

Kratus, J. (2007). Music education at the tipping point. *Music Educators Journal*, 94(2), 42-48. doi:10.1177/002743210709400209

I can understand why so many music educators found this article offensive. It was mentioned that in today's music education there are "limitations in musicianship", yet I am taking 3 classes a week dedicated to the art of musicianship itself. I find this surprising that the author stated this, as most of my musical training was founded on technical skills and overall musicianship. It is possible that much of this formal training is only being offered in private studios, and the public education system has lost sight of this all. I have seen the "tipping point" of music education first hand throughout my years in public school, leading up to its worst in high school. However, I don't believe that this is a result of unqualified music educators, as the author would argue. I do know that music educators are scarce, but all of my past music educators have been well qualified to teach, yet that tipping point still existed. I think (and hope) that this is just a phase, and this void will soon be filled by something greater, especially with our advances in technology.

Interestingly enough, I agree that music has been strongly digitalized in this day and age. Overall, the importance of live performances, and not "live" broadcasting from your television but live in person, has been disregarded; it has taken a back seat. For me personally, this is the pure essence of music: being able to share face to face your musical abilities. In a sense, technology both irritates and helps me. It is convenient and quick and, touching on a point from the reading, we are now able to view musical communities from all over the world. We can connect with like-minded individuals from anywhere, and not just based on proximity. That's fabulous! It opens so many cultural doors, along with new diverse musical perspectives. At the same time, it creates a barrier in music. We are so dependent on the Internet or our "tech toys" that we forgot the good old-fashioned methods. Sure many of these things are useful, for example digital metronomes, portable keyboards, but nothing compares to a solid wood grand piano. I think there is most definitely a place for technology in music. We are an evolving society. But, at the end of the day, I don't think it can come close to replacing the classics.

So in part, I would like to tell the author that I agree with the statement that, "Music educators need to uphold tradition while still embracing the future". Music education needs to accommodate the needs of the twenty-first century. Just as musical style and interests have changed through the eras, music education must do the same. Yet, we cannot throw away the Classical music foundation that truly nurtures us as musicians. Music education should start there, but not end. It is from there that the context, interest and needs of the students must be met. I would, however, like to ask the author why he or she placed some of the blame to this tipping point on the music educators themselves. To me, I don't think we can fully attribute this declining trend solely to teachers themselves, as I believe it is how things function as a whole that control how music education is produced.