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Review of *Music and Dementia: From Cognition to Therapy*. by Amee Baird, Sandra Garrido, and Jeanette Tamplin

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Likewise, anyone who has watched his performances in facing down capitol hill reporters knows that DJT (thrice married) is clearly no genius businessman or even the boardroom alpha male—but he played one on TV! Perhaps it is too much to ask of Kobes Du Mez that she would look deeper into the sources and meaning of such obvious preference among Evangelicals for image over reality. Hopefully that is the subject of a future project. In any case, it is an extremely important topic to wrestle down and would doubtless have profound implications for our understanding of the type of religion Evangelicalism actually is, politically, sociologically and theologically.

Daniel Liechty
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Amee Baird, Sandra Garrido, and Jeanette Tamplin. *Music and Dementia: From Cognition to Therapy*. Oxford University Press (2020), 293 pages, \$54.99 (hardcover).

This review will primarily focus on two subjects covered in this text, defining dementia-focused music therapy and the physiological impact that melody has on older adults. While the book contains fourteen chapters discussing topics ranging from the seven capacities of music to therapeutic intervention techniques for Life Enrichment specialists, I am focusing here on those topics most relevant to social workers. The research provided in this book offers implications for improving the quality of life for older adults across a variety of communities and living environments, including assisted living facilities, retirement communities, memory care support, or an individual's home. As dementia remains the most significant and neurocognitively harmful condition impacting older adults, it is for social workers and other professionals to acquaint themselves with the importance of sound and music as a therapeutic tool for working with this vulnerable group of people.

As a starting point, the authors debunk a number of common misconceptions about music therapy. They stress the difference between recreational and therapeutic experiences. In order to

provide a therapeutic structure for older adults with dementia, the use of music must be active, rather than passive. Often, passive experiences are mistaken for therapeutic ones because of the pleasurable moments they provide. The text lists several examples of passive listening experiences that are often used in assisted living and memory support settings, including bedside musicians, listening to music with headphones, a piano player in the lobby, a student playing guitar for residents, or a visiting choir performance. The authors note that musical experiences exist on a continuum, and that while each of the previous activities are not harmful, they are not considered music therapy. Such passive musical experiences can be implemented for older adults with dementia, but the psychological and physiological effects of a truly therapeutic approach are unlikely to occur. Passive listening, of course, can be enjoyable for anyone, but it is generally not individualized for each person, nor is it often accompanied by a professional care plan with specific goals.

An important consideration for social workers working with the dementia population is the genre of music used for intervention. For people with dementia, it is important to utilize familiar songs and melodies when creating therapeutic interventions. Research underlines the power of past associations. For example, if a song is linked to a patient's memory of a wedding day, a music therapist may have more success helping the patient stimulate their mind and connect with their emotions. Since determining musical preferences for a person with dementia can be challenging, it is recommended to consult with family members to find out what specific songs and genres the person enjoyed. However, the authors note that it cannot be assumed that familiar music is always the preferred music.

In addition to these considerations, the research presented here suggests the act of playing an instrument or singing along with a music therapist plays a tremendous role in improving quality of life and fostering personal expression. Activities mentioned in the text include utilizing percussion instruments, such as maracas, drums, or tambourines, and group sing-alongs in which individuals play music along with the recorded or live music provided by the music therapist, social worker, or life enrichment specialist. These activities have been proven to stimulate brain cells and to support a healthy brain state.

Music creates a physical stimulus in all of us. From anecdotal cases provided in the text, the authors conclude that during the progression of dementia, motor responses to music can endure longer than responses to other stimuli, such as exercise. Music has been proven to assist older adults with dementia in regaining access to emotions through autobiographical memories. As a result, many music therapists have designed interventions that are both physically and emotionally engaging. One study assessed cognitive outcomes in older adults after completing an intervention of exercise accompanied by music for one hour per week over the course of a year. The results indicated participants who exercised with music displayed improvements in visuospatial and cognitive function. Interestingly, the effectiveness can be caused by the association between music and physical movement, which increases the motivation to move. Likewise, particularly with older adults, physical responses to music are often more enjoyable than exercise alone. Therefore, the benefits of exercise are easily combined with the enhanced mood of listening to music.

Synchronizing with music enhances motor, cognitive, and behavioral patterns in older adults. The book highlights that when movement happens as a response to music it is proven to increase the motor functioning of dementia patients. The patterns found in therapeutic music can be used to connect with the patient and subsequently give a sense of regulation and security, a phenomenon known as neural entrainment. Similarly, when synchronous rhythms are used in music therapy, it leads to increased awareness, along with verbal and nonverbal communication abilities. One music therapist referenced in the text notes using a simple rhythmic pattern on a drum to produce a calming effect on older adults with dementia.

This multi-disciplinary text defines what music therapy for dementia patients looks like, as well as how music therapy can transform the lives of older adults experiencing neurocognitive decline in settings ranging from assisted living facilities to home environments. In summary, the authors argue that music-based intervention for older adults with dementia involves creating conditions in which the person, stimulus, and environment align to facilitate forms of engagement. As a result, clinical outcomes, such as mood improvement, heightened sense of self, and stimulus of short and long-term memory, make music

therapy an appropriate intervention for older adults across practice settings. While there is growing public awareness of the positive effects of music therapy, healthcare professionals and social workers alike often struggle to integrate this knowledge with standard best practice interventions.

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Ezra Klein, *Why We're Polarized*. Avid Reader/Simon and Shuster (2020), 312 pages, \$28.00 (hardcover).

Dannagal Goldthwaite Young, *Irony and Outrage: The Polarized Landscape of Rage, Fear, and Laughter in the United States*. Oxford University Press (2020), 267 pages, \$27.95 (hardcover).

Marc Hetherington and Jonathan Weiler, *Prius or Pickup? How Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America's Great Divide*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (2018), 259 pages, \$28.00 (hardcover).

A couple years back as I was looking for some summer recreational reading, I spotted this book, *Prius or Pickup?*, thinking it would be a light-hearted and humorous romp through America's culture wars. Although the prose is very accessible, what I got instead was a serious treatise by two academic political scientists examining recent research on a much different and more important divide: specifically, a divide in the cultural world views held by our fellow Americans, as well as of many other nations. The consumer preferences in the title turn out to be real, but much more reflective of world views, as well as other symptomatic indicators. Written soon after the 2016 election, the book is focused much more on trying to understand the results of that election than on motor vehicle preferences. Yet, the correlations are statistically significant.

The key issue that demarcates the divide in world views these authors tease out and expand upon can be summarized as, how dangerous do you perceive the world to be? As the saying goes,