

**Veblen, K.K. (2012). Community music making: Challenging the stereotypes of traditional music education. In C.A. Beynon & K.K. Veblen (Eds). *Critical perspectives in Canadian music education*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press.**

First of all, I had no idea there was even such a thing as community music upon reading this article. It's interesting to see how many initiatives are being implemented in order to incorporate social factors into music. Sometimes I believe we think too much about the technicalities of music, the performance aspects, or how we make music and forget about how music plays a role in many cultures, the community and even healing. This last point intrigued me the most. I have always been interested in the idea of music psychology. I find it incredible that music can be a form of therapy, both formally and informally: music has the power to heal us emotionally and even spiritually.

I also believe music programming in schools has great worth, but is extremely undervalued. The author mentioned that community music will open our minds to new perspectives and its core mission that goes beyond music in the schools system. While I agree with the point that music education needs to be expanded beyond schools, I want to tell the author that I think implementing a strong music programs in schools is a great place to start. The author stated that providing access to such initiatives can prove to be a challenge. Well, then why are we not first implementing community music into the school curriculum itself, emphasizing the concept of music as expression and social bonding. This is where children spend the majority of their day anyways. Sure this would only target the lower age range, but if we can provide that comprehensive, excellent music education the author spoke of right from when they are toddlers, I think we will have a better shot at maintaining "lifelong music lovers".

I would like to expand on this point as well. I believe that as we age, we begin to see the importance of many aspects in our lives, music included. So it comes as no surprise that many of the elderly are more prone to go to the theatre or concerts. For them, it is community music: a way to get out and socialize while enjoying the many pleasures of music. Adults have no problem with this concept. Nor do young children, in my opinion. Many of them love to express themselves individually, as well as in groups, musically. It is the teenage gap, however, that does not see music in the same way. Yet, they do participate in community music. Many of them attend summer music festivals and concerts. It is during this age where community music outweighs that of a more formal music education, and hence they perceive music education negatively. It is here that I have to agree with the author in saying that, we need to challenge the stereotype of traditional music education.

Lastly, I was shocked to discover that both the federal and provincial governments provide minimal funding and support for arts programs in the sense of grants and awards. It is sad to think that most people with jobs in the music field rely on themselves as their main point of funding. Community music is such a benefit to everyone, so why are we not

supporting this like we should be? It makes me wonder what has turned society to discredit the arts, and music in particular. Why do we all not share the same point of the importance of music education?