

## The Grieg Effect – On the Contextualized Effects of Music in Music Therapy

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### Abstract

In this essay I examine the group Upbeat's encounter with Grieg and his music and this story is used as an exemplar to illuminate themes of broader relevance concerning the role of music in music therapy. The contextual perspective taken is situated in relation to Wittgenstein's (1953/1967) discussion of meaning as use, De Nora's (2000) discussion of how various music(s) may afford certain things through appropriation, and Stige's (2002) discussion of health musicing. After a critical excursion to the discourse on the Mozart Effect and a brief discussion of various assumptions on the role of music in music therapy, the centrepiece of the essay is developed as the story of Upbeat's encounter with Grieg. This story is interpreted in relation to the involved interplay of human protomusicality, personal and cultural history, and in the concluding section of the essay the contextual perspective taken is substantiated through a summarized description of the proposed Grieg Effect as well as through a clarification of the concept of context itself.

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Music therapy is the prescribed use of music and related strategies, by a qualified therapist, to assist or motivate a person towards specific, non-musical goals. This process is used in order to restore, maintain, and improve emotional, physical, physiological, and spiritual health and well being. At the heart of music therapy is vibration. Veterans participated in music activities that focused on relieving pain perception. Many doctors and nurses could see the effect music had on their psychological and emotional state. Since then, colleges developed programs to train musicians how to use music for therapeutic purposes. In 1950 a professional organization was formed by a group of music therapists that worked with veterans, mentally retarded, and the hearing and visually impaired.