Narrative Inquiry in Music Education

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Editors

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Troubling Certainty

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Introduction

Margaret S. Barrett and Sandra L. Stauffer

We live in a "congenial moment for stories" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 30), a time in which narrative has taken up a place in the "landscape" of inquiry in the social sciences. This renewed interest in storying and stories as both process and product (as field text and research text) of inquiry may be attributed to various methodological and conceptual "turns," including the linguistic and cultural, that have taken place in the humanities and social sciences over the past decades. The purpose of this book is to explore the "narrative turn" in music education, to examine the uses of narrative inquiry for music education, and to cultivate ground for narrative inquiry to seed and flourish alongside other methodological approaches in music education.

In a discipline whose early research strength was founded on an alignment with the social sciences, particularly the psychometric tradition, one of the key challenges for those embarking on narrative inquiry in music education is to ensure that its use is more than that of a "musical ornament," an elaboration on the established themes of psychometric inquiry, those of measurement and certainty. We suggest that narrative inquiry is more than a "turn" (as noun), "a melodic embellishment that is played around a given note" (Encarta World English Dictionary, 2007, n.p.); it is more than elaboration on a position, the adding of extra notes to make a melody more beautiful or interesting. Rather, we suggest that narrative inquiry in music education may provide a means to "turn" in the active sense, as a verb, "to change direction and follow a different course" (Encarta World English Dictionary, 2007, n.p.); in short, narrative work provides a means to re-conceptualise the ways in which we think about music engagement, music education, and inquiry in music education. Please note our caution – "a" way; as John Dewey reminds us, there are no singular solutions to issues that arise from social phenomena.

Early on in the process of developing this book, we asked ourselves, "What are our intentions?" Margaret's first response was to provide a forum for the work of narrative inquiry contributors (Part II) and for that work to be presented, responded

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to, and contextualised within the larger conversations of music education research (Parts II and III). For Sandy it was primarily to have, in one location, a collection of pieces that demonstrate what narrative inquiry is, does, and can do in music education and examples for ourselves, our colleagues, and those students with whom we work. And underlying both these intentions – ones that focus on making public, of providing space, and of contributing a narrative perspective to conversation and dialogue in music education – rests another intention, to "trouble" certainty.

Whilst the notion of "troubling" suggests a desire to agitate, to disturb, or to disrupt, our use is less antagonistic. Rather, it is to provide alternative accounts of why, when, where, and how people engage in music experience and learning and, in that process, to prompt our readers (music education practitioners and theorists in school, tertiary education, and community settings) to consider other ways of engaging with people in and through music. In doing so, we hope to make a space in the discourse of inquiry in music education, one in which "troubling" may give pause for thought and prompt the community to consider the many ways in which we know and come to know. "Troubling" in this sense becomes a means to prompt "wide awakeness," a concept Maxine Greene (1995) employs to prompt educators to look beyond the familiar, to attend to the tensions that underlie the surface of experience, and to consider the ways in which we may come to understand alternative accounts of the ways in which lives are lived and storied in and through music and education. For Greene, "the teacher open to the mystery, open to the wonder, open to the questions is the one who can light the slow fuse of possibility even for the defeated ones, the bored ones, the deserted ones" (2001, p. 146). In such instances we can begin to see the world through the eyes of others, to experience empathy, and to move towards an understanding of the ways in which worlds are experienced and "othered."

So what is it that narrative inquirers do? And how does what they do trouble certainty? At the simplest levels, narrative inquirers live and work alongside research participants in order to understand the ways in which individuals and communities story a life and live their stories. Why are these stories and storyings important or relevant? Although it might be argued that the only story each of us knows is our own, we seem drawn, in our human experience, to connection with others, and we find connection in and through stories. Amidst the spinning of our individually and socially constructed webs of meaning (Geertz, 1973), we seek places and moments of intersection and reflection that help us understand ourselves and each other. Listening to and for each other's stories seems to serve our human connection-finding and understanding-seeking purposes well. But that is not enough.

Listening to each other's stories to know that we are not alone (if that is what we are doing) may be a necessary (if somewhat selfish) proposition and even a condition of being human, but it is not (yet) inquiry. The "turn" – what makes an account a narrative inquiry rather than a story – is one's willingness not only to look for connection and consonance, but also to recognise that different perspectives, voices, and experiences exist and *can inform.* The moment of disquiet, the instance of unsettling, and the recognition of certainties troubled may be the very times and spaces where insight takes root – the places of fertile ground. As Geertz noted in

the waning days of the last century, wrestling with "competing conceptions of how matters should be arranged and people related to one another" is not an issue

> of 'relativism,' as it is often put by those who wish to insulate their beliefs against the force of difference. *It is a matter of understanding that talking to others implies listening to them, and that in listening to them what one has to say is very unlikely, not at the close of this century, not in the opening of the next, to remain unshaken.* (2000, p. 259, italics added).

Without troubling certainty, we would have only sympathetic vibration, a kind of resonance that, while satisfying in some respects, would be unnatural or, at the very least, artificial. In a state of sympathetic vibration, we would experience agreement only and never deal with any issues – the ultimate rose-coloured-glasses society, at least for those wearing the glasses. And as Eisner (1991) reminds us, consensus is only consensus – agreement, not truth. As narrativists we listen *to* story (as does the ethnographer), we listen *for* story (as does the portraitist), and we listen *in* and *through* story to find meaning, to experience resonance and troubling, and, ultimately, to prompt further consideration of what it might be to be "wide-awake" in and through music.

The text is divided into three sections, each serving to present a different perspective on the uses and purposes of narrative in and for music education. In Part I we explore the origins of narrative research across a range of fields of inquiry including anthropology, historical and literary studies, psychology, sociology, and educational inquiry (Chapter 1). We then unfold our conception of narrative inquiry as resonant work (Chapter 2). We conceive of resonant work as that which is deep, rich, and lasting. We define resonant work as respectful to all those involved, responsible to the public good, rigorous procedurally and in presentation, and resilient in its ability to speak not only of here and now, but also across time and place and to varying constituencies.

Part II, the core of the text, provides seven examples of narrative inquiry studies. Each of these studies, undertaken by early career researchers in the field of music education, is accompanied by a reflective commentary written by an experienced music education scholar. These commentaries provide us with a view, a window into the narrative accounts. They suggest further questions that arise from the inquiry and provide insight into the potential uses of the narrative account for the theory and practice of music education.

It is perhaps no accident that the narrative accounts that feature in this book arise from the work of early career researchers. As Graham Welch remarks in his response to David Cleaver's account of a lived musical life, whilst the world of educational research has a considerable history of taking up methodological innovations, music education has been "relatively slow" to adopt these, "at least in its published journals" (this volume, p. 57). By contrast, in the work of early career researchers, including doctoral students, considerable innovation is often evidenced in both the methodological approaches adopted and adapted and the substantive issues with which these researchers engage. Part II of the text provides an environment in which these innovations may be cultivated in the field of music education, attended to carefully, and considered against the wider landscape of educational inquiry.

Part III of the text brings together the perspectives of two eminent theorists and practitioners from within and beyond the field of music education. Music education philosopher Wayne Bowman brings to the consideration of narrative inquiry an interest in its purposes, its uses, and its potential to "transform" the project of music education. Jean Clandinin, working in the field of educational theory and practice, is concerned with two key issues: the ways in which educators are prepared, and prepared for, the development of "wide awakeness" in their theory and practice, and the ways in which we cultivate such a propensity in the lives of the children, families, and communities with whom we work. Jean and Wayne were asked to respond to the narrative accounts and commentaries presented in Parts I and II and contextualise these within the larger discourses of educational inquiry. In that process, these scholars prompt us to consider the possible narrative futures and, importantly, the future narratives of music education.

We are indebted to many colleagues in music education and in the wider worlds of education, music, and the arts and social sciences who have informed our thinking. We are particularly indebted to those who have given so generously of their time and expertise in the preparation of this book, including the authors and commentators as well as the friends and colleagues who read drafts and challenged us with margin notes and other troublings. To each of you, thank you. Finally, we are grateful to Tammy Jones, the editorial assistant for this project, whose keen eye and unstinting efforts contributed to the final shape of this book.

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Part I

Chapter 1
Narrative Inquiry: From Story to Method

Margaret S. Barrett and Sandra L. Stauffer

"Narrative" is a term that has been pressed into the service of a multitude of ideas and theories. It is viewed variously as "story," as a "mode of knowing" and constructing meaning, and, more recently, as a "method of inquiry." At times it is all of these simultaneously. Perhaps the most enduring description and understanding of narrative is as "story," an account to self and others of people, places, and events and the relationships that hold between these elements. The capacity to speak, and, through that medium, to construct a version of events, is a distinguishing human trait. It is through narratives, both "grand" or "master" and personal, that we have understood and communicated our knowledge and interpretations of our past and our present worlds and are able to speculate about our future. Through this chapter we shall provide a brief overview of the journey from narrative as "story," through its conception as a "mode of knowing," in order to explore the ways in which narrative is being put to use as a "method of inquiry" in educational research.

The roots of narrative go long and deep into the inquiry landscape. Although the emergence of narrative as an inquiry process is a relatively recent phenomenon, its lineage may be traced through the varied disciplines of anthropology; the arts; historical, literary, and cultural studies; psychology; sociology; and more recently, educational inquiry. It is not our intention here to provide a definitive account of the development of narrative inquiry; rather we shall trace some of those pathways in the inquiry landscape along which "narrative" has travelled, with a particular focus on those pathways that have crossed the field of educational research. We shall take up issues specific to music education in Chapter 2, in order to address the uses and purposes of narrative inquiry in music education (there are other accounts, e.g., Barone & Eisner, 2006; Bresler, 2006; Bowman, 2006; Bruner, 1986; Chase, 2005; Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Polkinghorne, 1988).

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. . . Narrative as story . . .

The tradition of storying and story-telling is one that pre-figures the emergence of written language, as evidenced in the revered, and sometimes feared, role of seers and story-tellers in pre-literate cultures. This human capacity to story may be linked to the emergence of conscious thought. A number of scholars have suggested that early humans may not have been "conscious" of being conscious and that they attributed much of their thought processes to the gods (Jaynes, 1976). This is described by Jaynes as an instance of the bicameral mind. In this notion, the mind was divided into two chambers. The gods controlled one chamber, providing ideas, thoughts, and feelings, by "breathing" into the mind. Individuals experienced these "breathings" as "inspirations," as voices or urges. The other chamber of the mind was used for everyday thoughts, for speech, and eventually for other means of expression and forms of representation including writing and music – in short, the means by which the "inspirations" received from the gods might be communicated to others. Planning, volition, and action did not come about through conscious or unconscious thought, but rather through inspirations "told" to individuals in a familiar language by a "voice," which at times might appear with a vision of a friend, authority figure, or god. In Homer's *Iliad*, the characters' actions are an outcome of instructions received from the gods rather than of introspection – an early recorded instance of the bicameral mind. It is suggested that with the appearance of the *Odyssey*, a text which portrays humans initiating and perpetrating deceit rather than acting as agents of the gods, came the possibility of modern consciousness, of introspection and reflection, and of falsification, a phenomenon that relies on the human capacity to create different versions of self and events – in short, to story.

Whilst stories and the process of storying are distinguishing features of the human experience, these phenomena are not necessarily *narrative inquiry*. As Riessman and Speedy caution, "all talk and text is not narrative" (2007, p. 428). They go on to identify other forms of discourse such as "chronicles, reports, arguments, question and answer exchanges" as examples of non-narrative forms (2007, p. 429). Narrative as story is usually understood as "sequential" (Barone, 2001a; Bruner, 1990), featuring plotline/s, character/s, setting/s, and action/s (Bal, 1997) – aspects that are not central to all forms of discourse. Paradoxically, narrative is not all talk and text, nor is it always sequential. The arts provide us with examples of "narratives" that are neither language based nor inherently sequential. For example, whilst historical narrative paintings by exponents of early romanticism draw on Greek and Roman classical literature (as evidenced in the painter David's admonition to his former student Gros, to "*Vite, vite, mon ami, feuilletez votre Plutarque!*" ("Quick, quick, my friend leaf through your Plutarch!") (Brookner, 2000, p. 22)), they rely on media other than language for their sense-making and often seek to challenge the representational form in and with which they work. This is perhaps more evident in the work of contemporary artists, who "rarely tell straightforward narratives employing standard narrative tropes available within their culture, but rather ironize, layer, and otherwise subvert the standard tropes from a position of extreme cultural self-consciousness" (Mateas & Sengers, 2002, p. 10).

Nevertheless, there is a considerable history of the use of narrative as "languaged story" in various scholarly disciplines. Working in the 19th century, for instance, scholars of folklore drew on "story" in their explorations and interpretations of myths and legends (Toelken, 1996). Historians working with oral history methods, as well as textual analysis, have drawn on "narratives" – stories told and recorded – as have literary theorists and sociologists working in the first part of the 20th century.

. . . Narrative as a mode of knowing . . .

In 1984 at an address to the annual meeting of the *American Psychological Association*, Jerome Bruner challenged the psychological community to consider the possibilities of narrative as one of two distinct and distinctive modes of thinking, namely the "paradigmatic" or *logico-scientific* mode and the *narrative* mode. For Bruner, each mode constituted a unique way of construing and constructing reality and of ordering experience. Importantly, neither of these modes was reducible to the other, as each was necessary in the development of human thought and action. Taking up these ideas in later writings, Bruner (1986) presents the narrative mode of meaning-making as one that "looks for particular conditions and is centred around the broader and more inclusive question of the meaning of experience" (p. 11), whilst the paradigmatic mode is characterised as one that is more concerned with establishing universal truth conditions.

Bruner has pursued the notion of "narrative" modes of thinking and explored the ways in which we draw on "narrative" modes of knowing as a learning process (1996a). For Bruner, we construct our understandings of the world "mainly in the form of narrative – stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on" (2003, p. 44). In earlier writings, he points to the power and import of narrative as a meaning-making process, commenting that "our capacity to render experience in terms of narrative is not just child's play, but an instrument for making meaning that dominates much of life in culture – from soliloquies at bedtime to the weighing of testimony in our legal system" (1990, p. 97). Importantly, Bruner suggests that our "sensitivity" to narrative constitutes a major link between our "sense of self and our sense of others in the social world around us" (1986, p. 69) and is the mode through which we "create a version of the world" with which we can live (1996a, p. 39).

Bruner's work in the field of cognitive psychology constitutes one way in which narrative has been conceptualised within scholarship and has led to the establishment of the field of narrative psychology. It is perhaps serendipitous that Bruner's account of the narrative mode of thinking occurred at a time of growing interest in the ways in which narrative might be drawn upon for research and inquiry purposes. As educators and scholars took up the "call of stories" (Coles, 1989) to provide alternative means to explore, interrogate, interpret, and record experience, "it helped that the messenger was Bruner, an enormously powerful scholar with unusual cross-disciplinary knowledge, stature, and impact, who ventured to articulate what narrative could mean to the social sciences at large" (Bresler, 2006, p. 23). Crucially,

Bruner's work leads us to consider narrative as more than a means of presenting meaning and to consider the role of narrative and narrative forms in "re-presenting," in the sense of constructing meaning, both individually and collectively. For Bruner, narrative operates simultaneously in both thought and action, shaping the ways in which we conceive and respond to our worlds. In short,

> all cognition, whatever its nature, relies upon representation, how we lay down our knowledge in a way to represent our experience of the world ... representation is a process of construction, as it were, rather than of mere reflection of the world (Bruner, 1996b, p. 95).

Here, a narrative might become a "template for experience" (Bruner, 2002, p. 34) that works on the mind, modelling "not only its world but the minds seeking to give it its meanings" (p. 27). This move from narrative as "story presented" to narrative as a "form of meaning-making," indeed, a form of "mind-making," has played an important role in the development of narrative as a method of inquiry in the social sciences.

... Narrative as method of inquiry ...

The emergence of narrative as a method of inquiry in social science research may be linked in part to the growth of interest in qualitative methods in the latter part of the 20th century. Pinnegar and Daynes identify four "turns" in the move to narrative inquiry as a research method, those of a re-shaping and shift in the relationship between the researcher and the researched, a move to "words as data," a focus on the local and particular, and a blurring of genres (2007, p. 3). Whilst these turns are described as "narrative" turns, we suggest that they are characteristic of qualitative methods and approaches in general. Perhaps what distinguishes narrative inquiry is the way in which "story" can operate as a "relational" mode of constructing and presenting meaning. Working towards this distinction requires two shifts in perspective: first, a shift in our understanding of what is meant by narrative, and second, a shift in our understanding of what it means to be a narrative inquirer. The first of these involves a shift from a view of narrative as "story," to encompass one of narrative as simultaneously storied presentation, representation, and meaning-making process. The second shift in perspective requires narrative inquirers to re-consider their roles as researchers and to reflect upon their inquiry dispositions and the set of values and beliefs that are brought to the inquiry process. And just as narrative is a term that has served many uses, narrative inquiry has come to mean a range of things as it stems from varying scholarly traditions. In the following we shall explore these issues further.

... The "story" shift ...

As we noted above, whilst narrative is story, not all story is narrative inquiry. Riessman and Speedy suggest that the narrative scholar pays "analytic attention to how the facts got assembled *that* way" and asks,

> For whom was *this* story constructed, how was it made, and to what purpose? What cultural discourses does it draw on – take for granted? What does it accomplish? Are there gaps and inconsistencies that might suggest alternative or preferred narratives? (2007, p. 429)

Narrative inquiry in this account is more than the collecting and re-telling or re-presenting of stories; it requires the careful analysis of narrative data against a series of frames including those of the research participant, the researcher, and the larger cultural narratives in which these individuals are situated. For example, through their studies of teachers' personal and professional knowledge landscapes, Clandinin & Connelly (1996) identified a range of "paired narratives" that exist in dynamic tension in these settings. They write of "stories of school" and "school stories" and of "stories of teachers" and "teachers' stories," where the former provide "professional" accounts of how schooling occurs in particular settings, whilst the latter provide "personal" accounts, accounts that may at times run counter to and in conflict with the "stories of." The examination and analysis of these paired narratives provides opportunity to explore alternative views of the ways in which schooling is understood, enacted, and lived out by all participants. In a later work, Clandinin et al. (2006) refer to other types of stories that emerge in narrative inquiries, including "secret stories," "told only to others in safe places," and "cover stories," "told to maintain a sense of continuity with the dominant stories of school shaping a professional knowledge landscape" (2006, p. 7). In this careful distinction between the types of stories told, the places in which they are aired and shared, and the purposes they serve, Clandinin and her colleagues draw our attention to the need to move beyond the simple "telling" of stories. Rather, they suggest that narrative inquirers are engaged in "living" with and through stories in the research context, in order to work towards an understanding of the varying and complex meanings and interpretations all participants bring to their experiences.

. . . The "shift" to relational narrative inquiry . . .

Connelly and Clandinin make a distinction between narrative methodologies that *tell* and those that *live* (2006). Drawing on this notion, Clandinin and colleagues suggest that *telling* narrative methodologies work from "told stories of participants," whilst *living* methodologies work from "living alongside" participants (Clandinin et al., 2006). Whilst both *telling* and *living* approaches may draw on similar methods and techniques, the distinction is in the purpose of such inquiries – a purpose that moves between "life as lived in the past (telling) and life as it unfolds (living)" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 482). In the latter, the researcher lives alongside the participants in a process that is deeply relational and re-focuses the inquiry disposition of the researcher.

In a description of narrative inquiry as "shared relational work" between researchers and researched, narrative inquiry becomes a work that "leads to collaborative stories, where the researcher is no longer the 'scribe' of others' experience, but a 'story-teller' and 'story-liver' alongside research participants" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 12). Pinnegar and Daynes take up this notion, noting that a

distinguishing feature of the narrative researcher is a "move away from an objective conception of the researcher–researched relationship" (2007, p. 11) to one in which the researcher is deeply involved in the research relationship. Importantly, this research relationship is one in which the researcher too can be changed. In this process, narrative inquiry becomes to varying degrees a study of self, of self alongside others, as well as of the inquiry participants and their experience of the world.

It should be noted that careful observance of and attention to the relational aspects of inquiry are not the sole prerogative of narrative inquiry; however, they rest as a central tenet. Cultural anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson, for example, places relationships at the centre of her inquiry processes, proposing "a definition of relationship as knowledge, achieved and exchanged through information exchange – through conversation and communion" (1984, pp. 292–293). She takes this theme up in later work as she writes of the ways in which "stories of individuals and their relationships through time offer another way of looking" (2000, p. 247) and emphasises that the story/ies of the researcher/s is/are "interwoven" with those of the research participants.

Relationships or "interaction" (consideration of the personal and social) is one of three dimensions that shape the interpretive lens of Clandinin and Connelly's metaphorical three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (2000). Drawing on Dewey's (1938) notions of continuity and interaction, these narrative inquirers suggest that any narrative inquiry is shaped by the dimensions of interaction (consideration of the personal and the social), continuity (consideration of the past, present, and future), and situation (consideration of place) (2000, p. 50). Clandinin suggests that

> Narrative inquirers cannot bracket themselves out of the inquiry but rather need to find ways to inquire into the participants' experiences, their own experiences, as well as the co-constructed experiences developed through the relational inquiry process. This makes clear that as narrative inquirers, inquirers too, are part of the metaphoric parade . . . they too live on the landscape and are complicit in the world they study (2006, p. 47).

In later works, Clandinin and colleagues identify "three commonplaces of narrative inquiry – temporality, sociality, and place" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007), a refinement of the original dimensions.

. . . The narrative inquirer disposition . . .

Clandinin and Connelly suggest that "one of the starting points for narrative inquiry is the researcher's own narrative of experience, the researcher's autobiography. This task of composing our own narratives of experience is central to narrative inquiry" (2000, p. 70). Implicit in the identification of a researcher's autobiography as the starting point of narrative inquiry is the need to interrogate the set of beliefs and practices that are brought to the inquiry endeavour, the researcher's epistemological and ontological stance, and the ethical obligations that extend from these. Careful consideration of the ethical purposes of research, as well as the ethical issues that

arise from conducting research, is central to another approach to using narrative in educational inquiry, specifically literary nonfiction.

. . . Narrative in educational research . . .

In his use of narrative as a form of educational research, Tom Barone strives to "challenge the prevailing educational imaginary" (2003) through the presentation of texts that are "accessible, compelling and morally persuasive" (2000, p. 248). Barone argues that it is the responsibility of educators to inspire and persuade the general public of the value of schools and school people and suggests that it is through the employment of narrative approaches to research that this may be achieved most effectively (2000). For Barone, the educational enterprise is fundamentally political, unavoidably enmeshed in the social and cultural contexts in which it operates, and, crucially, pivotal to achieving social justice. Recognition of these social and cultural contexts compels us to find ways of describing, interrogating, and interpreting educational interactions that are reflective of their complexity, depth, richness, and perplexity.

Barone locates the roots of his use of narrative as a research method in two fields: those of ABER, or Arts-Based Educational Research, as he experienced this in his graduate student work with Elliot Eisner, and of his early interest in literary nonfiction. This latter has led Barone to draw on genres not traditionally associated with academic scholarship, including art criticism and the New Journalism of writers such as Truman Capote, Joan Didion, Norman Mailer, Hunter S. Thompson, and Thomas Wolfe, and to recognise and work with the aesthetic dimension of human activity. In this work, Barone portrays art criticism as a form of literary nonfiction and, simultaneously, suggests that the New Journalism is a form of criticism as it is concerned with "the criticism of human events and experiences, the very sorts of phenomena that comprise the experienced curriculum of a classroom or a school" (2000, p. 22). It is also of significance that Barone draws on the work of philosophers of the arts such as John Dewey and Susanne Langer in shaping his approach to the use of narrative in educational inquiry. For Barone, education is an "aesthetic project" in which the teacher strives to develop an "empathic understanding" of the "life-texts" students compose and live through (pp. 129–130). In striving for empathic understanding, he suggests, we seek to develop a student who is "a social being, and a moral agent, a responsible citizen of a shared community" (2000, p. 130). Barone borrows Harold's (1973) term the "strong poet" to describe such individuals and notes that the strong poet

> Is someone who refuses to accept as useful the descriptions of her life as written by others. Instead, the strong poet is a strong storyteller, continuously revising her life story in the light of her own experience and imagination. The strong poet constantly redescribes her past interactions with the world around her, constantly reinvents her *self*, so that she may act in the future with greater integrity and coherence. The strong poet plots her life story toward her own emergent ends and purposes (2000, p. 125).

In Barone's view, education and schooling should be "more life-enhancing for youngsters of all sorts and for the culture at large" (2000, p. 4), an experience that leads to "educational virtue" and that is unavoidably narrative in nature.

In his body of work, Barone initially appears to be more concerned with the endpoints of the research endeavour, the "challenging of the educational imaginary," than with outlining explicitly a narrative research methodology. Perhaps in this he is challenging us, initially, to a Wittgensteinian "game" in which we must look to his use of narrative in educational research as a means to understanding the methodological issues, rather than providing us with definitions or detailed accounts of methods and techniques. However, his defence of ABER and narrative research has led him to write compellingly about the distinctive features of these research approaches and their function for the educational community. The informative and interrogative qualities of the suggestive, the connotative, and the qualitative, over the methodical and denotive (2000, p. 23), are illustrated in his writings. His use of narrative as critical nonfiction is grounded firmly in the research setting, with careful attention to the characters, including descriptions that "should consist of a host of personality indicators, of physical attributes and characteristics of human behaviour, in actual incidents, recorded comments, and so on" (2000, p. 25). For Barone, good narrative research provokes "imaginatory" participation in alternative realities that may lead to "perceiving educational phenomena in a strange new way" (2001b, p. 25).

One distinctive feature of Barone's approach lies in his use of "fiction," a notion that recognises, as does Geertz (1974), that narrative writings, as anthropological writings, are "fictions," or "something made" (p. 15). Barone's researcher adheres to

> fewer (and of course different) canons of procedure than the "normal" scientist, and may even confront his or her materials without pre-established guiding principles for selecting and arranging them. Invention pervades every phrase and aspect of that kind of project, even if this invention has parameters of its own (2000, pp. 26–27).

Barone reminds us of Greene's espousing of good literature (fiction) as a means to question values, prompt new imaginings, and outline new possibilities (2001a). In this way, narrative research might "facilitate reflection about, and even *change in* prevailing teaching practices" (2001a, p. 736). Whilst some might question the validity of using fictional devices such as constructing composite characters, fictionalising some events in order to make a point more emphatically, or elaborating descriptions, Barone asserts that

> fictional texts do not partake of the traditional notion of research "validity." Validity serves an important function in research texts that aim to enhance certainty about particular features of the real world outside of the text. Because fictional texts serve a heuristic purpose, their usefulness is determined by their ability to evoke in the reader's mind a vicarious experience that *reduces* certainty about the matters in which the dimensions of the "outside" world are regarded (2001a, p. 738).

Barone draws on the features of the "New Journalism," specifically those of "theme"; "characterization," including consideration of the comportment of the

character, their commentary, and their products; "landscape"; and "plot" (2000). Within his discussion of the last, his emphasis on the careful placement of interpretations and theoretical analyses reminds us of the distinction he is making between the "New Journalism" and educational inquiry that aims at criticism of the experienced curriculum (2000, p. 42).

Barone provides a compelling example of what narrative in educational research looks like in his seminal text *Touching Eternity* (2001c). He describes *Touching Eternity* as an arts-based research study of the "curriculum-in-retrospect" that seeks to explore the long-term consequences of education and, in that process, generate a number of questions about the purposes and the effects of teaching and teachers' work and the ways in which teaching is shaped by the personal, theoretical, and cultural contexts in which it occurs (2001b). The text does not aim for definitive answers to these questions; rather, it seeks to highlight the ambiguities and tensions that underlie all teaching endeavours. In his conclusion to the text, he reminds us that

> the literary text is at least as suspect as other discursive forms. . . . My own aspirations for this text bear repeating. They were not to trick the reader into viewing the portraits of characters as neutral representations of reality, but to rhetorically persuade them to ask questions about important educational issues (Barone, 2001c, p. 162).

In this, Barone returns us to the purpose of his endeavour, to "challenge the educational imaginary" – a purpose that resists propaganda, deception, or self-interest in order to entice the reader, through an act of "writerly persuasion" to wonder "about what has been previously taking for granted. . . . to persuade readers to question prevailing notions of educational significance" (Barone, 2001c, p. 179).

. . . The uses of narrative . . .

Bruner suggests that narratives should be judged on their "lifelikeness" and their "usefulness" (1996a), a notion that has resonance with Barone's criteria for judgement, those of "usefulness" and "persuasiveness" (2000). This emphasis on usefulness is taken up by Clandinin and colleagues in their emphasis on making explicit the "social significance" of narrative inquiry work and the contribution it makes to the larger body of literature in the field (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 485). The purposes, aims, and goals of narrative in research must always be at the forefront of the research endeavour. As Clandinin and colleagues remind us,

> Narrative Inquiry is so much more than deciding at the last minute that a paper or dissertation or talk would be more compelling if a researcher was to tell a story. When researchers say they want to "do narrative" and what they want to do is to take their data and turn it into a story, that is, they want to somehow incorporate story in their research texts, this is not what we think of as narrative inquiry. For those of us engaged in narrative inquiry, we work from a set of ontological and methodological assumptions and the questions of representational form follow from these (Clandinin et al., 2007, p. 31).

Concluding Comments

In the above sections we have traced some of the pathways through the landscape of narrative inquiry that have been followed by those engaging in educational research. There are a number of other pathways through varying disciplinary terrains that we have not pursued here. Narrative inquiry is still in its early stages of development (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). It will be subject to contestation over the years as the methodology develops, and other pathways are marked out. Our intention here has not been to provide a definitive text; rather, it has been to outline some key considerations and to provide music educators with a context in which they might consider the purposes and uses of narrative inquiry for the field of music education. For us, narrative inquiry projects are deeply relational and committed to the pursuit of questions of educational significance – questions that challenge taken-for-granted notions of the nature of life and learning in and through music. These are ideas that we shall pursue further in the following chapter.

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Chapter 2
Narrative Inquiry in Music Education: Toward Resonant Work

Sandra L. Stauffer and Margaret S. Barrett

Narrative inquiry is evolving in music education and in the social sciences. In some respects, scholars engaged in narrative in music education have grown, collectively, beyond the "turns" described in the first chapter and have metamorphosed into a community of narrative inquirers. Narrative has been used in music education dissertations and other studies. Two international conferences addressing Narrative Inquiry in Music Education have been held. Narrative pieces have been published in the profession's research journals and in this book. Narrative studies are in progress as we write and read these words. Music education researchers who use narrative have found resonance with colleagues in other disciplines, as well as spaces and places where narrative can flourish (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). This collective interest in and turn towards narrative is consistent with the music education profession's move away from singular grand tales of music, music making, and music teaching and learning and towards consideration of multiple stories, multiple voices, and multiple meanings of music and musicking. The collective turn towards narrative in music education is also consistent with the profession's move towards embracing multiple means and multiple lenses for examining the new and recurring complexities of music in life and learning.

In other respects, however, the narrative turn in music education is still in progress as individual researchers move differently, for various reasons and in various ways, towards narrative thinking and narrative work (Pinnegar, 2008), while others choose different means and methods. This is as it should be. Researcher positionalities differ, as do research questions. Narrative is not a panacea, but rather one way to make audible the voices, experiences, and meanings of individuals and communities engaged in music and to raise those questions that are often left unasked. Among the challenges to those who choose to use narrative are the crucial and critical questions of when, why, and how narrative may be used or is useful (Bowman, 2006). In this chapter, we explore the means and methods of narrative as inquiry in music education and wrestle with the potential inherent in and

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through narrative to inform and perhaps transform music learning and teaching in its many iterations. We position this discussion of narrative inquiry in music education within a theoretical and philosophical framework that we have come to call "resonant work," work that reverberates and resonates in and through the communities it serves.

. . . Toward resonant work . . .

Despite the history and theory outlined in Chapter 1 and elsewhere (see, e.g., Clandinin's *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry*, 2007), the question asked most often about narrative as scholarship is, "What is it?" In the panoply of approaches available to researchers, narrative is located within the qualitative research domain, a domain that is "defined by a series of tensions, contradictions, and hesitations" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 24). (Those seeking exactitude should turn back here.) Painted with the broadest brush, narrative is among the modes of inquiry that engage the search for meaning (Bruner, 1990) and that emphasise both the socially constructed nature of reality and the situational restraints and constraints that shape inquiry. Historically, narrative is a form of educational inquiry that draws from the wellsprings of literature and the social sciences. In some instances and iterations, it is a genre blended with arts-based educational research and literary nonfiction. It is deeply relational – even co-relational – work. It is inquiry that makes evident to readers the lived experiences of individuals and groups by foregrounding *their* narratives and *their* understandings. In doing so, narrative inquiry, at its best, invites "conspiratorial conversations" (Barone, 2000a, 2008) aimed at resisting those master stories that dominate the current socio-political discourse about education, the arts, and the people involved in education and the arts. Narrative troubles certainty.

Narrative that aims to "prick the consciences of readers by inviting a reexamination of the values and interests undergirding certain discourses, practices, and institutional arrangements" (Barone, 2000a, p. 193), wherever they occur, holds some similarities with what Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon (2001) have called "good work." They describe good work as work that represents both high-level performance and social responsibility or "work of expert quality that benefits society" (p. ix). In short, good work is excellent, ethical, and engaged. But something more is required. For music educators and others, narrative is also artful and artfull. It is aesthetic in its purposing, its processes, and its presentational products. It is intertwined with the arts in content, practice, substance, and form, and like the arts, narrative seeks communication beyond the immediate or surface meanings, and reverberation past the present moment. Narrative is resonant work.

We define resonant work as having four qualities: it is respectful, responsible, rigorous, and resilient. Further, these four qualities are both symbiotic and obligate in narrative, meaning not only that they are present in the living work of narrative, but also that these qualities, as interdependent rather than autonomous acts and attributes, comprise an ethical grounding and imperative for narrative work.

. . . Respectful . . .

Respect has become a familiar ethic for researchers, though not via an uncontested path. During the middle of the 20th century, the complications, missteps, and tragedies associated with the treatment of individuals in research studies, particularly (but not exclusively) in medical trials, brought public and political attention to the matter of respect for research participants. The guidelines for ethical conduct of research that were developed and revised following various calamitous events became, in some ways, a means of codifying respect for, and respectful treatment of, individuals involved in research that requires the participation of fellow humans. Respect, though, is not so easily reified. Rather, respect is a dynamic quality, a living norm that transcends codification, and, for researchers in many disciplines, it signifies something more than complying with the regulations of ethics review boards and obtaining informed consent. As Lawrence-Lightfoot notes,

> Respect is not something one can imitate, but something one must embody. While we might say that a person has a disposition to act with respect, it is only in the individual acts of respect that the quality becomes actual. "Respect" as an integral aspect of life, both personal and social, is maintained by the respectful acts of individuals. Both individually and collectively, we are entrusted with the responsibility of preserving respect (2000, p. 57).

For narrative inquirers, respect is a living norm that exists in the relational space between and among individuals. More than mere consideration or thoughtfulness, respect in the inquiry process is *trans*actional – a negotiated quality among all parties that affects everyone and functions on multiple levels. In some ways, this is a familiar state for educators. Cushman comments that "in a high school classroom, respect and trust travel a two-way street between teacher and student – and have everything to do with learning" (2006, p. 16). Put another way, one cannot "know" without "getting to know" and "becoming known" to the other in the context of respectful transactions and relationships. As Lincoln and Guba assert of qualitative research in general, "The *way* in which we know is most assuredly tied up with both *what* we know and our *relationships with our research participants*" (2000, p. 182, italics in original).

The narrative inquirer enacts respect through deep listening and prolonged engagement, or "living alongside" (Clandinin et al., 2006), and does so with humility and perseverance, particularly when stories are difficult or uncomfortable. To do less, to turn away too early, or to disengage at moments of discomfort, risks disempowering individuals or trivialising their experiences. Scuh an action can lead to the conditions that Sennett (2003) describes when recalling the failures of the Cabrini projects in Chicago:

> The project denied people control over their own lives. They were rendered spectators to their own needs, mere consumers of care provided to them. It was here that they experienced that peculiar lack of respect which consists of not being seen, not being accounted as full human beings (p. 13).

Enacting respect requires recognising that everyone involved – inquirers *and* participants – is indeed "fully human" and potentially impacted by the research process