

EDITORIAL

Dynamic Evaluation of *Voices*' Transparent Publishing Policy

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Through a spirit of inclusiveness and socio-cultural awareness, *Voices* fosters dialogue and interdisciplinary discussion about music, health, and social change. We aim for our peer review process to mirror our values by promoting a constructive and dialogical approach where peer reviewers and authors dialogue through mediation from an article editor. We encourage authors, peer reviewers, and editors to engage in reflexivity and to position themselves to give context to their statements. We ask that authors carefully position themselves and practice transparency to aid readers in contextualizing and interpreting their work. We invite peer reviewers to embrace values of transparency and situatedness in their approach to generating peer reviews. When peer reviewers make their contexts and assumptions known, authors have a better foundation for working constructively with peer reviewer feedback.

As the values of openness, transparency, and situatedness have evolved, the journal has taken steps toward embracing open practices in the process of peer review. In 2016, the *Voices* editorial team invited the greater *Voices* community into dialogue about the possibility of increasing transparency in the peer review process (McFerran, 2016). The editorial team invited open discussion on the option of moving from fully masked peer review to a practice of publishing peer reviewer names when a submission is accepted and published. Such a step enables transparency around who has contributed to shaping the article through the process of peer review and provides a concrete acknowledgement of the work done by the peer reviewers. Based on positive feedback from discussions with the greater *Voices* community during conferences, email exchanges, and face-to-face dialogues, *Voices* began using a transparent publishing policy as of Vol. 17, No. 2 (2017). Peer reviewer names are masked from authors during the process of peer review but are published along with accepted peer-reviewed articles. Peer reviewer names remain masked in cases where a submission is not accepted for publication. We also publish the name of the article editor(s) who followed the manuscript through to acceptance. Our transparent publishing policy is listed on the [Voices website](#) along with a description of our dialogic process of peer review.

We are currently working to refine our practices around implementing our transparent

publishing policy by improving the way such information is conveyed when people are invited to serve as peer reviewers. We are also exploring options for keeping a more up-to-date and evolving list of peer reviewers posted on our website to promote greater transparency and acknowledge the service of peer reviewers in a timely manner. At various points since the initiation of open practices in our peer review process, the greater *Voices* community has engaged in dialogue around this policy, including weighing the benefits of transparency versus the perception of objectivity in the peer reviewing process (McFerran et al., 2020). We invite you to continue to contribute to this dialogue by contacting us if you have perspectives you would like to share. We aim to maintain a dynamic evaluation of this policy in a way that is responsive to our various experiences and perspectives.

Contributions to this Issue

This issue of *Voices* includes contributions from Australia, Denmark, India, Kenya, Norway, and the United States, and the authors are service users, family members, educators, music therapists, and other professionals. Reflection on intercultural spaces is a theme that runs through several contributions, along with consideration of nuanced dynamics and interdependent processes that occur between two or more people engaged in musicking.

Making way for a “future of possibilities,” Mufu Luvai shares reflections as a Kenyan student completing a music therapy internship in rural Kenya. Music has long played an important role for various ethnic groups in Kenya but as of the time of writing this article, music therapy was not yet offered as a course of university study. Overcoming challenges linked to limited resources, cultural differences, and long-distance supervision, Luvai uses personal and professional reflection to dive deeply into the questioning of “Who am I here?” and thereby navigating relation in this musical space.

Using an action research pilot study, Indian community-based rehabilitation (CBR) co-researchers and Australian music therapy co-researchers explored the perceived impact of music therapy-informed activities for CBR facilitators and participating families. Lucy Bolger, Sameer Valsangkar, Sumathy Sundar, and Melissa Murphy consider ethical aspects of this online collaboration and suggest that the findings can inform online intercultural collaborations within music therapy and in international/community development.

An arts-based, phenomenological research project was used to explore experiences of singing together pre- and post-transition to online sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic for members of a therapeutic community choir for people with dementia and their family and friends. In their article, authors Zara Thompson, Felicity Baker, Imogen Clark, Gwladys McLachlan, Sue Mountain, Dennis Mountain, Maria Radford, Mark Reid, Nena Reid, Teuila Reid, Vera Tkalcevic, Marion Hodgson, and Jeanette Tamplin present an 18-part song cycle generated from themes that emerged from phenomenological analysis. The virtual choir format connected members during the unprecedented isolation of COVID-19 but also posed challenges.

Christopher Pizzute makes a case for the untapped resource of video game culture in the context of music education and music therapy practice. Pizzute describes the creation and implementation of a virtual music composition/education program that represents an integration of music therapy intervention and video game culture for neurodivergent and neurotypical children. Through the program, children experienced agency and mastery along with gaining knowledge of music and how video game music is created.

Frode Aass Kristiansen, Brynjulf Stige, and Anna Helle-Valle use an instrumental case study to explore the implications of musical interaction in music therapy for agitation in an adult with dementia. The findings in this case study demonstrate both the robustness of the beneficial impact of musicking along with the fragility of such impact.

Affect regulation is often disturbed following traumatic experience. Through a thorough

discussion of the role of music in affect regulation and a clinical explanatory case study, Oda Dypvik Bjørke and Bolette Daniels Beck explore the role of music therapy for an adult with complex post-traumatic stress disorder. Improvised interplay offered chances for creative playfulness and self-agency, and the authors suggest that both dimensions of micro processes within dyadic regulation and agency within meso-levels of relation are necessary.

Weaving in her own reflections and experiences, Sandra Ramos-Watt provides a thoughtful book review of *Trauma-Informed Music Therapy: Theory and Practice*, edited by Laura E. Beer and Jacqueline C. Birnbaum. The review provides a thorough overview of the book and helps contextualize its particular contributions to the literature.

Acknowledging Contributors to *Voices*

Continuing efforts towards transparency, we take this opportunity to thank those who have moved out of important roles at *Voices* and welcome those who are moving into such roles. We are indebted to Tormod Strømme from the University of Bergen Library for several years of detail-oriented work carefully laying out articles for publication. In addition, we gratefully acknowledge the service of several editorial team members who are moving on to new horizons. Carolyn Shaw, Danielle McKinnon, Daphne Rickson, and Triona McCaffrey have concluded service as article editors in 2022/2023. We appreciate the sensitivity and respectfulness they brought to their exchanges with authors. Their efforts to supportively see submissions through the dialogic peer review process have been greatly appreciated! Following our open call for applications at the beginning of 2023 and subsequent review of applications, we would like to introduce several new editorial team members. Recognizing the detail-oriented efforts Tim Honig has given to work as a copyeditor for *Voices*, we now welcome him into the role of article editor. We warmly welcome David Akombo to the role of article editor; Emily Hunt, Kaitlyn Kelly, and Katelyn Beebe to the role of copyeditor; and Laura Torgeson to the role of communications editor.

References

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