying, making it difficult for the adults involved to influence the students

into not seeking out those social experiences. Just as Marsha supports finding a space for

children to do their favorite activities in the classroom, Campbell sees potential in condoning and

honing children's natural behaviors and established rituals into a constructive applications within

the institution of school. Again, this allows for a less punitive approach to behavior

management; but it also harnesses children's existing successful rituals to achieve teachers'

curricular objectives.

Going with students' natural tendencies also means adjusting expectations and curriculum to the mood and mindset of students in the moments they attend class. As expressed by Marsha early in the chapter, what works for one group of students may not work for another. Likewise, what works on one day may fail on another. Marsha and Natalie both talked about how hunger, fatigue, weather, diet, and other external factors may affect a child's participation in class. They adjust their approaches in the moment, sometimes changing programming or its sequence.

Sitting in the music classroom at Cornerstone Learning Community waiting for the next class to start, I heard what sounded like a herd of rhinos stampeding up the wooden ramp to the portable classroom. Marsha's second grade class came tearing in, still hyped up from recess, which had just ended for them. A particularly rambunctious group of four boys in that class (affectionately known by some of the school staff as "The Wolf Pack") tumbled around the floor, wrestling. Shoes were quickly tossed on the floor in a pile at the back of the classroom, and extraneous belongings like jackets and interesting rocks found outside laid on the table next to me. Marsha started class with a chant called "Bazooka Bubblegum," which involves both scripted and improvised movement. The second graders nearly shouted the chant and animatedly danced around the classroom. After a few rounds of "Bazooka Bubblegum," Marsha recalled them to the rug nearest her chair at the front to work on a music literacy lesson. The children were still loud and animated in transitioning between the two activities, but did settle down within a few minutes of doing music notation. The next day, I asked Marsha, "Do you do more movement activities when [the students are] squirrelly?" She replied,

> Yeah. I mean, you can try to plow through with what you need to get done, and just accept the fact that it's not going to look like a model lesson from the teacher training video. Or you can take a break, play a game, come back to things. You can skip over things. It's hard to skip over things when you only have them once a week. Like

yesterday, I really wanted to have them look at the charts that had ta, ti-ti, quarter rest, and half notes because I felt like we were getting a little behind…. We really needed to get some momentum going there. So we started out with the movement—the whole "Bubblegum" thing—and waited to sit down and look. And they actually ended up doing pretty good. But I think if I had had them sit down and try do that *first*, that would have been really hard for them… They wouldn't have been able to sit still. I think they needed to get some energy out, they needed to have fun, they needed to move before they could sit and focus on that.

Here is another sense in which musical movement games and dance are special in the elementary classroom. They prove a powerful tool for reigning in over-exuberance so that children can learn other skills that require more discrete attention. Playful, high-energy music activities give children a chance to "get some energy out," as Marsha says. She deemed it worth her time to first satisfy her students' need to move, so that they could then focus on a music literacy activity without feeling jittery. In "Bazooka Bubblegum," not only did Marsha go with the normal form of the song, which itself is highly energetic, but she allowed the children to participate more rambunctiously than usual, giving them a chance to yell and move animatedly around the room as they were naturally inclined to in that moment. She did not correct them for yelling, but let it happen for the express purpose of making the next activity more successful.

Another aspect of adjusting expectations to match children in the moment is knowing when to allow them to not participate. Both Natalie and Marsha gradually increase their expectations for participation through the early years of elementary school. Preschoolers are encouraged—but rarely forced—to participate, but by first or second grade students are expected to participate fully in classroom activities. Both teachers spoke about this transition, and about their reasoning for making such allowances:

> Natalie:
> For most little 3- and 4-year-olds, I am a strange adult. I'm not Mom, I'm not Dad, and I'm not their teacher. And it takes a little while to become their teacher when I only see

them once a week. So with preschool there's that: they need to learn to be comfortable with me. And it doesn't take too long before they're willing to just get up and run around and hug me and play games and do whatever I want them to do. But they still have their moments. They're still babies, kind of. They'll have their moments where, "I'm hungry and I feel like a nap and you're trying to get me to sing, so I'm not gonna do it, I'm gonna have a tantrum instead." So with preschool it's usually, "If you want to join in, join in." And if I phrase it the right way, or if I make it look fun, then most of them will join in, with very few exceptions. Like at the end of class if I've been working them real hard and running them around a lot and playing a lot of games, then sometimes I know they're tired. So for the ones who still have energy I'll say, "If you want to get up and run for this song, you can get up and run," but I know some of the other ones are ready for snack time or nap time, so I'm not gonna push it too hard. Then as they get older, into kindergarten, sometimes I give them the option, sometimes I don't…. And then by first grade, most of the time [I expect that] everybody does the activity. I might ask for volunteers here and there, and give an option every once in a while. But generally by first grade every kid needs to be participating, otherwise I think they're not learning and they're not earning the grade that I give them… So by that point the, "you can decide if you want to participate or not" has kind of gone away for the most part.

Marsha:
I think it's gradual. I think we expect more and more of them as they get older.
And I do tend to use a lot of analogies in terms of comparing it to other subject
areas or other activities. As they get older, I ask them what's the name for a musical
team, because they've all done soccer.... "Oh, it's an ensemble." So we compare an
ensemble to a sports team. You've got to have everybody doing your best and
you've got to have everybody doing their part, and not everybody gets to be to
quarterback. Not everybody gets to play the bass xylophone, and things like that.
So you constantly have to put it in other contexts for them. But as far as the
accountability, I feel like it's just what's age-appropriate. You know, a
preschooler—a three-year-old—you can't make the same expectation for them.
Because they're just sittin' there missin' Mommy… But holding them accountable...
it's just gradual.

Natalie specifically cites behavior management as one factor in allowing young children

to sit out when they don't want to participate. Pushing a preschool student who is hungry, tired,

or otherwise unwilling to participate might induce a power struggle and make the child more

likely to act out, whereas making an allowance for their nonparticipation in that moment

preserves the activity as a positive experience and hopefully makes it more likely the child will

join in later. In this instance, Natalie says she does not engage the child directly, but simply tries

to make the activity look fun.

This allowance, though, is seen as simply developmentally appropriate. Older children are expected to participate, even when they do not want to. I asked about this expectation when interviewing Lucas[25], a second grade student of Marsha's:

Michelle: In second grade, can y'all sit out if you don't want to participate?

Lucas: Nu-ungh. If we *have* to, like if our stomach hurt or if somebody hit us or if somebody pushed us and if we bruised our arm or leg, then we're allowed to sit out.

Michelle: But generally unless you're hurt?

Lucas: Or if you're interrupting the game, if you're messing up the game.

Michelle: Oh, okay. Are you *made* to sit out, in that case?

Lucas: Yeah.

Lucas seems well aware of Marsha's expectation of students of his grade level in terms of participation. He even points out (what probably goes without saying for Marsha) that she would be understanding of students who were hurt or sick if they did not want to participate. In this quote, Lucas also reaffirms that the behaviors which would prompt removal from the game (or another behavior modification) are those which make that ritual less successful; in his words, "interrupting the game" or "messing up the game."

Conclusion

Movement games and dance have a special role in elementary music classrooms as tools for classroom management. They are highly motivating, because children enjoy the chance to move their bodies in class and because they are socially satisfying, making these activities good

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[25] Pseudonym

reinforcers for positive target behaviors. Likewise, teachers can use removal from these pleasurable experiences as undesirable reinforcers. Children are naturally creative, and movement proves an especially accessible medium for individual expression, another socially satisfying element of ritual. Dynamic games can help expend excess energy so that children are more able to concentrate on difficult tasks, increasing success of these more sedate activities and decreasing disruptive behaviors.

Movement and gesture also provide teachers with non-disruptive modes of communication for addressing behavior. These can limit the humiliation associated with negative feedback and allow students to easily integrate back into productive participation.

All these elements enable teachers to capitalize on the positive emotional energy that comes with making music and playing fun games as a social group. Randall Collins's theory of interaction ritual chains suggests that as students accumulate like positive experiences, they are more likely to seek out similar interactions and more likely to comply with behavioral expectations that facilitate those interactions.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHING ACADEMIC SKILLS

This chapter returns to the most basic function of musical movement activities, from the point of view of elementary general music teachers: the development of academic skills. In Chapter 2, I contended that such skills have implications for these students' present and future social interactions. With that established, I now look to the ways dance and musical movement help to shape elementary students as young musicians and learners.

Non-musical Academic Skills

Music making and musical movement have been acknowledged as useful tools for teaching and reinforcing many non-musical academic skills and developmental milestones. There are many books about "best practices" for incorporating music and dance into elementary classrooms for this purpose, overflowing with activities that use performance of rhythms to teach students what a syllable is (Overby, Post, Newman 2005: 68) or different ways of coordinating group movement to make geometric shapes (Overby, Post, Newman 2005: 123). Other pedagogues suggest incorporating music and musical movement to enhance reading circle time (Carlow 2008: 27).

When I started this thesis, I expected to find that my informants used movement in their classrooms to reinforce non-musical academic skills, at least those that might have some benefit to their curriculum like reinforcing words' meanings through illustrative gestures. I found that I was wrong. Both of my informants acknowledged that musical play may help children conceptualize ideas from other subjects, like definitions of terms, but neither intentionally plans

lessons to strengthen these skills. On this subject, Marsha said,

> When I think about reinforcing meaning of a song, it's more as a music teacher. I'm not looking at it as a language arts teacher, even though I know I am reinforcing what they do without even trying, which is the cool thing about music.

Music making and musical play may have many potential applications and benefits for school subjects other than music, but for teachers like Marsha and Natalie, these fall outside the purview of musical instruction. Instead, they focus on teaching their students social, behavioral, and musical skills that are applicable to their own community of *music* learners.

Musical Skills

Musical movement is chiefly used by music teachers to teach concepts and skills that are part of their curricular objectives. These applications widely vary, as Marsha explains:

> Oftentimes it's something for their hands to do, or it's reinforcing steady beat versus phrase. Sometimes we're trying to reinforce steady beat while we're singing. Sometimes we're trying to reinforce phrase. Sometimes it's reinforcing the words. You know, it's kind of like a whole bag of stuff that you do, where you go through all these different activities, where the movement is reinforcing different things at different times.

My informants addressed several of these applications in our interviews. I have divided them here into six categories: experiencing musical elements, musical expression and coordination, musical coordination, motor skills for playing instruments, memory aid, and music literacy.

Experiencing Musical Elements

One aspect of elementary general music pedagogy systems like the Kodály Method and the Orff Approach is that children should experience musical elements and feel comfortable with

them before they are named by technical terms or abstracted (Houlahan and Tacka 2008: 144) (Steen 1992: 19). This approach springs from the idea that in natural learning, a concept is first experienced, then named, and lastly applied to and practiced in multiple contexts. Arvida Steen explains this idea well:

> Learning is often described as three-dimensional. You are probably already aware of *naming*, or presenting our learning objectives (the first dimension), for it is dealing with new learning that drives our music programs. However, there are two other dimensions that determine how useful the new learning becomes. These are the *experiences* that precede and prepare conceptual learning, and the *conscious application* which follows. (Steen 1992: 19)

We see this approach reflected in Natalie's statements about her approach to teaching small children. Though she doesn't use the verbiage of experience as preparation for other skills, she expresses in her own words the same concepts: that musical experience builds conceptual understanding of musical elements, and that naming of terms is secondary to meaningful performance of music. She states,

> My first goal is I want them to go home and tell their parents they had a fun time in music class. My second goal, with the real little ones in preschool, I want to kind of give them a firm foundation in music so that when I see them in later years as they get older, it will be naturally ingrained in them. So yes, I teach them vocab words. So they know presto means fast and largo means slow and forte means loud and piano means soft. And that's kind of cool. But I'm not doing those things so that they learn the vocabulary, I'm doing those things so they have it kind of built into them.

Marsha more explicitly cites the Kodály Method and Orff Approach, using the language of "experience." She is particularly concerned that her students get a wide variety of musical experiences that will prepare them to sing, play instruments, read music, and move musically as they develop more skills and progress through the process of naming and applying musical concepts. Marsha explains:

> I guess my main thing with kindergarten through second is to keep them engaged and experiencing those important things for early childhood music, every lesson. So at some point are they making some kind of connection between a visual and what they're singing

or doing? Are they getting up and moving? Are they singing? Are they playing an instrument in the sense that at least there's some kind of body percussion or a steady beat going on, even if we don't drag out the Orff xylophones every time, or the rhythm sticks, or the drums. But there's something that ties into instrument playing at some point. I guess that would be the main categories… I have a checklist of things that I consider my minimum that I want to try to get to each year. In kindergarten, it has very obvious things like steady beat, experiencing the way the words go (which will turn later into rhythm... that's a Kodály thing) versus steady beat, by the end of the year, being able to play a bordun. But I go pretty slow because of the once a week and I'm not in a hurry to get them reading and writing music… What I'm trying to do is have a lot of experience and exposure to these different concepts. So I want them to be *doing* something all the time, not just making sure that by this point they can write and read ta's and ti-ti's. That not my focus; it's more doing lots of different things so that all the different learners are getting what they need. So I'm making sure that there's singing, there's instrument playing, there's movement in every class, and there's also visual learning, so I try to have as many visual aids as I can.

Because experiencing musical elements encompasses all work done before explicitly naming an element, it is difficult to pinpoint particular instances in which I saw students engaging in musical experience. Almost anything could be considered experience, from students exploring "how the words go" in preparation for learning about rhythm in Natalie's class, to singing folk songs that include So, Mi, and La in Marsha's class before these syllables have been named. Even when students are focusing on the naming or application of a concept within the context of an activity, they may be unconsciously experiencing other elements that can be drawn out, named, and applied later.

Musical Expression and Improvisation

Musical movement is a medium that is sufficiently limited as to be conducive to early improvisation. Teachers use free movement games to teach children how to improvise with dance in a low-pressure setting. This approach is endorsed by Houlahan and Tacka in *Kodály Today*:

Making up movements to accompany songs and changing the words to a song will

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encourage young students' spontaneity and creativity. The classroom atmosphere for such activities should be free and game-like so students can make an error without becoming embarrassed. (Houlahan, Tacka 2008: 185)

Natalie employs this technique when she plays "The Mirror Game" with her students, in which the kids come up with motions to match recorded music while a partner imitates them in mirror image. Natalie changes the music, drawing children's attention to musical elements that could be expressed through movement. She describes it this way:

> I'll say, "Okay, pick a partner. Who's the leader first? Who's the mirror first?" And then they just do whatever motions they feel like around the room. Sometimes it works really well, and sometimes they're like, "I can't copy him, he's moving too fast." But yeah, they're given a whole lot of free rein with that. I mean, I have a couple rules like always, like I'll say, "You can't touch each other." But beyond that, they're kind of given free rein to move around however they feel like it. And that's when I start—they don't realize I'm doing it—but I'll start messing with the music, like I'll go from a really slow track and then I'll put a fast one on just to see how their motions change. And it'll go from like, slowly leaning back and forth to jumping up and down like crazy people. It's fun to watch how they respond to the music like that, when you give them the chance.

Marsha approaches creative movement similarly, also instructing students to move freely to recorded music. She stresses the importance of moving musically and responsively to the music, and uses children's improvisatory motions to assess their level of perception and understanding of different musical elements. Marsha says,

> [When] we teach improvisation to preschoolers, part of it is that we let them make up movement. Here's the sound you're hearing and the movement that you're making up as you go, that's improvisation. Or just sort of looking to see, are they really listening to the music? I play a game called "Popsicle," where the music changes every time we stop. It's like ""Freeze Dance"," except every time the music starts up again, it's different. So we're really watching to see: how do they interpret what they're hearing? Is there a kid that's just bouncing and jumping no matter what the music sounds like?... So we're talking about weight in music, expressiveness, one of the qualities that you can explore through movement is weight—are they lightening up and floating a little more when they hear [lighter music], and if it's loud do they show a really strong steady beat...? Things like that. When it's more expressive or creative, it's more watching how they're interpreting it and looking to see how they're responding.

These approaches are similar to, if not influenced by, the Orff Approach as described by

Patricia Shehan Campbell:

> The untrained and natural movement of children is a significant component of the Orff process of music education. Such play activities as jumping, skipping, spinning, swinging, and running are encouraged in the interpretation of music that is played by the teacher and other students. Also, attention is drawn to the form and rhythm of children's movements, and the students are guided to improvise instrumental patterns in the rhythms and phrasing of their movement. A mirroring of movement through music, and music through movement is planned in order to capture the expressiveness of children in these forms and to nurture the natural fusion of the two. (Campbell 1991: 219)

Just as Campbell describes musical movement as being capable of capturing the form and phrasing of music, Marsha approaches expressivity through music in a more subtle way, beyond vaguely "moving to the music." Not only can tempo and tone be shown through music, but so can form and the meaning of lyrics. Ideally, she says, movement should capture all of these elements, without subordinating one to another:

> I'm looking at it in terms of expression and how do you teach expressiveness in music, how do you teach expressive qualities besides just being very overt about loud and soft, or speeding up or slowing down, or weight, or sustained or staccato, or any of that kind of stuff that we would call "expressive qualities" that are more subtle. So if we're singing "You Are My Sunshine," I would rather have this big gesture that mirrors the phrase of the song, but also the meaning. Like [the lyric] "You are my sunshine," so here's the sun and here's the rays coming down.... rather than have some kind of steady beat thing, because that would just be not musical with that song. [It's] visually musical, but also reinforcing the lyrics, of course, because lyrics are like poetry. You do want to put thought into that. When I use sign language, American Sign Language, I do a lot of picking and choosing, and I'm not trying to fit in every word. I'm picking the word that I think is a key word of the phrase or lyric, but that also fits with the song and phrasing.

Marsha's approach reflects and reinforces the idea put forth by Brian Ebie and cited in Jody L. Kerchner's *Music Across the Senses: Listening, Learning, and Meaning Making,* that,

> Students engaging in gestures/movements during music listening can transform musical sounds into concrete, bodily manifestations of the inherent musical qualities. Further, movement provides students the opportunity to demonstrate not only what they hear perceptually in the music but also their affective responses to it. (Ebie 2004, cited in Kerchner 2013: 52)

This view of movement as a medium for young children to communicate what they are hearing and feeling while listening to music is reflected in Marsha's free movement lessons. They are structured to draw children's attention to different musical elements, and utilize high-quality, engaging music. I observed one such lesson, in which Marsha's preschoolers played "Popsicle."

Marsha passed out small primary-colored scarves to her preschool class, painting the classroom in a gauzy rainbow. Little girls peered at each other through their colored shrouds, grinned, stuck out their tongues. Olivia, a rather spacey three-year-old, scanned the room and found the nearest person who held the same color scarf as she. Marching up to her homeroom teacher, she announced that *they were blue*. Marsha pushed a button on her boom box and the music started- an Irish reel, at a clip. The students bounced and galloped around the room, jerking their scarves up and down. About a minute later, Marsha switched to the next track, this time a sweet instrumental Sean-nós. Pallavi[26]—four years old and the most mischievous student of the group, but also the most musically astute—swirled and waved her scarf slowly through the air to the beat, the movement left to right vaguely following the phrasing of the music. Her wrist moved fluidly, as if she were painting. Olivia continued to bounce throughout the slow tune, falling to the floor every few seconds and laughing every time. The other students moved about the room, clearly responding to the music with their movement, unlike Olivia. They moved fluidly during the Sean-nós and jerkily during the reel, though most had not progressed so far as to clearly show the beat or form like Pallavi was beginning to do.

During this activity, Marsha's students had a low-pressure opportunity to experiment with moving musically and improvising in the context of a free movement

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[26] Pseudonym

game. The use of scarves as a manipulative gave these students extra constraints which

served as inspiration for different possible movements, while the changing music brought

attention to different musical qualities that the children might express through their

gestures. There was also potential for students to take this expressive opportunity deeper,

as Pallavi did when she used motion expressing form. In this activity, children responded

to music in a way that was observable to their teacher, effectively communicating about

elements they heard which they did not yet have the vocabulary to describe.

Musical Coordination

Though Natalie teaches musical expression and improvisation through movement, she

tells me that this is low on her list of priorities for elementary general music students. Much

more important, she says, is the skill of making music together and learning how to coordinate

movements and music with others. In her own words,

> Music very much provides an opportunity to learn [how to] be creative on your own and
> come up with your own ways of self-expression. But it's definitely a very small part of
> what we do. As far as I'm concerned, that's because I'm teaching pre-k through 5... My
> students come in the door very individualistic and self-expressive, and they are very,
> very, very different kids, and I'm trying to teach them how to become one, how to work
> well with others. That line, "works well with others" that's on report cards for
> preschoolers? That's a very important skill to teach them, that does not come naturally.
> You have to teach that… You have to rein them in if you want them to work as a team.

Movement is one of the tools she uses to teach these skills of coordinating music

making as an ensemble. For instance, she models simple forms of conducting to teach fifth

graders to sing together independently:

> I know you didn't watch my older classes, in fourth and fifth grade... but let's say
> they come into class and I have a list of directions on the board for them for what
> we're going to do today. And to make sure they're paying attention, I'll say, "I want
> you to read the directions together as a group. Go." And the first time, some go
> fast, some read slow, and they all fall apart and it sounds terrible. I'll stop them.

And I let them do that on purpose so they can hear how poorly that worked. "Yeah, that didn't sound very good, did it? Try it again, this time *together*. *Listen* to each other." And they read through the list of rules. And sometimes I'll start them off with a rhythmic pattern:
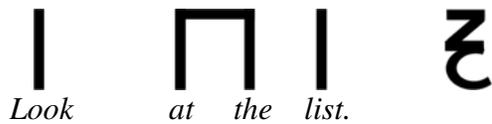

Look   at   the   list.

Figure 4.1 Choral reading

And I'll kind of **nod** my **head** and **feel** the **beat** as we're reading. Because I'm a musician. That's what I do, I conduct. So I conduct their reading. Then I kind of back away and let them go, and I watch and I can see some of them moving their head and watching each other. And when this kid hears that they're getting too fast over there, he'll start saying it louder: "**this is the-**" So yeah, they kind of copy the things that I model for them. So if I'm conducting the class to read together by nodding my head, I'll see them do it too. So yeah, maybe those things working together will be for the good of society, but it certainly is for the good of our class. I often say we're a team. I treat them like a sports team. I don't really say ensemble, they don't know what that word very well. I say, "We're a *team*."

Natalie models a conducting style similar to that used by chamber ensembles, in which movements of the head are used to coordinate music making between members. In this activity, she challenges her students to generate a solution to their problem without explicitly walking them through the process; first letting them fail, then modeling one solution and leaving it up to the students to determine why that solution worked and how to make it work for themselves. Without explicit instruction, the students picked up from the activity how to coordinate choral reading through movement.

In teaching earlier grades, Natalie uses an approach similar to that for teaching improvisation to move the students from only performing together with their teacher to being able to sing in call-and-response, another form of musical coordination. She describes this technique further:

As they get older and songs get more complicated, you want to be able to do a repeat-after-me approach, so that I can sing a line, you sing the line back to me. I sing a phrase, you sing the phrase back. That's not a natural skill in preschool, and not even in kindergarten, at first. So to kind of get them to watch and observe and learn the difference between doing it with me and repeating after me, we do "The Mirror Game". I'll demonstrate it with one student who I think will pick it up real quick, and then we'll break up and have partners. So I usually put on some quiet music—sometimes it's fast, sometimes it's slow—but kind of quiet in the background. And I'll just pick a kid to be a mirror. I'll say, "One person's the leader, one person's the reflection." And then I'll do motions, big, slow, easy-to-follow motions with my whole body, to music (the music's just secondary in this activity), with the idea that the kid has to copy exactly what I'm doing at the same time, they have to look like they're my mirror... which is how preschool thinks, they do activities with you. And then once they get the hang of that, I'll start turning it into, "Take turns. The leader goes first, *then* you do the motion back at them." So if I wave my arms three times and touch my nose, you stand still. *Then* you wave your arms three times, touch your nose. So hopefully by the time that sinks in, I can get them to the point where I can say, "Okay, I'm going to sing [sings 'Mary Had a Little Lamb']... then you sing [sings 'Mary Had a Little Lamb']." Because that's something they don't just naturally do right away. That's something we have to work towards.

Natalie explained that when she asked students to repeat a line of music after her, they found it difficult and naturally fell into chorus with her as she sang. Movement in this case made the concept easily observable. Once she saw that her students had mastered the concept and execution of watching and processing a motion *then* imitating it, she had them apply that conceptual understanding to its musical parallel. This cleared the communication barrier, no doubt in a less frustrating way (for both teacher and students) than continuing to stop and retry call-and-response singing until the children mastered it.

Motor Skills for Playing Instruments

Elementary teachers also use musical movement to prepare students for playing instruments, especially percussion instruments like hand drums. For instance, students might learn to pat out a rhythmic pattern on their laps with their hands, then transfer that

pattern to a xylophone (Campbell 1991:220). In this way, children build muscle memory

that helps them perform a musical pattern (Steen 1992: 28), but also have the opportunity

to isolate that particular aspect of playing xylophone before other challenging skills like

holding the mallets correctly are added. "Once most of the children can respond to the beat

accurately using their large muscle responses," says Arvida Steen, "they are ready to use

the more refined responses required when they play the instruments" (Steen 1992: 57).

Marsha uses this method of kinesthetic preparation for instruments in her class, saying,

> When we're just singing songs, I think they usually have [some kind of movement].
> Sometimes it's body percussion, because it's going to lead to instrument playing, and it's
> not just a reinforcement of the words or a Kodály sign. So if we're singing a song and I
> know we're going to go and do a certain kind of bordun[27], I'll play it on my lap so they're
> mirroring it... There's usually some kind of visual, but it's not necessarily a gesture.

I saw this technique used in her classroom to teach children as young as three and four years old,

who were learning to play on frame drums.

Marsha sat with her preschool students in a circle. She had just passed out small hand

drums to the class, and they had them in their laps, curiously scratching and lightly tapping

various surfaces to softly experiment with different sounds. Marsha made a "flat O" handshape

(refer to Appendix A, p. 102) with her left hand at shoulder level, as if she were using a hand

puppet, and her students immediately joined in imitation of her movements. She started opening

and closing the hand puppet's mouth to the beat as she spoke a rhyme:

Figure 4.2 "Yum Drum"

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[27] Drone ostinato pattern in open 5th

look- ing   for   a   drum.

Figure 4.2 continued

She went through this rhyme three times, and on the third time replaced the word "drum" with an imitation of a mouth being muffled, at which point she used her chomping puppet hand to "bite" the drum into a secure but relaxed hold. She paused to give stragglers a chance to catch up, then continued her chant:

Thumb
(Points to her properly placed left-hand thumb, curving over the frame)

Drum
(Uses a "B" handshape (refer to Appendix A, p. 102) with her right hand to gently rub the surface of the drum, producing a swishing sound)

Yum
(Uses the same handshape and motion to rub her belly)

Figure 4.3 "Yum Drum" continued

Marsha used this mini-activity as a way to teach her students how to properly hold their

drums, before they began making music together and improvising on their instruments. They

went through motions of gripping a drum, using familiar movement from other musical and non-

musical play, then applied these to holding the drums. This allowed Marsha to model and

rehearse necessary skills for playing these instruments, while maintaining the context of a game

and minimizing the amount of verbal instruction and correction that needed to be given.

Memory Aid and Reinforcement of Lyrics

Much of the movement that accompanies young children's songs consists of visually

representative gestures that illustrate the lyrics. A familiar example is the set of motions that

accompany the song "The Itsy Bitsy Spider." These gestures show a spider crawling upwards,

rain falling, the sun in the sky, and water evaporating into the air, illustrating the meaning of the

song's lyrics as they are sung.

Natalie and Marsha both use representative gestures very frequently, especially with

preschool and kindergarten students. Marsha notes that at the very least, such motions provide

young children with something to do with their hands to keep them engaged.

Natalie acknowledges another function of such movements in the reinforcement of what

lyrics mean, but in her opinion this is just a fortunate byproduct of their most important function.

For her, illustrative motions are most useful as memory aids for lyrics. To this point, she says:

> If there's motions that go with [a song], they remember the words *so* much easier.
> Without the motions, it would be like me trying to force the words down their brains.
> But the minute I put motions, they're like, "Oh yeah."

I saw this in action during several of Natalie's kindergarten classes. She sat at the front

of the classroom facing her students, who were seated in their usual semicircle on numbered

carpet squares. Natalie sat cross-legged on the floor with her hands placed on her knees,

swaying to the beat as a recording of "I Bought Me a Cat" began to thrum out of speakers in the back of the classroom. The kindergarteners swayed along, some clearly registering a beat and others less so. Natalie made eye contact with different students, smiling, as the short introductory tag played, then opened her mouth and lifted her eyebrows to cue the students to start singing.

Verse: *I bought me a cat, the cat pleased me,*
        I fed my cat under yonder tree

Refrain: *And the cat went fiddle eye fee, fiddle eye fee*

She continued to sway through the first short verse, until it got to the word "cat." At this point, she raised "curved hand" handshapes (refer to Appendix A, p. 102) at face level to represent cat's paws. When the group sang "fiddle eye fee," she pawed small circles moving away from her body in a motion like pedaling a bicycle, keeping the beat with her "paws." The song continued in a progressive form, with each new verse adding a line to the refrain:

Verse: *I bought me a sheep, the sheep pleased me*
        I fed my sheep under yonder tree

Refrain: *The sheep went baah, baah*
        The goose went honk, honk
        The duck went splishy splashy
        The hen went chipsy chopsy
        And the cat went fiddle eye fee, fiddle eye fee

During each pickup to an animal name (e.g. "the goose went…"), Natalie placed her hands in a position ready to perform that animal's representative gesture, giving her students a visual cue for the lyrics a split second before they came up. This helped her students remember what to sing, even when doing a long sequence.

Music Literacy

Specific types of musical movement prepare music literacy in elementary classrooms,

including Solfege hand signs as used in the Kodály Method. These hand signs show relations

between pitches and map melodic contour kinesthetically (Choksy 1999: 14). Marsha speaks to

this function of movement in her classroom, saying,

> Well, I do use the Kodály [hand signs]. So that's just reinforcing music literacy. So
> again, high and low, pitch relations… I feel like the more I can connect the auditory and
> the kinesthetic, the more learning that's going to happen for more kids.

Natalie also uses hand signs as a tool in her curriculum, and begins to expose her students

to them around kindergarten. For this age group, she uses a video from Music K8 which features

an animated version of a newer iteration of "Do, A Deer" from *The Sound of Music.* This

version, like "Do, A Deer," introduces each Solfege name at the beginning of a four-bar motive

and provides a pun by which to remember it (e.g., "Do: I make my cookies out of dough").

On one of the days I observed her class, Natalie started this segment with one play

through the video. The kindergarten class sang and did hand signs along with the video, though

it seemed difficult for them to coordinate both singing all of the words and correctly placing their

hands. Natalie went to the piano after the video had finished and played the song chord by

chord, instructing the students on how to form their hand signs. "Re, like an airplane." (A few

students launched their airplanes) "Mi, flat like a table." After a quick review, she played

chords with her left hand, modeled hand signs with her right, and sang the song, giving the

students another chance to practice at a slower pace. She ended the activity by having the kids

sing and sign along with the animated video once more.

Natalie approaches early use of Solfege signs as an opportunity for her students to

experience this tool, but they have not yet learned how to apply it. As they get closer to reading

music, she will likely start making her students conscious of the relationship of the kinesthetic

placement of the signs to the pitches they accompany, then transfer this concept to reading notes on a page.

Conclusion

Musical movement is used by music teachers like Natalie and Marsha to explore musical concepts through visual and kinesthetic learning modes. Skills and concepts learned in musical play and dance are transferrable to other aspects of music making like singing, listening, composing, and playing instruments. Through musical movement, elementary music instructors both teach and assess students' mastery of skills and concepts integral to their development as young musicians.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

For my teacher informants, the main charges of an elementary music educator are teaching children musical skills and instilling in them a love of music. The successful musical interactions that enable both competence in and enjoyment of music are part of a chain of interaction rituals in which social solidarity is created, maintained, and used to fuel further successful rituals. Synchronized (musical) movement is a particularly powerful generator of collective effervescence, which bolsters group solidarity and increases the effectiveness of in-class musical rituals of performance. The emotional energy that results influences children to seek out similar interactions, both in elementary music classes and possibly through other musical ritual as adults.

I suggest that the emotional energy generated from moving musically and socially in a group influences children to seek out more musical experiences. When they are motivated to participate in this way, children choose to comply with behavioral standards in order to avoid exclusion, and are more likely to enjoy learning musical concepts and skills that will make their music-making rituals more successful. Furthermore, positive experiences in making music as children may inspire these students to seek out further musical interactions in adulthood, allowing them to engage in social solidarity building rituals that will deepen their relationships and facilitate social—and by extension, psychological—health.

While dance and musical movement is but one tool utilized by elementary music teachers to achieve curricular objectives, it is to me a particularly dynamic and captivating one. As I watch young children move to music, it seems they explore and question and influence their

world kinesthetically, inscribing meaning in the arc of a limb through space. I see the joy in their movement, and wonder about its source, and how it is connected to their development as musicians, citizens of the world, and social beings.

For kindred spirits, here is my contribution.

APPENDIX A

ASL HANDSHAPES

"5"   "B"   "curved hand"

"flat O"   "index" or "1"   "X"

Figure A.1 ASL handshapes

Image source: See Vicars citations in Bibliography.

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

The Florida State University
Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 9/11/2013

To: Michelle Jones
Address: ███████████████████████
Dept.: MUSIC SCHOOL

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
PAIRED CHILDREN'S SONG AND GESTURE AS MEANS OF MULTIFACETED
ENCULTURATION

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the
research proposal referenced above has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Committee at its
meeting on 06/12/2013. Your project was approved by the Committee.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to
weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk
and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be
required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent
form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be
used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 6/11/2014 you must request a renewal of approval for
continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your

expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is FWA00000168/IRB number IRB00000446.

Cc: Michael Bakan, Advisor
HSC No. 2013.10641

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE ADULT CONSENT FORM

My name is Michelle Jones and I am a graduate student in Ethnomusicology from the College of Music at Florida State University. You are invited to be in a research study about gesture in children's music. We are asking that you take part because you teach music to the target age group (kindergarten through second grade) in a Tallahassee-area school. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in this study.

The study:
    The purpose of this study is to identify how motions that accompany children's songs and musical games are used to teach academic skills, socialize, and manage behavior. If you agree to take part, you will be interviewed individually and observed teaching your regular music classes over the period of a semester. At some point over the course of the study, participating students will be taken aside from the group for about 10 minutes and asked questions about the songs they sing that involve representative motions.
    Researcher, teachers, and child participants may be videotaped during both the group class and individual questioning.
    Interviews with teachers will be conducted in person, before or after class- or at a prearranged time- for 40-60 minutes. Teachers may expect to be interviewed 3-4 times over the course of the study. Total time commitment for teacher participants is 3-4 hours.

Risks and benefits:
There are no risks to you if you take part in the study. Participants who allow classroom observations will be treated to lunch by the researcher near the end of the semester. Other participants will be thanked for their time with a handwritten card.

Voluntary Participation:
    Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions you don't feel comfortable answering, and may also choose to stop at any time. Your decision of whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with Florida State University. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Confidentiality:
    Audiovisual and/ or audio recordings will be made of both the class observation (if applicable) and individual interview portions of this study. They will later be transcribed. These recordings will be used for research purposes only, and will never be used commercially. On request, you may view any recordings in which you appear. You may choose to be referred to by your real name in publications resulting from this research, or to be referred to by a pseudonym.

I have read the above information, and consent to participate in the study.

Participant name: _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Please initial one of the following statements to which you agree:

I prefer to be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications. _____

I prefer to be referred to by my own name in any publications. _____

      The researcher for this study is Michelle Jones. You may reach her at ███████ ███, or ████████████. Please feel free to contact her with questions at any point in time. You may also contact her faculty advisor, Dr. Michael B. Bakan, at ████████. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the FSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (850)644-8633 or access their website at http://www.fsu.research.edu. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE CHILD CONSENT FORM

My name is Michelle Jones and I am a graduate student in Ethnomusicology from the College of Music at Florida State University. Your child is invited to be in a research study about gesture in children's music. We are asking that your child take part because he or she is in our target age group, and participates in mainstream general music classes. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to allow your child to take part in this study.

The study:

The purpose of this study is to identify how motions that accompany children's songs and musical games are used to teach academic skills, socialize, and manage behavior. If you agree to allow your child to take part, he/ she will be observed in his/ her regularly scheduled music class. At some point over the course of the study, your child will be taken aside in the music classroom for about 10 minutes and asked questions about the songs they sing in class. Researcher, teachers, and child participants may be videotaped during both the group class and individual questioning.

Risks and benefits:

There are no risks or benefits to you or your child if he/ she takes part in the study.

Voluntary Participation:

Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your child may skip any questions he or she doesn't feel comfortable answering, and may also choose to stop at any time. Your decision of whether or not to allow your child to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with Florida State University or with your child's school. You are free to withdraw your child at any time.

Confidentiality:

Digital footage will be made of both the group class and individual interview portions of this study. They will later be transcribed. To the extent allowed by law, these recordings will be used for research purposes only, and will never be used commercially. On request, you may view any footage in which your children appear. Publications resulting from this study will not include identifying information about student participants beyond their grade level and the name of their school. Students will be referred to by pseudonyms only.

Please write your child's name and sign below if you give consent for him/ her to participate in this study.

Child participant's name: _____

Parent's signature: _____

Date: _____

The researcher for this study is Michelle Jones. You may reach her at ██████████ ███, or ████████████. Please feel free to contact her with questions at any point in time. You may also contact her faculty advisor, Dr. Michael B. Bakan, at ██████████. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the FSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (850)644-8633 or access their website at http://www.fsu.research.edu. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Michelle Jones was raised in San Antonio, Texas, and received her Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from Texas Tech University in 2010. She taught beginning strings classes during college and student-taught elementary general music at a Title 1 school in San Antonio. She has also worked in different capacities and settings with people who have special needs for ten years, and looks forward to many more. Michelle is fluent in Signed English and is currently studying Hindi and Indian Sign Language so she may one day teach and advocate for people in India who have special needs. Her research interests in musicology include gestural codes in dance, altered states of consciousness, and disability studies. Michelle loves fantasy novels, stargazing, and crème brûlée.

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