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Mindfulness as an Alternative to Prescriptive Pedagogical Methods for Technique

Seth Quay
Intro to Grad Studies
Assignment 4: Annotated Bibliography
11/14/18

Mindfulness as an Alternative to Prescriptive Pedagogical Methods for Technique

Bibliography

Secondary or Tertiary Monographs:

Baltzell, Amy. *Mindfulness and Performance: Current Perspectives in Social and Behavioral Sciences*.

New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Abstract: The practices of mindfulness among performers in various venues, from athletes to musicians and dancers, is examined in this text to draw connections to peak performance and well-being.

There is research quoted throughout this book that strengthen the arguments for the positive power of mindfulness practice as it relates to performance. This information is not only helpful to most musicians, it provides a impactful starting point for this research that reinforces arguments in favor of using mindfulness.

Bonpensiere, Luigi. *New Pathways to Piano Technique: a Study of the Relations between Mind and Body with Special Reference to Piano Playing*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1953.

Abstract: This source was written quite some time before the trend of mindfulness and body awareness became popular in America and, subsequently, in classical music. The primary focus is on piano playing but the focus of these discussions and exercises are relevant to almost all musicians.

There is reference to connections between the mind and body and instructions for establishing meaningful awareness of the body and movements required to play piano.

Feldenkrais, Moshe. *Awareness Through Movement: Easy-to-do Exercises to Improve your Posture, Vision, Imagination, and Personal Awareness*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1990.

Abstract: This book is from the creator of the Feldenkrais technique who gives an insightful perspective to analyzing movement through personal awareness. There is an extended introduction of “understanding while doing” in Part I, and Part II includes 12 Lessons, or exercises, for improving posture and awareness. This book is focused on awareness, which parallels the awareness cultivated through other mindfulness techniques.

-- . *The Potent Self: A Study of Spontaneity and Compulsion*. Berkeley, CA: Frog Books and Somatic Resources, 1985.

Abstract: Also from the creator of the Feldenkrais method, this book draws connections between pain and improper posture, and includes the role of emotional tension and stress in creating patterns and counterproductive habits. A chapter focused on the body and mind is useful for this research in understanding techniques commonly used by musicians to further their awareness and mindfulness in their movements.

Iyengar, B.K.S. *Light on Yoga: The Bible of Modern Yoga- It's Philosophy and Practice- by the World's Foremost Teacher*. New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1966.

Abstract: *Light on Yoga* is written by one of the foremost scholars of Yoga practice in the 20th century who was a major factor in it's importation to America. He details the history of yoga and it's place in Hinduism, as well as a detailed description (with illustrations) of yoga postures and positions and their purposes. There is a significant amount of material devoted to mindfulness and it's practices, from a master who is native to India and an esteemed authority of yoga study. There is a particularly interesting introduction by virtuoso violinist Yehudi Menuhin, a student of Iyengar.

Dissertations and Theses:

Knerr, Julie. "Strategies in the Formation of Piano Technique in Elementary Level Piano Students: An Exploration of Teaching Elementary Level Technical Concepts According to Authors and Teachers from 1925 to Present" PhD diss., University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, 2006. ProQuest Dissertations & These Global.

Abstract: This dissertation is a useful source for this topic as it provides a meticulously compiled analysis of prominent and influential pedagogues' approaches to technique and tension. There are detailed comparisons between these 20th century pedagogues' language and teaching styles as well as reviews of their literature and philosophies. There is also a comparison of four current "exemplary" teachers' approaches to technique including Marvin Blickenstaff and Mary Craig Powell.

Wheatley-Brown, Michele. "An Analysis of Terminology Describing the Physical Aspect of Piano Technique." Master's thesis, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada, 2011. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

Abstract: This dissertation seeks to find the root of a complex problem involving the language used to describe piano technique. This language is not standardized and often not medically accurate. Wheatley-Brown analyzes five prominent pedagogues whose approaches reflect trends of piano pedagogy in recent years, including Dorothy Taubman, a prominent instructor of piano who focuses on rebuilding technique after injuries or improper technical training.

Conference Papers

Lehrer, Paul M. "Psychological Approaches to the Management of Tension in Performance." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Schools of Music, Houston, TX, November, 1985.

Abstract: This conference presentation focuses on psychological approaches to tension management. The author provides instructions for exercises to reduce anxiety and stress as well as manage the amount of tension prior to performance. Anxiety and muscle tension are shown to be interconnected and several psychological exercises are provided for dealing with physiological responses to anxiety and muscle tension. These psychological approaches mirror the same principles and objectives of mindfulness and meditation, but also include desensitization and therapeutic analysis.

Journal Articles:

Anderson, William Todd. "Mindful Music Listening Instruction Increases Listening Sensitivity and Enjoyment." *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 34, no. 3 (June 2016): 48-55.

Abstract: Mindful music listening instruction of 4th grade elementary students was studied to formulate the thesis of this paper, which is that mindful listening strengthens listening sensitivity and enjoyment. This research provides a parallel analysis of the efficacy of mindfulness in education. The outcomes of mindful listening are applicable to musicians and 4th grade elementary students .

Crappell, Courtney, Barbara Lister-Sink. "Playing-Related Injuries." *American Music Teacher* 64, no. 4 (Feb/March 2015): 16-19.

Abstract: This article describes a common problem for many musicians: injuries related to their playing and improper technical facilities. There is anecdotal evidence of creating awareness of proper biomechanics and recommendations for pursuing what the author refers to as “somatic education courses,” such as Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais method. The information in this article stresses the importance of dealing with injuries preventatively and in healthy and positive ways and seeks to destigmatize injuries in musicians to encourage acknowledgment and treatment early on.

Lanzer, Katie. "Yoga And Piano: Learning to Unify Musical Intentions with Easeful Actions." *American Music Teacher* 58, no. 6 (June 2009): 26-30.

Abstract: This article provides anecdotal evidence for the benefits of yoga practice in relation to piano.

There is a discussion of the most impactful aspects of yoga practice and how they can be applied to discovering technical solutions involving lower levels of tension. This article describes a process that is very personal to the individual, one that requires awareness and mindfulness of sensations throughout the body, but also mediates distracting thoughts that invade the conscious mind while attempting to focus on music.

Pike, Pamela D. "Exploring Self-regulation through a Reflective Practicum: A Case Study of Improvement through Mindful Piano Practice." *Music Education Research* 19, no. 4 (October 2017): 398-409.

Abstract: This provides an alternative approach to mindfulness in piano practice by assigning faculty coaches to supervise students' practice sessions who encourage the students to reflect, analyze, and self-regulate in the practice room. This creates a definition of mindfulness that originates from reflection and awareness as opposed to the conventional meditative approach of yoga. This research is focused on the development of good practice technique, which can be related to developing good musical technique.

Smith, Scott. "Let's Get Physical: Technique - Edna Golandsky on Taubman Technique." *Clavier Companion* 4, no. 5 (September 2012): 50-52.

Abstract: Scott Smith interviewed Edna Golandsky, a protégé of Dorothy Taubman and director of *The Golandsky Institute* which carries on the work of Taubman. Taubman was an innovator and pioneer of healthy functions and movements in piano technique. This interview with her disciple provides insight into her process for discovering "correct" technique, which was philosophical

and flexible and dependent on the individual's experience and development. This approach is a contemporary of other pioneering methods such as Feldenkrais and Pilates.