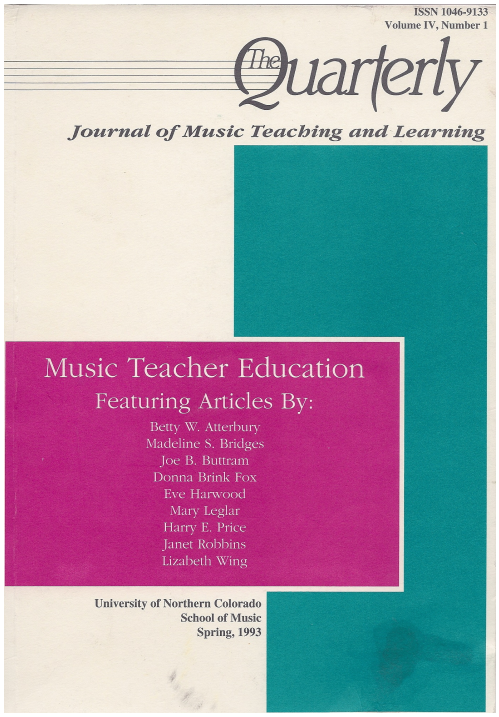

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It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. *The journal began in 1990 as* The Quarterly. *In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to* The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning *and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication.* Visions of Research in Music Education *will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish* The Quarterly *in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.*

Preparing Students To Think Like Teachers: Relocating Our Teacher Education Perspective

By Janet Robbins

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There is very little discussion in the teacher education literature in music that has focused on teachers, the questions they ask, the ways they make decisions about what to teach, the knowledge they have about what works and what doesn't, and the processes that they apply to understand and improve their practice.

Lack of attention to the experience of teachers themselves results in a view of teaching that is primarily linear and "emphasizes the actions of teachers rather than their professional judgments" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, p. 2). Too often the preparation of teachers reflects this view as well, resulting in methods courses that reduce the complexity of teaching to the acquisition of skills and pat formulas, regardless of context. Consequently, when students become teachers, they assume they should use the suggested activities or methods precisely as presented.

The prescriptive nature of teacher preparation in music often fails to address the uncertainties that typically accompany the early classroom teaching experience. Once on their own, novice teachers often find themselves faced with decisions and judgment calls that they were never prepared for, nor did they ever imagine. This sink-or-swim approach to induction that dominates current practice too often leaves new teachers unprepared. They must search for alternatives in a context in which the rules that they dutifully learned in college may no longer apply. The conflict and tension between theory and practice that arise are swallowed up by the daily grind and well-rehearsed routines remaining invisible to teacher trainers, researchers, and sometimes even to the teachers themselves.

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For the past two decades, the sparse research on music teaching has assumed an outside-in approach, using the familiar cause-effect model, testing researchers' hypotheses, and correlating teacher behaviors with student achievement in an attempt to determine effectiveness of teaching. The complexity of teaching is often misrepresented and dehumanized. Another research paradigm being used to study teaching is driven by the notion that "knowledge about teaching is fluid and socially constructed" (Smith & Lytle, 1991, p. 284). This type of qualitative study

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is rooted in anthropology and sociology and places primary importance on the perspectives of teachers and students. Methods which once were used to study exotic cultures and the street-corner societies of cities are now being applied to the study of classrooms.

Only a handful of studies have used this new approach in music education. Some have focused on the learner (Cohen, 1980; Miller, 1983; Metz, 1986). Others have been case studies of specific teachers, classes, and settings (Zimmerman, 1983; Thiel, 1984; Ingram, 1985; Wohlfeil, 1986, Huff, 1989). Two studies (Krueger, 1986; Schleuter, 1988) have focused on the student-teaching experience.

While the rich descriptions of qualitative reports have added new kinds of data to the literature on music education, our understanding of the experience of music teaching remains inconclusive. Many questions remain unanswered and more important, unasked. For instance, what are the sources of knowledge used by teachers as they progress from novice to experienced? What influences how teachers make decisions? How is new knowledge acquired and old knowledge retrieved? How do lessons change from class to class and across teaching sites? How do teachers learn to cope with the daily grind? What are the principles that guide practice?

Interest in teacher thinking has gained a great deal of attention in general education. Schon's (1983) work on the reflective practitioner, Schulman's (1987) on pedagogical content knowledge, and Berliner's (1991) studies of the stages of development from novice to expert teacher all are testimonies to the idea that teaching cannot be reduced to merely presenting pat formulas and a set of skills. The research questions in these studies and others are context-specific, "highly reflexive, immediate, and referenced to particular children and classrooms" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, p. 3).

Teachers themselves have begun to investigate their own teaching. Called teacher research, this movement is helping to raise the teacher's voice as well as to break down the boundaries between university-based and school-based teachers. Authority about the origin of knowledge about teaching and about who constructs it is shifting, and a new breed of highly professional and articulate teacher is being revealed.

Teacher research encompasses a range of activities. Teacher-researchers keep journals to record data about specific students, chronicle events and describe lessons, and ask questions and embrace uncertainties. They often form teacher cooperatives to share students' work and progress, using oral inquiry to arrive at solutions to teaching problems and questions. Further, these teacher-researchers conduct and report classroom studies.

Research questions are intimately interwoven with practice in such a way that the research both informs and transforms practice. The research is driven by a curiosity about teaching and influences day-to-day choices:

> Wondering about my students' thoughts and ideas forms the basis of the way I teach and the choices I make when I am teaching. As teachers, we are constantly faced with making choices—this piece for this student, that scale for that student, and so on. We are also in the unique position of observing the evolution of our students' knowledge—knowledge being constructed, restructured, questioned, and experienced (Goldberg, 1990, p. 38).

Being curious about the evolution of our students' knowledge may be the key to getting started with this kind of study. I am curious about how my students' knowledge

about teaching evolves over the course of a semester and beyond into student teaching, and I am searching for ways to "break their silence" about what they are learning and how they are constructing a knowledge base of pedagogy and content that works for them.

This is no small accomplishment, particularly since getting teachers to talk is not all that simple. The "cellular design" of schools that Lortie describes in *The Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study* (1975) has discouraged inquiry, collegiality, and participation in fashioning a school-wide culture. Teachers who are isolated and alone eventually adapt to being alone and ultimately grow silent.

Like practicing teachers, undergraduates are products of years of schooling and socialization that have silenced them. Our society and our schools reward certainty rather than uncertainty, and our students' fear of the failure that accompanies trying out new ideas and taking risks is simply too great. So undergraduates in teacher preparation courses wait silently for prescriptions and answers. Students don't want to raise questions, they expect their teachers to answer them; they don't want to search for solutions, they simply want to know how to succeed.

As a teacher of undergraduate and graduate methods, I constantly pose questions about the complexities of teaching, questions that both guide and motivate my teaching and research. I am no longer convinced that merely teaching undergraduates a set of skills is enough, or even ethical. Teaching the students a script may be useful, but if this preparation ends with students trying to "teach like I do," then they are not addressing their own underlying assumptions about teaching, nor will they find their own voices with regard to what works and what doesn't.

I am interested in explaining the undergraduates' experience with concepts that they use; in discovering the questions that they ask; in portraying the unique experience of learning to teach (which we too often take for granted), and uncovering the principles that are shaping their developing practice. The same kinds of questions that are shaping the teacher-research movement can shape the undergraduate teacher education program as well. When undergraduates are prepared to become researching teachers, they understand that the sources of teacher knowledge are no longer located only in textbooks and familiar formulas.

Undergraduate music methods courses can include two kinds of tasks that I believe help liberate music teacher education from the prescriptive model of the past. These tasks include journal keeping and written and oral inquiry using teaching cases, including observational case studies of children. The following discussion will illuminate both the ways in which undergraduates' thinking about teaching are revealed and supported as well as the questions that are raised when they begin to claim some authority about where the knowledge about teaching resides.

Journals

Journals are useful as a way to capture and record evolving learning and thinking. Keeping journals forces one to "dig into practice" in the following ways. First, journals kept over time produce ideas that go beyond the surface, exposing what is both familiar but forgotten, as well as uncovering what is new. Journals also become the place where new ideas are housed, creating a literal storehouse of both old and new thoughts. Finally, the act of keeping a journal reserves time for cultivating thinking, gathering the disparate parts of the day, week, and month, and preparing for the next steps.

Keeping journals provides a lens to be used to focus on both ourselves and others. As the teacher, I see how my students are thinking and what it is they think I am teaching. I gain a window on their world and can examine how the students are processing information, which in turn can raise the questions and issues for later discussions. For the student, rereading journals often leads to researching ideas that may have been unnoticed, to "looking and looking again...and to REconsidering what is at hand" (Berthoff, 1987, p. 30). Dialogues between teacher and student and between student and self are what lead to the generation of theory.

I learn a good deal by reviewing the journals of students in my semester-long, field-based methods course. First, I come to know the questions they ask, rather than

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only the ones that I might ask of them. I also learn about their uncertainties regarding the teaching that they are doing for the first time in elementary general music. I come to know the personal doubts, revelations, and intentions that too often don't find their way into classroom discourse, and I gain an understanding of how they are constructing a pedagogy that makes sense to them.

I am uncovering the language that students use to describe teaching and learning, their terminology for explaining and defining, and the metaphors they use to express feelings and ideas. A look at one student's journal, written from January to April about the weekly clinical experience, illustrates my point. Jamie writes about the first teaching experience:

> January: The students seemed to have a mixed response and things started slowly. The exercise didn't turn out to be quite the success we had hoped, but it did work, nonetheless. Next was the proverb activity. I don't know how successful this really was. The transition between activities was somewhat awkward and the kids didn't seem to be impressed at first. After we all demonstrated our proverbs and put them with the body percussion patterns, interest began to increase. Breaking them into groups saved us from the quicksand it felt like we were sinking in.

Here one learns about Jamie's uncertainties regarding whether or not the pacing was what it should have been, about the awkwardness of transitions between activities, and about how successfully the material was demonstrated. His use of quicksand as a metaphor for how he felt reveals the degree to which his sense of survival was challenged.

The following month, Jamie continues to focus on the fears he has about managing the classroom, but he also begins to observe some of the individual students, acknowledging the possible relationship of student involvement to the success of the lesson:

> Today, I was afraid we were going to crash and burn in a big way. We sort of knew what we wanted to do, but we didn't have time to get it all worked out. I was actually afraid to deal with those little rug rats at the start. We got going and it all fell into place. Whew! The kids really made it happen...they were excited about getting to "act" and perform. I think they're all a bunch of hams. My kids were really into our snake sounds and they wanted to act like the python so they came up with their own snake routine. I was impressed. I think some of the kids were having trouble with the rhythm clapping and the chant, but that's to be expected.

Jamie's entry after the first time he taught by himself reveals his uncertainty about whether it was the students or his teaching that caused the problems. The beginning of his journal entry records his gut reactions:

> March: I don't know how best to describe today's experience. Some words that come to mind are Raucous, Rowdy, Disoriented, Confusion, Uncivilized, Obnoxious, Overwhelmed, Out of Control, and the such...I was seriously disoriented and discouraged at the conclusion of my teaching. I felt somewhat helpless as I watched my lesson deteriorate into nothing more than a supervised three-ring circus..

In the same entry, Jamie steps back from a purely personal response to the experience and begins to identify and analyze some of the problems. His developing stance about how the clarity of his demonstrations and explanations affects student understanding and behavior is apparent:

> I have seen some areas of the lesson that could have been cleared up a bit which in turn would have solved some of the problems. I believe that the demonstrations and time spent explaining the activity would have eliminated some of the areas that led to the fall. The improvisation section was not clearly explained to the kids, thus leading to less than wonderful rhythm patterns.

Finally, Jamie arrives at a specific point in his lesson, focusing on one student rather than generalizing about all students and his entire lesson. He uses a sports metaphor as

a way of understanding what happened and coping with frustration:

> The fiasco with the movement was indirectly related to Sam. Some quick disciplinary action might have warded off some of that...I don't think I'm gonna let them get away with this again. Next time, I win.

Even after his lessons began to improve and he felt more successful, Jamie continued to dig into his teaching. As his repertoire of lessons grew, he could compare lessons, searching for patterns or routines in his teaching. His entry in late March begins:

> I must say that this lesson was much better than the last....must have been inspired or something, because I introduced the chant quite enthusiastically which got the kids interested.

Later in the same entry, Jamie shifts to an analysis of the class lesson he presented:

> As the lesson progressed, things went well, but some parts could have been improved. The instrument part seemed a little sluggish and could have been improved with a better demonstration and cast of instruments.

Finally, he refers to an earlier entry, continuing to re-examine his notion of "winning" in teaching:

> After my first solo teaching experience, I didn't ever want to teach them again. But the #1 factor is that, as I stated at the bottom of journal entry #10, "next time, I win." Well, I won—not by the greatest margins, but I did win. Hopefully, I will continue to gain confidence and experience to "widen my lead."

Throughout the entries, Jamie's developing theories about what works and what doesn't are apparent. His use of metaphor reflects the way in which he is framing his work, and in a sense, how he sees teaching "as" something. Although Jamie's search for understanding is only beginning, his journal, seen over time, reflects how he is struggling to apply theory to practice. His ownership of what works and what doesn't is a first step in his developing ability to think like a teacher.

Using Case Studies

Another way of moving away from the prescriptive model of teaching methods courses is to use case studies. Shulman (1992) provides a comprehensive discussion of the applications of the case method, which include case materials, case reports, case studies, teaching cases, case methods of teaching, and case books.

According to Shulman (1992), "Cases... possess at least two features that render them useful for learning: their status as narratives and their contextualization in time and place" (p. 21). A case tells a story that includes the unfolding of events in a particular place and time. Sometimes referred to as "vignettes," cases provide a written account of a teaching event or moment. In the case of a half-hour lesson, any part of that lesson may become the material for a vignette, so long as it has a beginning, middle, and end. The written case frames a problem in such a way that one can see it within a particular context and begin to recognize it as a "case of" something. For example, scenes from classrooms may be categorized as cases of class control, managing instruments, student misunderstanding, or asking questions. After reading and rereading a written case, students can analyze and comment on it. Discussions that follow are specific and situated rather than general and decontextualized.

What can develop over time is a kind of episodic knowledge which Berliner's (1991) work on the stages of teacher development from novice to expert suggests is postponed until the "advanced beginner" stage after two to three years. Writing and responding to cases develops the student's ability to spot issues, frame problems, develop professional judgment, enlarge the repertoire of routines, and strategies, and become participants in the generation of knowledge about what works and what doesn't. Kleinfeld (1992) suggests that cases can help students "think like a teacher" by giving them "vicarious experience with the kinds of problematic situations characteristic of teaching" (p. 34).

Although cases may have varying lengths, I use short vignettes, usually one to two paragraphs, that identify a problem or critical incident. The questions that are raised range from the obvious to the more subtle. In some instances, I present a vignette and simply ask, "What's wrong with this picture?"

Another approach involves student-written cases, in which the student identifies a problem and provides the vignette. A short written assignment, called a teaching case, accompanies the weekly clinical experience.

The format includes

1. identifying a problem in the lesson;
2. describing, in a narrative fashion, the specific moment or event that frames the identified problem;
3. asking the question about teaching and learning that arises from the case; and
4. commenting on issues that are raised and giving possible solutions.

These short cases are shared with the class and used either for class discussion or as material for written comments in journals and short essays. The student's habit of reflective inquiry is stimulated, and the development of professional judgment is fostered. For me, the discourse that results becomes the data which informs my practice, since it is this talk about teaching that allows me to see what my students do and don't understand, and how they are applying pedagogy to practice.

Another use of cases involves student-written, third-person accounts of a single child in the classroom where the weekly clinical experience occurs. It includes two parts: first, the purely descriptive "portrait," and second, a focusing question or issue raised by this single case. From the specific case, students are asked to generalize about the problems of teaching that are presented. Questions about individual children are constructed from observations over a four-week period, and the emphasis becomes one of "understanding the generalities of teaching by exploring its particulars" (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p. 293). Students become participants in constructing a "composite" picture of the children they teach, researching the teacher-learner interaction as a way to move beyond surface encounters and pat formulas. For the music specialist who typically sees hundreds of students, the ability to use knowledge about specific cases to "cut across classrooms and age levels" (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p. 293) is invaluable.

Through the use of cases and journals in teacher preparation, we gain new knowledge about the students we teach, and thus our teaching is informed. The rich descriptions have had a powerful affect on my teaching, as I am constantly given new information about what the undergraduate knows, believes, and fears. Teaching in this way allows me to both embrace the notion that the school music experience is very complex and that teaching teachers how to teach is no small task. I am challenged to embrace the uncertainties in my students' teaching, as well as my own, in a way that I find intellectually stimulating, professionally satisfying, and admittedly personally scary.

By encouraging my students to become teacher-researchers, I am coming face to face with the questions they ask and uncovering what they value and don't about their journey through the semester-long course. A new set of questions arise: What happens when undergraduates begin to reflect on their practice? What happens when they are asked to embrace uncertainties? What happens when they are given the power to participate in decision-making about scheduling, curricula, and policy in an early clinical experience?

What I am finding are a range of voices that are at once resistant and resilient; voices that resist taking risks and resent making mistakes; voices that gain clarity and power when things go well; voices that doubt and voices that dare to claim ownership of knowledge about teaching and learning. The uncertainty in the voices is inevitable.

McDonald (1986) addresses the issues of uncertainty in his work with teachers and asks some tough questions:

> What would happen if teachers recognizing the uncertainty in their work raised their voices instead of growing silent? And what if theorists recognized that intimate knowledge of this uncertainty was exactly what was missing from both their theories and the policies these theories provoke? (p. 362).

Embracing the uncertainties of undergraduates can be unsettling, but by leaving the uncertainties unexamined, our teacher preparation programs can only pretend to prepare students for the real work of teaching. Preparing teachers to be teacher-researchers may be one way to close the widening gap between theory and practice which has for so long plagued teacher preparation programs. The reflexive process that is fueled by the constant examination and revision of practice has the potential to transform our teaching, our students' teaching, and ultimately our teacher preparation programs.

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