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Aspects of Upbringing As Revealed In The Personalities of Musicians

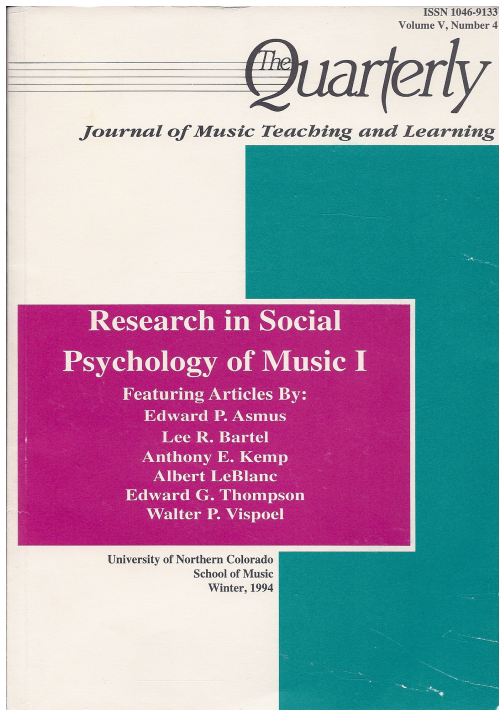
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It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of 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.

Aspects Of Upbringing As Revealed In The Personalities Of Musicians

By Anthony E. Kemp

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A growing body of research has pursued aspects of parental and teacher influence on the early development of musical talent. In studying a group of Polish musicians, Manturzevska (1990) claimed that musical careers were strongly dependent upon environmental and biographical conditions, particularly in the early stages. She showed, for example, that 93 percent of her musicians came from families where there was evidence of a musical tradition and a preponderance of professional musicians among their parents.

Manturzevska also reported that around the age of six, her subjects' musical motivations tended to change from a need to *play* with music to a spontaneous one to *learn* music. This new drive was manifest in all subjects, regardless of their family musical background. Manturzevska illustrated its strength by citing cases where children demanded music lessons or pleaded with their parents to purchase or borrow instruments, sometimes overcoming a variety of se-

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vere obstacles to gratify their need to engage in music. One needs to bear in mind that as this information was gleaned from musicians, many of whom were well into middle and old age, the passage of time may have exercised something of a distorting effect upon their recollections.

This problem was less likely to have occurred in the group of young musicians attending a school for the musically talented, such as those studied by Sloboda and Howe (1991). Like Manturzevska, Sloboda and Howe also stressed the importance of parental and teacher influence upon early musical development. They reported their group as receiving active supervision and encouragement from their parents, 72 percent of whom were, to

some extent, involved in music themselves. They established, however, that not only did the more highly accomplished members of the group appear to come from the *less* musically active families, but that they also received *fewer* early lessons than the less highly accomplished students. Thus, both these studies tend to offer support for the notion that, although parental support and encouragement may be important, one finds the highly accomplished child positively seeking involvement elsewhere.

Similarly, Sosniak (1985), who studied a

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group of 24 exceptional American performers, found that half came from homes where the parents had little musical involvement, but that first teachers exerted a very powerful influence. She observed that the basis of this influence lay, not in the teachers' technical standard, but much more on their qualities of personality and temperament, which affected the nature of the relationship. This finding was also supported by Sloboda and Howe (1991). What characterized the early teachers of the young talented musicians they studied was not their musicianship, but rather their personal warmth and ability to encourage.

Returning to these questions again, Howe and Sloboda (1991a & 1991b) reported additional observations on the substantial qualitative data that they had amassed. They conceded that while they had not identified a common route to musical excellence, several routes may exist. They noted that:

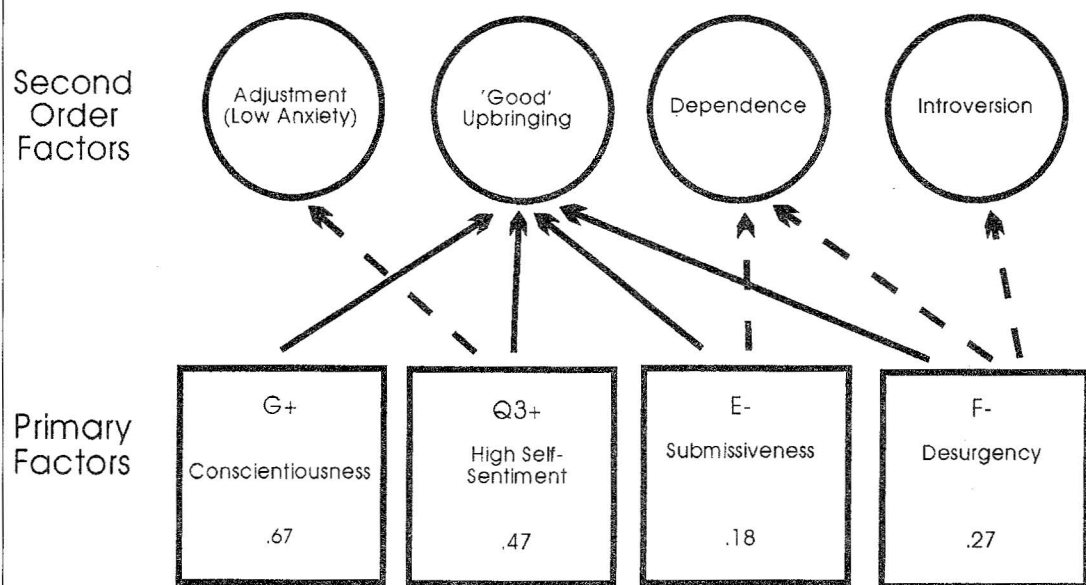
Whereas, for the majority of children, parental support and encouragement were essential for ensuring that as essential an element of the learning process was regularly engaged in, other young students required no encouragement to practice. Yet others developed a kind of obsession which led to excessive amounts of practice and listening (Howe & Sloboda, 1991b, p. 62).

Although the pattern of events contributing to a young person's musical success appears highly complex, this research suggests the following: parents, who may possess modest musical skills themselves, need to take an active role in supporting and encouraging early musical talent. Even so, those children who emerge as highly exceptional frequently appear to seek gratification of their musical needs outside the family. In this way, they may break free of external forms of motivation and develop their own musical identity and commitment. Those who emerge as the most highly accomplished appear to be self-motivated, even to the point of obsession, as if they were unable to separate their developing self-perception from that of being a musician.

This paper returns to data previously collected by Kemp (1981a; 1981b; 1982a and 1982b) through which the research studied the personality structure of musicians using Cattell's inventories. In re-analyzing these data, it was hoped to develop insights into the interrelationship between styles of upbringing, personality, and the emergence of musical talent. Cattell's monumental work, which demonstrates the explicit attempt to measure personality in its totality, appears to offer an appropriate theory concerning the links between styles of parental upbringing and personality development (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuoka, 1970; Cattell, 1973). Among his second-order factors (formed by the intercorrelated nature of their constituent primary traits) appears one which was originally identified as "super-ego strength" (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuoka, 1970). Later, this was re-labeled "upbringing," and Cattell (1973) maintained that it reflected the "impress of good upbringing in morals and manners" (p. 187). In remarking upon the large amount of variance attributed to this second-order factor, Cattell considered that it warranted a more prominent place among the early extracted factors.

Due to the bi-polar nature of all Cattell's factors, that of "upbringing" has unfortunately been attributed the value-laden "good" and "bad" poles. For the purpose of this research it may be helpful to side-step a full discussion of this terminology and adopt interpretations which can be developed from a closer study of the constituent primary factors. Figure 1 shows how four primary factors "load" on positive upbringing, indicated by the continuous arrows. The broken arrows merely indicate how these factors are also related to, among others, second-order factors which lie outside the concerns of this paper. The loadings that appear in the respective boxes indicate the strength of the relationship of these primary factors to positive upbringing.

Figure 1 *Cattell's second-order factor of upbringing and its contributory primary factors.**



* The loadings shown here relate to upbringing only.

The following primary factor descriptions were compiled from Cattell's literature (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuoaka, 1970; Cattell, 1973; Cattell & Kline, 1977). The first-named poles relate positively to what Cattell called "good upbringing."

Conscientiousness (G+) vs. Expediency (G-)

This primary factor emerges as the most powerful constituent of upbringing and, unlike the primary factors which follow, does not feature in any other second-order factor. The G+ person is persevering and determined, engages in responsible forms of behavior, and shows concern about moral values. One finds emotionally disciplined individuals scoring highly on this trait. It is also associated with a high regard for parents, with whom there is a warm relationship founded upon reasoning rather than punishment. Research suggests that the G+ factor loads positively with school achievement; in-

terestingly, however, at the negative pole of expediency it appears to be associated with artists and rebellion against imposed values. **High self-sentiment (Q3+) vs. Low self-sentiment (Q3-)**

This trait describes people who are controlled, exacting and socially precise, and who have a strong self-image. It is associated with compulsive behavior and emerges as an important component of self-concept inventories. Research shows that this factor is linked to a form of parental control exercised through reasoning and affection. It tends to be high in only children. As with conscientiousness, this trait is also negatively associated with artists as well as being an important dimension of anxiety, another second-order factor.

Submissiveness (E-) vs. Dominance (E+)

The people placed at the negative pole (Submissiveness) are considerate, diplomatic, conventional, conforming and humble.

Moreover, they are easily upset by authority. Children who score negatively tend to be obedient and accommodating and have exacting aspirations. There is a relationship between submissiveness and educational achievement up to university graduate work. First-born children and artists tend to score at the positive (dominance) end of the factor.

Desurgency (F-) vs. Surgency (F+)

Desurgency is characterized by silent, introspective, cautious types who stick to their inner values and who, at times, may appear uncommunicative. Like conscientiousness and high self-sentiment, desurgency is associated with behavioral control by parents, and relates to the development of strong work habits and steady achievement.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the loadings of these factors on upbringing at its positive pole are: G+ (.67); Q3+ (.47); E- (.18); and F- (.27) (Cattell, 1973). Desurgency is, in fact, a more important component of introversion than upbringing, and joins submissiveness to load on another second-order factor: dependence. Although not pursued here, the links between these second-order factors in considering the overall personality pattern of musicians cannot be overlooked (Kemp, 1981a; 1981b; 1982b).

Cattell (1973) postulated that together, conscientiousness and high self-sentiment can be viewed as the direct outcome of an upbringing based on regimes of well-defined structures and reasoning. This brings about the development of strong social values. Together, these traits exercise inhibiting effects upon the developing child, causing an overall restraint and reduction in surgency and dominance.

The question to be addressed in this research is whether any appearance of these particular traits in musicians might help clarify the nature of the precursors of musical excellence. If the biographical patterns and events in the lives of young musicians do not lead to any clear understanding of optimum and appropriate parenting methods conducive to the development of musical talent, perhaps the more dynamic view presented in Cattell's literature might offer new insights. New levels of understanding may lie in the nature of the triangular interaction among upbringing methods, the developing person-

ality, and musicianship in subtle and complex ways. Clearly, Cattell's theories appear to claim that the study of personality, at the very least, offers a window into the complexity of the problem insofar as the second-order factor of upbringing focuses upon the impact of two distinct styles of parenting on personality development.

Method

In this study, the researcher set out to reinterpret selected data, more fully described by Kemp (1981a; 1981b; 1982a and 1982b), drawn from three sizable groups of musicians measured with Cattell's personality inventories. These groups, tested on either the *High School Personality Questionnaire* (HSPQ) (Cattell & Cattell, 1969) or *Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire* (16PF) (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuoka, 1970), as appropriate, were as follows:

Main Samples

- 496 young instrumental musicians aged 13-17;
- 272 secondary school non-musicians aged 13-17;
- 688 full-time music students at music conservatories, colleges and universities;
- 160 full-time non-music students at colleges and universities; and
- 202 professional musicians.

Subsidiary Samples

- 116 young musicians attending Saturday junior departments at music conservatories;
- 69 young musicians at special music schools;
- 223 full-time students of performance at conservatories;
- 202 full-time students of composition at conservatories, colleges and universities; and
- 28 professional composers.

The data drawn from the main samples of children and students were separately entered into MANOVA analyses along with those of their respective control groups comprised of subjects who showed no overt musical interests. Likely intervening factors such as age, sex, and socio-economic level and educational level of students were also entered as covariates. In the case of the professional musicians, unpublished norms for higher socio-economic groups (Saville, 1976)

Table 1 Group performance on primary traits associated with upbringing

	Upbringing							
	Positive pole				Negative pole			
	G+	Q3+	E-	F-	G-	Q3-	E+	F+
	Conscientiousness	High self-sentiment	Submissiveness	Desurgency	Expediency	Low self-sentiment	Dominance	Surgency
Young instrumental musicians (N=496)	*** G+	*** Q3+	*** E-					
Young musicians at Junior Departments (n=116)	*** G+	* Q3+						
Young musicians at special music schools (n=69)								
Full-time music students (N=688)	** G+			*** F-				
Full-time performance students (n=223)					* G-		* E+	
Full-time composition students (n=36)					** G-	* Q3-	* E+	
Professional musicians (N=202)						***+ Q3-	* E+	* F+
Professional composers (n=28)					** G-		* E+	

Note: Empty cells indicate non-significant results

+ males only * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .00001$.

□ females only

were adopted for comparison purposes, and the data tested statistically with sexes independently (see Kemp, 1981a). It was intended that the three main samples would offer insights into developmental trends, and that the sub-sample comparisons with the main groups would supply additional trends in connection with particular manifestations and levels of musical talent.

Results

The results shown in Table 1 indicate that:

1. The complete group of young musicians in comparison with their control group displayed significant levels of conscientiousness, high self-sentiment and submissiveness, reflecting the impress of parental

styles of upbringing as characterized by the positive pole of the second-order factor of upbringing.

2. The complete group of full-time students in comparison with their control group showed significant levels of conscientiousness and desurgency. This confirms the children's positive upbringing, but also suggests that the balance and nature of the contributory primary factors had shifted.
3. Whereas the male professional musicians — in comparison with appropriate norms — showed a significant degree of low self-sentiment, the female sample displayed significant levels of dominance. These results tend to suggest the presence of distinct differences in terms of patterns of upbringing between music students and those who

become professional performers.

Comparisons between the main and related sub-samples showed that:

1. Young musicians at the conservatory junior departments displayed significantly higher levels of conscientiousness and high self-sentiment in comparison with the main sample already shown to be characterized by these traits.
2. Talented young musicians at special schools displayed no significant differences from the overall sample, implying that the traits associated with the second-order factor of upbringing are linked to close nurturing rather than levels of musicianship.
3. In comparison with the main group of students, the performers showed significant expediency and dominance. This suggests a swing away from the positive to the negative pole of upbringing, thus appearing to confirm the trend shown by the professional musicians.
4. In comparison with the main sample of music students, the student composers also demonstrated significant expediency and dominance as well as low self-sentiment. This indicates a significant shift towards negative upbringing, a trend also reflected in the professional composers' profile.
5. The professional composers, in comparison with the main sample of professional musicians, showed significant levels of expediency and dominance, confirming the trend towards negative upbringing demonstrated by the student composers.

Discussion

Direct comparisons between the major groups should be pursued with some caution. Nonetheless, the inferences drawn from such comparisons, viewed together, tend to suggest that a shift took place towards negative upbringing somewhere towards the middle of the total age range represented by the three groups of musicians. This changeover appears to be directly linked to self-motivated musicianship which emerges after a period when work patterns are established by a home environment conducive to their development. This conclusion may be reached since it was clear that the shift was not due to an age effect (age had been entered as a covariate); besides, Cattell (1973) showed that the age trends on these key traits tend to be in the opposite direction. Furthermore, neither was the

changeover related to the musicianship criterion, as Kemp's (1982b) earlier research had demonstrated that the correlates of musicianship were separate from the traits associated with upbringing.

From the point of view of Cattell's theories, these data clearly indicate that the personalities of young musicians reflect the impact of close parental nurturing. The emergence of even more explicit indications of positive upbringing in those young people attending the conservatory junior departments can be ascribed to the types of parental support and encouragement that this group very likely received. Attending these institutions would have generally involved considerable levels of parental support, as well as investment in terms of time, transport, money, organization, and motivation (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a). In many cases, this involved the chauffeuring of offspring to the center of London from the home counties every Saturday. Particularly talented young musicians, who were likely to be living away from home at special schools, displayed no significant differences from the main group. This tends to support the notion that high levels of positive upbringing appear to be related to overt parental support.

The profiles of the full-time students are also revealing. The definite shift towards the negative pole by the more talented performers in comparison with the main group tends to confirm the notion that a changeover occurs in those who develop serious performing aspirations. The profiles of the two groups of composers also confirm the same pattern in that they demonstrate consistent negative upbringing.

Taken as a whole, these results tend to demonstrate a reasonably consistent pattern of expediency (G-), a tendency to follow personal urges (Q3-), and assertiveness (E+), which combine to produce a syndrome of refusal to be bound by external pressures. This pattern of non-conformity and personal autonomy was identified in creative people by Barron (1955), and also by Drevdahl (1956) more specifically in artists. These findings can be interpreted, less as a tendency to be undisciplined, but more as a manifestation of well-internalized personal

work habits which allow the individual to break free of social expectations and pressures. In the words of Chambers (1969), "they have chosen not to conform to a given mold but rather to express their sensitivities and other characteristics through their creative abilities" (pp. 791-792). The findings of Kemp (1982b & 1984) concerning the tendency of musicians to be less subject to gender stereotyping clearly support this view, but from a somewhat different perspective.

How do these results relate to issues concerning developing the talents of young musicians? One way of interpreting them is that methods of upbringing in the very early stages should provide the close support and encouragement that enable young musicians to develop good work and practice habits. Later, they gradually internalize and adopt these habits as their own. Those who become too dependent upon imposed work schedules might find themselves rebelling against them in adolescence or, indeed, earlier.

One might expect conservatory or university music students who remain dependent upon home influences and disciplines, to find acclimatizing to the conservatory (with its seemingly in-built freedoms) very problematic, and as a result, withdraw. On the other hand, the emergence of highly significant levels of submissiveness (F-) in the main sample of student musicians (the only manifestation of this trait throughout the whole range), may be psychologically significant, if not a little worrying. The group's extreme desurgency, in comparison with students in other disciplines whose desurgency is well established (Saville & Blinkhorn, 1976), appears to indicate the temperamental outcomes of the continuing pressures exerted upon music students in the conservatories and higher education generally. In other words, the appearance of such high levels on this trait at this developmental point may indicate that teachers in these institutions might be attempting to counteract the problem just described.

Although this research might be challenged on the grounds of confounding effects, two not necessarily conflicting notions appear to suggest themselves. One relates to the idea that those young musicians who find adjusting to self-motivated work patterns too diffi-

cult, or who have become too dependent upon parental support, discontinue at the two major points of selection: entry to higher education or entry to professional life. The second notion relates to the idea that those who are able to adjust to the demands of musical performance at these high levels do indeed develop the requisite capacities. What might be witnessed here is the presence of two concurrent phenomena: one involving a changing and progressively self-selecting population brought about by attrition among those who find the demands too tough, the other of a population slowly undergoing adjustment and development as the working conditions change and the musical demands build up.

The first process is one which clearly operates in all walks of life and is recognized by career advisers and occupational psychologists. The second requires a little more consideration. That is, how and when do transitions take place moving from the close parental support and encouragement of childhood to the emergence of the more autonomous levels of personal mastery. One can only suppose that those who emerge as successful in professional life either already possessed sufficient drive and determination reported in some of the biographical research, or that they possessed the kind of parents who were able to 'let go' at the appropriate time.

The tendency of parents of the musically gifted to boast of their children's accomplishments can frequently be observed, and such levels of what might be interpreted as possessiveness might not only cause negative reactions but also offer a too-repressive environment for the natural growth of self-motivated commitment. Interestingly, it was Roe (1967) who suggested that too much loving and too little neglect on the part of the parent does not produce the requisite personality conducive to creativity. Further research based on longitudinal data, rather than ex-post facts of the kind reported in this paper, may help to clarify further this and associated issues.

Note

This article reports one selected element drawn from the invited paper delivered at

the Indiana Symposium on Research in Social Psychology of Music at Indiana University, May 2-3, 1993.

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