

Using Research in Practice

ARNOLD APRILL, CHICAGO ARTS PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION: *Something I'd be interested in hearing discussed is how we take studies like you did for CAPE, and how we make them of use to the teachers and the musicians who are actually in our program. How does the evaluation and the research become a part of the discourse of the practitioners?*

JAMES CATTERALL: *Well, I think two ways come to mind. One, if the research has anything to say about outcomes that you want to achieve, then it's useful in inspiring you and perhaps convincing your supervisors to support you and fund you and get you instruments or that sort of thing. Two, I think a very important stream of work to come out of the last few years is understanding how schools can organize to do arts based programs in any of the visual or performing arts or multi-arts programs, and get the conversation about the ideas behind it into the center of the school. So it's not five teachers doing their thing and no one else caring and the principal saying, "All right, you can have another \$5000 next year." It's about getting the idea of the importance of music or theatre or multi-arts programs into the heart of a school so it takes on a life of its own. Teachers work together, make things better, get the resources to do it, and when you walk into a school you really know it's happening.*

QUESTION: *If the research that's been done consistently seems to look at results outside of the art form itself-test results, lower truancy, etc.- are we inside this field creating a hole for ourselves, where we're carrying a burden of responsibility that's outside of our own expertise? What research might be done or should be done which affirms or denies the value of the art form itself?*

CATTERALL: *Several things occur to me, and one came out of a conference just last week, and that was a suggestion brought up by Eliot Eisner of Stanford that got a lot of resonance. We need research on*

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what's going on in the minds of young artists-to-be or artists-in-training as they do their art. To me, that's a very interesting area. What's going on when someone learns to play the violin over time? What's going on when a painter is learning to paint, between the time they first put the brush to canvas and when there's a much more developed set of skills? That kind of research seems very important. You as music teachers are the source of the curiosity. You're at the center of creating curiosity about what information would be useful to you. For example, what is it that gets kids to practice 30 minutes a day on a regular basis on an instrument? What kinds of methods are best at advancing skills on the bassoon over time? Those sorts

of things-knowledge about teaching practice. Then there's a domain of research in the aesthetic that asks simply, what does being a musician mean to a sixth grader or an eighth grader or an eighty year old? What does being a musician mean? What has it meant in their lives? What has it brought to them? Forget about factoring algebraic expressions. What does being a struggling musician mean to you? I'd put my money on those kinds of questions.

MARTIN GARDINER, BROWN UNIVERSITY: I think that we are now discussing a very important question. I agree with Eisner, and now James Caterall, that the intrinsic values of music are very, very important: they are reason enough to want music to have a central role in the curriculum. Music has been around as long as human culture. It must be doing something important, and whatever that is, it's not teaching math. The historical record is very powerful in this regard. But I think there is also a danger of a false dichotomy about the values of music. Why must we-and in fact can we-choose between intrinsic and extrinsic values? I truly think that the extrinsic and intrinsic values are inherently locked together by the brain, however we may prefer to think about them. The modeling I am working on hypothesizes that crossover connections between music and other learning reflect deep similarities in the kinds of thinking that are needed to do music and to do, for example, good math or to do good reading. Not the same thing in those cases; there are different kinds of connections between, let's say, music and reading as compared to music and math. But these connections may then give us a remarkable opportunity to understand in a deeper way how the brain is organized, and how we learn and the role of representation in learning. I think we should have our cake and eat it too.

CATTERALL: Let me just add that another wonderful-ly interesting piece of research I would love to do is to understand the importance of music in different cultures around the world. And to understand the importance of live music, the importance of recorded music, the importance of music in certain domains of life, perhaps religion. Also, the importance of music in the education of young children.

GAIL BURNAFORD, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY: Our experience in Chicago has helped us see that a strong integrative approach seems to contribute to more commitment to arts specialists being hired in schools, and a stronger independent focus on teaching the arts.

Accountability

COMMENT: [In our lunchtime discussion] we had a group that included educators, researchers, and those representing cultural institutions. We spent a good deal of time discussing the three equal parts that create a strong school culture. Certainly, the teacher development is a major piece of this. But we were also looking at accountability and trying to decide the best practices of business leadership-team-building, consensus and game plan - from the administration to the educator, who is very knowledgeable about the subject and has a passion for it and understands creative ways of communicating that passion and that knowledge. It's all about setting up ideal pathways for students to experience that passion of learning and for the kids to actually make the art and experience the joy in that.

LARRY SCRIPP, NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY: I notice the necessity for putting the passion of learning up against such neutral and forbidding terms as accountability. What was the effect around that discussion? Was the idea of accountability just as passionate as the idea of the arts?

FOLLOW-UP: We all talk a lot, but actions do speak louder than words. I think anybody who is in the education field, whether he or she is a parent or an educator, has to be accountable. One needs to ask, is the program working? Is the child really learning something? Who is getting the most out of it? Are you spending the time? Who is receiving the benefit of this experience? Hopefully it works both ways. Particularly from a cultural institution point of view, when we're looking from the outside in, to a school culture, we better be good. Because why should we be there, and why should we waste their time? Why should we ask our funders to raise the money? Why should we have

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a role in this at all? We have to speak the language of the educator. We make the assumption that if they're any kind of educator, they would certainly know something about our field, but we don't take the time to know their field. I think that's a major mistake.

RICHARD BELL, YOUNG AUDIENCES : *I wish the dialogue was going that way these days in terms of accountability. But I hear a much more narrow-focused definition of accountability, namely literacy and numeracy-and the tests, of course, especially the paper and pencil tests that go along with that. It's all about math skills and reading skills. More and more states are demanding that, and not just as the primary area of concern. In many schools, it is the only priority. This serves to push those subject areas that have been on the margins of the curriculum even further away from the center of school priorities. In my conversations with superintendents, unfortunately I find they are very much narrow-focused on that definition of accountability.*

SCRIPP: *Is the solution to broaden the definition of numeracy and literacy?*

BELL: *Yes, that is the strategy that many people have urged us to adopt in the arts education field. And that brings us to the question of transferability, which is part of what this conference is about. The question of studying the arts for their intrinsic value rather than for their instrumental value is a hot topic these days. As I see it, any solution that denies the value of either approach is not worth pursuing.*

It appears we are in a trap when it comes to accountability. Many in the business community assert that students lack basic skills in reading and math. As a result, legislators and other politicians focus on that. But

when we attempt to assess higher level problem solving skills, and other disciplines such as the arts, that do not lend themselves to standardized tests, we are faced with unreliable measures and/or much higher costs. Only a few states have included the arts as a subject that is regularly assessed. Kentucky is one of them. And it's not just multiple choice. The kids have to demonstrate what they know.

Jim, in 1998 there was a unique opportunity to make progress in this area with the NAEP assessment. It could have been a seminal moment in terms of evaluation and assessment of the arts. From your perspective, what came out of that effort on the plus side?

SCRIPP: *Let's make sure everybody knows about NAEP*

CATTERALL: *NAEP is a National Assessment of Educational Progress which samples two or three thousand kids in every state, and they do different subjects each year, but they mostly concentrate in math and verbal skills. They'll do science, they'll do different grade levels, and they don't put kids on a norm standard. They say, "What does high proficiency mean? Level 4 is this, level 5 is this." The NAEP sort of went out on a limb and said, "We want to ask some questions and try to see how kids can perform in the arts." And they did these measures, and they sat kids down and had them do various things. A large read on it was, a lot of kids couldn't do much. And I have not paused long enough to explore that, because the initial read was that perhaps it wasn't done right or they weren't asking the right questions, or the assessments were too difficult to get right. Frankly, there isn't much variation and performance is fairly low everywhere they looked.*

APRILL: *I also want to respond to the accountability issue. We've had some success teaching beyond the standards. You don't fight with the standards, but the standards are not enough. And the rigor that comes from real arts investigation, the aesthetic thinking about instruction that Eric was talking about, is what we need to demand in all instruction. Then we don't get into a fight with the standards, or the numeracy or the literacy.¶*