

## Elusive Kodály, Part I: Searching for Hungarian Influences in US Preschool Music Education

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**Abstract:** This paper is the first part of two articles exploring whether and how Hungarian music pedagogues have influenced early childhood music education in the United States. Using less-known publications and archived materials, this study moves beyond the well-documented history of the Hungarian pedagogue, Zoltán Kodály's influence upon American general music education to focus on Kodály's early childhood concepts, which form the backbone of the Hungarian philosophy of music education. Through the lives and work of the Hungarian and American music educators, Katinka Dániel, Katalin Forrai, Sister Lorna Zemke and Betsy Moll, I delineate a pedigree of distinguished female Kodály protégés professing a passion for Hungarian early childhood music pedagogy that did not mainstream into US preschools. In words spoken by and about these scholar-educators, my research locates the systemic and cultural factors contributing to the challenge of implementing Hungarian musical ideas in US preschools. To round out a description of the elusive Kodály influence on US early childhood music, this analysis also draws upon my own Los Angeles experience in searching for a quality Kodály education for my young toddlers.

**Keywords:** *Zoltán Kodály, Kodály scholarship, early childhood pedagogy, US preschool music education, Katinka Dániel, Katalin Forrai, Lorna Zemke, Betsy Moll, Hungarian American music history, systemic preschool reform, baby-toddler music industry*

**Biography:** Angela A. Chong (née Wu) is a D.M.A. student at USC Thornton School of Music in Music Teaching and Learning. She was a 2001/2002 U.S. Fulbright Scholar to Hungary, where she attended the Kodály Intézet in Kecskemét and performed a piano concert of Kodály, Bartók, and Liszt across Hungary and in Berlin. She has received numerous awards on the piano and violin, including First Prize at the Los Angeles Liszt Competition. Chong has a B.A. in Religion and Government and a J.D. from Harvard. She practices law in Los Angeles and teaches her five- and six-year-old children music using innovative Kodály-based pedagogies. [aachong@usc.edu](mailto:aachong@usc.edu)

In Hungary, pedagogue and public figure, Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967), is best known for his conceptualization of a music education approach which has been replicated around the world, including the United States. Fundamentals of the Kodály concept of music education include: (1) a belief that it is possible for every child to sing beautifully; (2) that children learn to sing best using relative solmization; (3) and that folk music is the basis of high-quality musical material for children (OAKE and Liszt Academy websites). I first encountered the Kodály approach as a



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twenty-year-old fresh out of college and traveling on a U.S. Fulbright scholarship to Hungary. During my Fulbright, I was placed at the Kodály Intézet ['Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music'] in Kecskemét, Hungary. What I really wanted at the time was to spend a year abroad studying the piano, but what I learned over the course of my year in Kecskemét was that one does not simply study the piano in Hungary. Rather, as toddlers all children begin the serious study of music in their publicly-funded preschool. Through adulthood, their music lessons are sequentially built upon this early experience of singing and movement that was founded on the principles of Kodály. Even through many political changes since the fall of communism, universal Kodály-based preschool music has remained a constant in Hungary. I therefore had quite a bit of catching up to do, and spent most of my energy during my year at the Kodály Intézet trying to master solfège, whose basics I had never learned as a child. In my own US public school education, the Kodály Concept did not appear in any systematic fashion. During my year in Kecskemét, I became aware of pockets of Kodály excellence in the US, as represented by classmates from institutions with long-standing relationships at the Kodály Intézet, such as Capital University in Ohio and Indiana University. These classmates would eventually establish careers teaching according to the Kodály Concept at the US elementary and secondary school levels.

Fifteen years later, after having my own children, I began a search for Kodály-based preschool instruction, which led me to become keenly aware of its general absence in the US. My son and daughter entered preschool in the Los Angeles area, where I was taken aback by the poor quality of their music instruction. The one song they sang together every day from age one-and-a-half to three was an original ABC song that repeated the exact same four short melodic lines thirteen times until the end of the alphabet. I could hardly believe the young children were able to stay awake, let alone attentive, while singing such a song. One day I hid behind the preschool door to spy on my daughter and observed the preschool teacher singing the ABC song with a level of boredom in her demeanor and tone that made me feel very sorry for everyone in the room. After class was over, the teacher explained to me that this song is "excellent for phonics," precisely because of its dull repetition of letter sounds. While I accepted the ABC song's value in promoting toddler literacy, I found its unimaginative musical construction and the complete lack of joy in the teacher's rendering of it to be detrimental to my children's musical development. I contrasted my own children's preschool musical experience with my memories of the very youngest schoolchildren I observed in Hungary singing lively Hungarian children's songs while laughing and learning rhythm and improvisation through movement games. I began to ask: Were there any local preschools that offered Kodály-based instruction? Were there any preschool music instructors in the area trained in Kodály?

After scouring the internet for "Kodály-based classes near me," I was left with the impression that no opportunity for Kodály instruction existed for my children prior to elementary school age. As a result of this initial obstacle, my search for the elusive Kodály began in earnest. After years of research, I would find that it was true: no Kodály-based preschool instruction was available for my children here in Southern California. My research took an academic turn as I discovered that many US music educators with a passion for Kodály-based preschool education had in the past turned their attention away from the early childhood principles that form the foundation of the Kodály approach. I looked to historical sources to understand why. This inquiry revealed a rich body of knowledge that inspired me to write two separate papers, which I have the privilege of sharing as a two-part series on "Elusive Kodály." This paper, Part One, explores the history of four female scholar-educator pioneers who developed a passion for

Kodály-based early childhood concepts and factors pressuring them to place preschool music in the periphery of their work in the US. Part Two traces historical US interest in Kodály early childhood concepts to the flourishing genre of private, stand-alone baby-toddler music classes that have become a lucrative industry in the US today.

The Kodály approach entered the US music education scene in the late 1960's. So many people deserve credit for bringing Kodály's vision to the United States that it would be difficult to document them all in this paper. Most of them were Americans who studied Kodály's teachings under the mentorship of Hungarians in both Hungary and the US. Among the Hungarians influential upon the US adoption of Kodály-based early childhood music education, two stand out: Katinka Dániel and Katalin Forrai. Katinka Dániel (1913-2010) is often referred to as a "Founding Mother" of the Kodály Concept in the US (Jeri Bonnin 1999; 2003: 48). Dániel was a protégé of Kodály and his pupil and colleague Jenő Ádám (1896-1982) who systematized the Kodály Concept in Hungary. For the ten years spanning 1949-59, Dániel's husband, the pianist Ernő Dániel, was advised not to return to Hungary from his concert tour in the US due to mounting political hostilities between the US and the Soviet-backed state socialist regime in Hungary (Bonnin 2003: 38-9; 2005: 50-2). Alone in the US and exiled from his home, Ernő could not openly communicate with his wife, Katinka, and two children who remained in Hungary. During this time, Katinka Dániel continued studying, teaching, and working in Budapest with Kodály and Ádám while raising her two children as a single mother. The political situation in Hungary created additional stressors that she was somehow able to overcome; for example, she was arrested and jailed several times on false allegations that she was a spy because her husband was in the US, but one of these times, she convinced her jailers to release her by telling them that a large number of children were depending on her to conduct their children's choir concert that evening (Bonnin 2001; 2003: 39; 2005: 51-2). In 1960, the government permitted her to leave the country with her own children and to reunite with Ernő in the US. Quickly gaining a US reputation for her impressive skill in musical instruction, she was hired as a professor to teach the Kodály Concept at UCLA (1961) and USC (1976) (Bonnin 2003: 39-43, 61-2).

From 1962-1979, Dániel piloted the first US adaptation of the Hungarian Kodály K-6 curriculum sequence by Ádám at the San Roque Church near her home in Santa Barbara, California. At San Roque, she mentored and worked alongside Sister Lorna Zemke, an American music educator who later became an influential Kodály scholar at Silver Lake College in Wisconsin (also known as Holy Family College, permanently closed in 2020 due to Covid-19). Reliant upon folksongs of American, Native, Hispanic, and Asian origin, Dániel's adaptation of the Kodály Concept to the US elementary education system was approved by Kodály during his visit to California in 1966. During the forty-year period from 1960 to 2000, Dániel gave hundreds of workshops on Kodály across North America and was a pioneering figure in the widespread integration of the Kodály Concept into US grade school music education (Bonnin 2003: 43-9). Her classic publication, *Kodály in Kindergarten* (1981), serves the dual function of documenting her US adaptation of the Kodály Concept and guiding US kindergarten teachers in Kodály lesson-planning. It is important to note that Dániel's adaptation of Kodály did not apply to children younger than US kindergarten age, and her use of the word, "kindergarten," refers to the US form of kindergarten, universally available for children five to six years old as the first year of mandatory elementary education (not the "kindergarten" commonly used to describe Hungarian public *óvoda* for children three to six years old).

Dániel dedicated her book to her four grandchildren and "to my good friend, Kati Forrai, Kindergarten [Hungarian *óvoda*] master teacher of Budapest, Hungary" (Dániel 1981: v). Katalin Forrai (1926-2004) is considered the founder of the field of early childhood music education around the world (Betsy Moll 2013). Like Dániel, Forrai was a protégé of Kodály who encouraged her to research, write about, and teach Hungarian teachers developmentally appropriate music education in both the *bölcsőde* ['crèche for children from birth to three years old'] and *óvoda* ['commonly translated as kindergarten, but the equivalent of state-run preschool for children three to six years old'] (Moll 2013; see also Phyllis Entin 1990: 2-3 for explanation of "developmentally appropriate programs"). A highly accomplished scholar-practitioner, Forrai taught music to toddlers at the Csobanc Street *Óvoda* in Budapest for over fifty years starting in 1948 (Lenore Bateman 1997). In a Hungarian system that includes three years of paid maternity leave, the universally available *bölcsőde*, and mandatory public *óvoda*, early childhood music education is publicly and universally available from the time a child is born (András Gábos 2017). Forrai worked with Kodály to systematize early childhood music education in the *bölcsőde* and *óvoda* across Hungary (Moll 2013). Their collaboration resulted in Forrai's classic publications, *Ének az óvodában* ['Singing in the *Óvoda*' translated into English by Jean Sinor of Indiana University as *Music in Preschool*, including over one-hundred rhymes and singing games of Anglo heritage to use in a US classroom] and *Ének a bölcsődében* ['Singing in the *Bölcsőde*,' available in Hungarian only]. Later in her career, she traveled around the world including the US, and worked with early childhood music educators to adapt her Kodály-based early childhood music education approach to their own culture's folk music, rhymes, and language (Moll 2013; Bateman 1997). According to Forrai, three basic elements of a Kodály-based early childhood education include: (1) simple singing games (preferably pentatonic songs within a six-note range, as well as traditional rhymes); (2) high-quality composed songs in folk idiom; and (3) simple, beautiful lyrics in the children's mother tongue (Forrai 1994; Forrai, Jean Sinor 1998).

I should make note of the critical importance of early childhood to Kodály's approach. Forrai begins the *Bevezető* ['Introduction'] to her book, *Ének a bölcsődében*, with a quote from Kodály (all translations of *Ének a bölcsődében* are my own, with valuable assistance from Erika Sólyom): "To the question of when to begin a child's music education, I gave the following answer: Nine months before the birth of the child. At first, they took this for a joke, but later they realized I was right. The mother not only gives her body to the children, but also builds their souls out of her own [*Arra a kérdésre, hogy mikor kezdődjék a gyermek zenei nevelése, azt találtam felelni: kilenc hónappal a születése előtt. Első percben tréfára vették, de később igazat adtak. Az anya nemcsak a testét adja a gyermekének, lelkét is magából építi fel*] (Forrai 1994: *Bevezető*, quoting Zoltán Kodály 1951).

I definitely followed Kodály's advice with my own children by singing and playing music for them while they were still in my womb. For Kodály, this was not the practice that is so commonly encouraged in the US as a means of developing the baby's brain; instead, for Kodály, the primary purpose was to mold and shape the child's soul from the mother's own. I cannot say that the American obsession with baby Einsteins did not in some small way influence my decision to begin my children's music education in the womb – I am, after all, American. I was, however, familiar from my time in Hungary with Kodály's philosophy that exposure to music is one of the most valuable forms of spiritual education, and it was important to me that my children's souls begin their journey in this world musically enriched. Forrai adds flesh to this

rather vague concept in her Introduction to *Ének a bölcsődében*, by succinctly summarizing the long-term vision underlying the Kodály early childhood approach:

This book was created for caregivers in the crèches. But it gives help to those parents who are raising their children at home and also to those who wish to strengthen and supplement the impact of crèche music education. Together, the family and the crèche can do a lot to arouse the musical interest of the little ones at this receptive age, to create joy for them through the singing games, and to awaken their desire to imitate and to sing together. This joint influence prepares and lays the foundation for music education; contributing in such a way that the little ones – who will be fathers and mothers in the future – become adults who are receptive to music appreciation and who pass along the playful mood, humor, intimate atmosphere, and joy of singing later to their own children.

*[Ez a könyv a bölcsődék számára, gondozónőknek készült. De segítséget ad azoknak a szülőknek, akik gyermeküket otthon nevelik és azoknak is, akik a bölcsőde zenei nevelőhatását megerősíteni, kiegészíteni kívánják. A család és a bölcsőde együtt sokat tehet annak érdekében, hogy e fogékony korban a kicsinyek zenei érdeklődését felkeltse, az énekes játékokkal örömet szerezzen és kedvet ébresszen az utánzásra, együtt énekelgetésre. Ez a közös hatás előkészíti, megalapozza a zenei nevelést; hozzájárul ahhoz, hogy a kicsinyek – akik a jövőben apák és anyák lesznek – a zene hallgatására fogékony felnőtté váljanak, és a játékos kedvet, humort, bensőséges hangulatot, az éneklés örömeit majd saját gyermekeiknek is továbbadják] (Forrai 1994: Bevezető).*

It is a shame that this book is not translated into English, as it provides such a rich and persuasive description of how to set the early childhood foundation for generations of joyful music-making. US audiences, too, could benefit greatly. There is no English-language equivalent that lays out a Kodály-based plan for the critical years of toddlerhood in our children's journey to become human beings with well-developed souls.

Scant literature exists on Kodály-based preschool music education in the US apart from Jean Sinor's Forrai-translation, *Music in Preschool* (1998) and a section of Dániel-protégé Lois Choksy's book, *The Kodály Method* (3rd ed. 1999) recommending a sequence of lessons for North American children ages three to five. The music educators trade journal, *Kodály Envoy*, includes few articles on topic, and, in any case, this journal is not easily accessible to the wider population. Most of the publicly available literature on Kodály in the US relates to grade school education starting at the US kindergarten level. Building upon Dániel's *Kodály in Kindergarten* (1981), one comprehensive book entitled *Kodály in the Kindergarten Classroom* has since been published by US educators Micheál Houlahan and Philip Tacka (2015), and the literature becomes more plentiful as the grade levels increase.

One academic island of Kodály-based preschool innovation appears in the US through the work and teaching of Sister Lorna Zemke, although her workshop did not produce much published literature. As was mentioned above, Zemke mentored with Katinka Dániel at San Roque School in Santa Barbara and went on to earn her master's and doctorate at the University of Southern California researching Kodály education (Zemke 1968; 1973). Her theses focused on the Kodály Concept in US grade school. Later, she became a professor at the former Silver Lake/Holy Family College in Wisconsin where she supervised the research of master's students, a few of whom wrote theses on Kodály-based preschool education in the US which were unfortunately not published. As of 2021, Zemke and her library of Kodály-related documents, including a collection belonging to Katinka and Ernő Dániel, as well as unpublished theses from

Silver Lake/Holy Family, have moved to Lakeland University in Plymouth, Wisconsin. Zemke developed a Kodály-based curriculum for expectant parents, which was published as *LoveNotes: Music for the Unborn Child* (1989). She also published a DVD with her protégé John Feierabend (also now a professor at Lakeland University as of 2021) called *Musical Motivators in Early Childhood* (2005), which discusses musical engagement with children from birth to age five. Yet she does not appear to have published any articles or books on Kodály preschool education in the US, even though early childhood education became her notable area of expertise during her tenure at Silver Lake.

After reviewing these documents, I found that the few publications available on Kodály-based US preschool instruction appear to be aspirational – in other words, they involve theoretical application of Kodály principles and lesson-planning at the preschool level in a US setting and do not document evidence of formal Kodály preschool instruction in the US. There are several empirical studies of US preschool music education programs but none of them mention whether Kodály is used in the participating preschool classrooms (Rachel Nardo *et al* 2006). This circumstance might lead one to believe that Kodály instruction in US preschools does not exist, but this is probably not true. Rather, there is simply not enough literature to confirm what does exist, and what may exist is not likely systematic. This begs the question of what became of the US educators in Forrai's many workshops on Kodály-based preschool teaching. Weren't there many US early childhood music educators eager to implement Forrai's teachings in their own preschool classrooms? In an interview from July 2020, Betsy Moll, a Fulbright scholar and the first US student to study Kodály in Hungary from 1967 to 1969, describes her passion for early childhood music education as having been inspired by her experience with Forrai at the Liszt Academy in Budapest (Megan Ankuda 2020). After three years of studying, observing, and teaching in Hungary, she returned to the US for graduate work at Indiana University and then began her thirty-year career as professor of music at Duquesne in Pittsburgh. While teaching musicianship classes at Duquesne, she also founded a Kodály-based preschool program in Pittsburgh (IKS Newsletter 2014). It was difficult for me to find further information about this preschool program – whether it was part of a formal preschool curriculum, or a stand-alone extracurricular course, or even its name and duration. I therefore e-mailed Moll, who kindly responded with the following:

I did not ever develop a thorough Kodály-based preschool program in Pittsburgh. During the 1970's, when my own three children were preschoolers, I did volunteer to teach music in their preschools. I developed a curriculum and taught at Temple Emanuel Preschool, and also for several years (I cannot tell you dates, but I estimate from 1974-1981), I taught at Southminster Presbyterian Church Preschool. I was also teaching classes in kindergarten (age 5-6) in the Mt. Lebanon Public School District and served as Music Consultant there until I began teaching at Duquesne University in 1981. From then on, I was teaching university students. While I was working at the preschools as a volunteer, I was invited to teach a teacher training program in music for preschool teachers (non-musicians), at the library in Squirrel Hill, PA. It was a six-week training course (Moll 2022).

Moll's significant contributions to Kodály preschool music in Pittsburgh from 1974 to 1981 warrant further research and documentation. Surely there have been at least a few more Kodály-based preschool programs offered in the US over the years since Dániel arrived and Moll met Forrai, but documentation is virtually non-existent. This gap in the literature requires further attention, to document Kodály-based preschool programs such as Betsy Moll's in Pittsburgh that

may have existed historically in the US. While Kodály instruction has become well established and documented in US grade schools, its status in US preschool education is largely uncertain.

One possible explanation for the silence on US preschool use of Kodály is that music-education and policy-making organizations in the US may have directed educators' energy primarily toward grade school music education as a priority, rather than preschool. Shortly after her return to the US in 1969, Betsy Moll – along with Katinka Dániel and other educators mentioned above – became a founding member of the International Kodály Society (IKS), the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE), and OAKE's journal called *Kodály Envoy* (trade journal with limited access mentioned above) whose founding mission was to connect educators across the US independently teaching Kodály (Ankuda 2020). These organizations, along with several US-based Kodály teacher training organizations, and the Kodály Intézet founded in Kodály's hometown of Kecskemét, Hungary in 1975, spearheaded a US and worldwide Kodály movement focused on grade school music education. While Moll professed a passion for early childhood music education in particular, the fruits of her career have been described in the US in terms of her work more broadly promoting Kodály through the organizations she helped found. In 2014, Moll received the distinguished *Pro Cultura Hungarica* award from the Hungarian State. To explain her lifetime of achievements leading up to her award, her hometown newspaper, *Daily News* (2014) in Greensburg, Indiana, primarily referenced her "fostering of higher standards for American music education...[serving as] a founding member of the International Kodaly Society, the organization of American Kodaly Educators (serving as president from 1990 to 1992), and...founding co-editor of the Kodaly Envoy, journal of the Organization of American Kodaly Educators." The newspaper made a side note of her recent documentation and cataloguing of the professional papers and legacy of Katalin Forrai at the Kodály Intézet Archives as "one of McLaughlin-Moll's loves." It was a project she engaged in outside of any of her professional affiliations.

At the very end of the article, as an afterthought, the newspaper mentioned that she had co-founded the International Katalin Forrai Award presented to outstanding teachers of early childhood music throughout the world. In contrast with the *Daily News* release, a Hungarian press release regarding Moll's *Pro Cultura Hungarica* Award does not mention IKS, OAKE or *Kodály Envoy*, but rather focuses squarely on her *elévülhetetlen érdeme* ['inexhaustible merit'] for archiving the Katalin Forrai Papers and co-founding the International Katalin Forrai Award (Kormányportál 2014). Likely since the Hungarian press release was written by the government body that conferred the award upon Moll, her work promoting Forrai's Kodály-based preschool music education concept is a much more central reason for her selection for this award than any of the work she did in the US promoting Kodály more generally. This discrepancy highlights a cultural difference between the US and Hungary in the priority placed upon grade school versus preschool music education and the power of US organizations to shape educators' teaching and research priorities in a manner that leaves preschool music education in the periphery.

A history of the International Katalin Forrai Award co-founded by Moll, for which she was recognized by *Pro Cultura Hungarica*, reinforces the unique absence of systematic Kodály-based preschool education in the US. The Award was established to recognize outstanding Kodály early childhood educators around the world. Moll has been on the selection board of the Award since its inception in 2011. To date, it has been presented to only one US educator, Dr. Lorna Zemke. All the other recipients have been from other countries. As mentioned earlier, Zemke is known as an expert in Kodály early childhood education, but her academic publications on the topic are not extensive. She has published and taught more widely on Kodály

education starting in grade school (Zemke 1968; 1973; 1976; 1977; 1983). What stands out about Zemke's commitment to Kodály in early childhood is her prototype development of private group classes and curricula for expectant parents, babies and toddlers in several communities in northeast Wisconsin. In 1984, Zemke founded Music for Tots, a Kodály-based program structured developmentally for children from birth to age five based in singing, simple children's singing-games, and folk songs and offered continuously for thirty-seven years. In addition, Zemke published her Kodály-based LoveNotes prenatal music curriculum in 1989 (see publication by the same name described earlier as part of Zemke's work and teaching at the preschool level). Since then, the LoveNotes curriculum has been used by private instructors across the US and around the world, and it appears that Zemke herself has also taught expectant parents a five-week LoveNotes course from time to time. Although these courses are not advertised as "Kodály instruction," given Zemke's lifetime commitment to the promotion of Kodály, there can be no doubt of their Hungarian influence. LoveNotes recalls Kodály's principle that the best time to begin a child's music instruction is nine months before the child is born (Kodály 1951).

As the keynote speaker at an OAKE National Conference, Zemke encouraged educators to "explore other dimensions of teaching music to children and adults through the Kodály concept...we need to explore differing creative and innovative ways or delivery systems to impart that knowledge and love of music to children and adults" (2002). The Silver Lake College press release announcing Zemke's LoveNotes course offering in 2010 echoes Zemke's OAKE comments regarding the need for innovative methods to communicate love through Kodály: "[T]he classes are not designed to develop 'Little Mozarts,' but are meant to enrich the life of the unborn child.... The five-week course is a small investment of time to teach pregnant parents how to use the language of music to communicate love and reassurance to their unborn child." It is a formidable achievement very much worthy of the Forrai Award that Zemke has sustained her Kodály early childhood prototypes for over thirty years in the face of a US music education culture that appears not to prioritize preschool musical experiences. Her decision to promote her Kodály-based early childhood work through private stand-alone courses and curricula is perhaps representative of the localized, piecemeal nature of preschool music instruction in the US.

There may be a variety of reasons why these US scholar-educators who were passionate about Kodály early childhood pedagogy ended up devoting much of their professional energy to grade school rather than preschool music education. There is evidence to support that Katinka Dániel and other Hungarian proponents of the Kodály approach in the US hand-chose grade school education as a focus for Kodály-based research during the 1960's and 1970's to strengthen the case for US adoption of the Kodály approach. These advocates likely found a soft entry-point in US grade school classrooms, where music was already being taught in a somewhat systematic fashion. In a recent podcast interview with Feierabend protégé Missy Strong, Dr. Zemke indicates that her USC doctoral thesis research topic – fourth-grade Kodály instruction – was carefully curated by Dániel and a group of other Hungarian mentors close to Kodály. Zemke shared with Strong that upon hearing about Zemke's acceptance into USC graduate school, Dániel lovingly commanded: "You will write about Kodály."

Zemke's dissertation was the very first major academic work in the US on Kodály, using over two hundred sources in the Hungarian language that Zemke collected during her six months studying in Budapest; Dániel then translated these sources for Zemke during her dissertation writing process in Santa Barbara (Strong 2019). According to Zemke: "I was told, though I have never verified it, that this dissertation was the first in English completed totally on Kodály and



his music system" (Lynnda Fuller 2005: 43). Her 1973 thesis, entitled, "The Kodály Method and a Comparison of the Effects of a Kodály-Adapted Music Instruction Sequence and a More Typical Sequence on Auditory Musical Achievement in Fourth-Grade Students," featured testing orchestrated in part by Dániel using Zemke's own fourth-grade students as subjects (Bonnin 2003: 49). Dániel noted in a personal interview that she had already received numerous requests from US music teachers for materials on Kodály's approach prior to Zemke's completion of her dissertation (Bonnin 1999). It appears that these requests were met starting in 1973 with copies of Zemke's completed dissertation, until the time that Zemke was able to extract and organize portions of her dissertation into two publications widely distributed around the US (Strong 1999; Zemke 1977: vii). The first publication contained practical lesson plans, and the second described the history, philosophy, and development of Kodály (Zemke 1976; 1977). To angle most effectively for US implementation of the Hungarian approach, Dániel and other Hungarian advocates may very well have engineered the introduction of Kodály's concepts at the US grade school level through Zemke's research and writing.

My first reaction to the idea that Kodály advocates in the US strategically favored a grade school versus preschool approach was personal disappointment. It has been years since I began searching for a decent preschool music program for my toddlers and I have now resorted to teaching them music myself at home. We enjoy ourselves sometimes, but at other times I wish we had a Katalin Forrai teaching at our own Csobánc Street preschool so that I could send them away to a master teacher who would infuse them with a full program of Kodály instruction each day. When I take a step back to look at the situation in the US more broadly, however, I feel hopeful that pioneers like Dániel and Zemke successfully gained a foothold in the US education system fifty years ago. It is particularly hopeful that US music educators recognized the value of not only practical lesson plans, but also Kodály's philosophy as published in Zemke's works. Deeply embedded within Kodály's philosophy is the critical foundation of early childhood. A commitment to Kodály's philosophy is a necessary first step to more systemic advocacy. I am heartened by a reminder that the absence of research on Kodály-based preschool instruction in the US is not necessarily reflective of a lack of interest, since music education appears to be a discipline emphasizing teaching more than research. I am grateful to music education scholar, Beatriz Ilari, for suggesting that I look at how US teacher training may be a key component in evaluating the possibility of a US preschool music education system commensurate with the Hungarian. To add fuel to my optimistic outlook, my kids are graduating from toddlerhood soon, with grade-school Kodály instruction just around the corner. I believe there is reason for hope that the state of US preschool music instruction can improve.

Betsy Moll, on the other hand, appears to have doubts. She observes that it is not simply the lack of systematic preschool music instruction that has made Kodály-based preschool experiences difficult to find in the US, but also the absence of systematic preschool in the US overall. In a memorial speech given in Hungary at the passing of Katalin Forrai, Moll contrasted the absence of nationally organized or supported early childhood education in the US with the Hungarian system of carefully constructed and generously funded public preschools. Moll's speech, entitled, "Inspirations from Hungary: A Tiszta Forras-bol" (2005), honored Forrai as her beloved mentor by sharing what she learned from Forrai and from Hungary during her formative first visit from 1967 to 1969. As Moll writes,

I am certain that you all are aware that Hungary is and has been a leader in the world in early childhood education for decades – not only in pre-school music. When I arrived in Hungary in 1967, there was no nationally organized or supported early childhood education system in the United States at all. *There still is none!!* Working parents were and still are left to find adequate – let alone exemplary – childcare for infants and young children.... I do not need to dwell on the often dismal conditions of American daycare centers for children today. It is enough to say that I found the *reverence* for the care of young children in Hungary to be wonder-filled. It speaks to the cultural value system in your country: that children in the cradle nurseries and kindergartens are cared for with such attentive and careful concern – not only for their health and well-being, but also for their educational and aesthetic development (Moll 2005: 25-6).

Moll called Hungary her “well-spring” [*‘tisza forrás’*] with special attention given to the “reverence” for young children she observed there. Without nationally organized or supported preschool in the US and given a general lack of reverence for formal US early childhood care, music educators with a passion for Kodály-based early childhood music instruction might naturally look outside formal childcare institutions for fertile ground. Rather than trying to plant systematic Kodály-based early childhood instruction within the “dismal conditions” of US daycares, perhaps these educators have found alternative US-based well-springs of their own. In the tradition of Zemke’s private, stand-alone baby-toddler courses, a burgeoning baby-toddler music industry has since developed in the US where early childhood educators might find more traction for Kodály-inspired teaching. Moll’s pessimism about the state of US preschool education after her more than forty years at the forefront of US Kodály teaching and scholarship suggests that more substantial research investment in this alternative private industry may be valuable.

I did not give up on my search for the elusive Kodály in US preschool music education in spite of the evidence that such instruction did not exist in any systematic fashion. Rather, I changed my focus and began to find bits and pieces of Hungarian influence within the flourishing private baby-toddler music industry in Los Angeles area. I found elements of the Kodály Concept in these private classes that were not attributed to Kodály. I also found widely attributed, highly lucrative baby-toddler music approaches named after American men not known as Kodály protégés but very much influenced by Kodály. Hence, my search for the elusive Kodály continues – and ends fruitfully – in Part TWO focused on the US baby-toddler music industry. I am honored to have shared these stories of four remarkable female pioneers of Kodály early childhood education – Katinka Dániel, Katalin Forrai, Betsy Moll, and Lorna Zemke. My hope is that what I have written might make a small contribution to their grand legacies by inspiring further scholarship and advocacy for systematic US preschool music education at a Hungarian level of excellence.

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