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**Book review: SUSAN HALLAM, *Music Psychology in Education*, Bedford Way Papers No. 25.  
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## Book reviews

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SUSAN HALLAM, *Music Psychology in Education*, Bedford Way Papers No. 25. London: Institute of Education, 2006. 281pp. ISBN 0854737162 (pbk) £17.99

This handbook is designed for students training to be instrumental and class music teachers, and music teachers with an interest in the psychology of music. Students of music performance, most of whom can expect to teach at some stage in their careers, will also find it extremely useful. Its main aim is to summarize the psychological research that is most relevant to the teaching of music, and thus to provide a concise introduction to music psychology. Key topics are addressed in 12 chapters; at the end of each one there is a short section on the implications of the research for music educators and a brief, up-to-date reading list.

Chapter 1 looks at the nature of sound, the origins and functions of music in society and music education both general and specialist. This sets the scene for subsequent chapters on musical ability (4), motivation and musical identity (9) and assessment (10), but in the meantime we return in Chapter 2 to music, the brain and learning: brain structures, the impact of learning on brain functions, and emotion and music. Early development, beginning with prenatal experiences and the role of caregivers, is the topic of Chapter 3, which also discusses the development of music perception from infancy to childhood, including the emotional content of music.

Chapter 4 describes attempts made since the beginning of the last century to define and measure musical ability. Hallam argues, however, that this is more usefully conceptualized in terms of the skills needed for musical success, and these are summarized and considered in relation to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Inevitably, this leads to the question of the extent to which musical ability (however defined) is genetically determined.

The ground is prepared in Chapters 2 and 3 for an outline, in Chapter 5, of research on listening and responding, appraisal and evaluation, and musical preferences. Chapter 6 moves from listening to making music, addressing the creative processes underlying composition and improvisation. Children develop

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their capacity to be creative individuals through learning to improvise, but they need 'creative environments' in order to develop expertise.

Expertise is often most apparent in performance, and Chapter 7 examines some of the prerequisites for learning to play an instrument or sing. Opportunity and choice are crucial; predictors of success include practice (Chapter 8) and motivation (Chapter 9). Hallam summarizes the research on skill acquisition, musical memory and reading music. She describes the stages of becoming a performer and the role of the family, what is involved in performance, why some musicians experience performance anxiety and how this can be tackled.

Hallam herself has made a considerable contribution to the literature on practice. Chapter 8 outlines the different processes involved in practising and, on the basis of research on expert and novice musicians, discusses effective strategies: quality is as important as quantity, and metacognition – related to motivation and self-regulation – enables the musician to meet specific task requirements. Hallam ends by examining the role of the environment, such as teachers' and parents' views on practice, and the nature of group rehearsal. The research discussed in Chapter 9 is largely based on psychological models whereby motivation and musical identity are understood in terms of the interaction between value-, expectancy- and affective-components, concisely and clearly explained.

Chapter 10 sets the topic of assessment firmly in the context of its effects on students' learning, and therefore on teaching. Hallam considers the assessment of composition, improvisation and performance, touching on different types of assessment and inter-judge reliability; she also discusses peer assessment and her own adaptation of existing schemes for assessing intellectual development in the context of music-making. These are key issues for educators, and Chapter 11 focuses on music teaching in the studio, the classroom and with groups. Specifically, researchers have investigated composition teaching, the use of technology, teacher characteristics and teacher–pupil relations; their findings inform the advice that closes the chapter on ways of developing effective teaching strategies. Finally, Chapter 12 returns to the theme of music in society, examining the role of music in everyday life from infancy to adulthood, in education, therapy, medicine and work.

Hallam has amassed a wealth of literature, which she summarizes with admirable succinctness, drawing useful parallels between research in education and music psychology. Aiming for breadth rather than depth, she does not provide detailed critiques of specific studies. Nevertheless, the 'implications for educators' that conclude each chapter contain a powerful argument based on the evidence: music is vital to human beings, influencing mood, emotion and arousal from infancy; the purpose of music education should be to ensure that all children are motivated to enjoy and engage with music throughout the lifespan, via listening, composing, improvising and

performing. Overall, the book makes a strong case for the use of psychological research in music education and amply fulfils its purpose of sketching the current landscape, making practical suggestions and directing the reader to richer sources of information.

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M.H. THAUT, *Rhythm, Music, and the Brain: Scientific Foundations and Clinical Applications*, Studies on New Music Research, 7. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2005. Translation of the book is available in Japanese, with translations in progress for Chinese, German, and Korean editions. ISBN 0415973708 (hbk) \$95.00

Michael H. Thaut's *Rhythm, Music, and the Brain*, an impressive delivery of ground-breaking ideas, is couched in recent attention given to music by the neurological sciences. An unprecedented production of music–brain studies provides the foundation to the development of what Thaut labels Neurological Music Therapy (NMT). The main purpose of the book is to present these foundational studies with emphasis on investigations related to rhythm – ‘one of two big pillars in music that hold the auditory temporal architecture of music together’. A thorough compilation of research literature and clinical applications supports the use of facilitated music experiences as an evidence-based practice for individuals with neurologic disorders (e.g. brain injury, Parkinson's disease).

The book is written for a diverse audience including professional and lay readers of the sciences and arts, and professionals in neuroscientific research and rehabilitation. The author's intent is to contribute to the advancing of the discipline of music therapy, and also to serve as a text for training music therapists in NMT. The author is successful in his systematic approach in relaying diverse and complex information to these varied readers. However, readers will likely choose chapters and sections according to their interest and expertise. For example, Chapter 5 delivers highly technical information, written where possible in a user-friendly tone, with sections of the chapter reserved for those with bio-physics and mathematical knowledge.

The clinical contribution of the NMT approach evolved from two landmark studies carried out in the mid-1970s that uncovered the relationship between auditory rhythm and the response of the motor system. More specifically, the early findings described the existence of auditory–motor pathways, via brain–spinal cord connection, along with increased motor neuron excitability. This excitability enhanced individuals' readiness to move and an additional entrainment effect to rhythm, which in turn had