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**Paragraph in Response to Music Matters
Chapter Four, *Music Listening***

Music listening and music making are mutually interdependent; they are two sides of the same coin.

This chapter is, I think, one of the best so far, and certainly the most important for music educators. This *praxial* idea of music listening as a part of music making makes a great deal of good common sense, also. I have made the mistake of trying to teach with records, tapes, and CD's, using the Norton scores to have the students follow the first and second theme and the development. I confess that most of the time was spent trying to keep the students awake!

One of the most successful lessons I ever did (before I knew of your writings on the subject), was in teaching about Gregorian chant to my inner city students. (The class in which this was done was my Music Workshop class, a combination of theory and history.) We analyzed a short segment of chant (*Ut queant laxis*), used the same tessitura and mode, and wrote our own chants, using Biblical texts or whatever religious text a student wanted to provide (from any faith). There were some very interesting and convincingly authentic sounding chants written. I would like to believe that those students are able to listen more effectively to chant or chant-like music than they were before doing this study.

In my choir classes now, in high school, I have occasionally been spending a few minutes having the students listen to choral or vocal music. I direct them only to be able to tell me something about the music after we listen, or, that it is like one of the pieces they are now studying and I will want them to be able to tell me which one, and how it is similar. I also ask them to tell me about the singer(s). Because the music they hear is the same medium (i.e. *practice-specific*) in which we are working, even if the singer or singers are unusual (countertenors or African-American style) the

context is familiar. We have had some stimulating discussions about the music and the historical background and culture from which it comes.

The dilemma for me now is, perhaps I am wrong in proposing a new course for next year, called “What to Listen for in Music,” with no prerequisite, and therefore available to non-music students. I wonder now if the way I am doing music listening in my choir classes is not the most effective way of introducing music listening. I will value your advice in this area.

Reading this chapter has caused me to evaluate my own music listening. I am listening even more intensely now, I think. Thank you for writing this!