

# Musicology and Undergraduate Teaching\*

## Introductory Remarks

ANNE DHU SHAPIRO

AS THE COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY BOARD MEMBER FOR MUSICOLOGY and a long-time member of the American Musicological Society, I was pleased to chair the joint CMS/AMS session on Musicology and Undergraduate Teaching at the 1987 Annual Meeting, a session that bore fruit in the essays printed here.

From what I have gathered as a Board member, The College Music Society is an organization devoted to examining how the various musical disciplines contribute to the educational environment of departments and schools of music. In that context, musicologists are often perceived by others in the music profession as being off in an ivory tower, with little that is practical to offer to those environments. I know that this is not necessarily the case, and I am sure that these essays will help dispel the negative image.

The object of the session was to explore the problem of how musicology as a discipline has an impact on the undergraduate curriculum. Musicology is taught at the graduate level; yet most of us teach undergraduates as well. The question is: does our research influence our teaching?

I invited submissions from four who are well-respected musicologists and who are known as good undergraduate teachers. What I asked from each participant was a short statement about an area of musicological research that has made its way into some aspect of undergraduate teaching and how it works. They gracefully arranged to cover the gamut from non-major introductory courses to those aimed at performers, theorists, and composers, as well as music history majors.

James Hepokoski received his Ph.D. at Harvard University, and has published widely on both Verdi and Debussy, including books for Cambridge University Press on Verdi's *Falstaff* and *Otello*. From 1978 to 1988 he was Professor of Musicology at Oberlin College Conservatory, where he taught courses in nineteenth- and twentieth-century music, both in the form of semester-long surveys for sophomores and juniors and more advanced courses on individual composers or genres (he has now moved to the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities). His essay addresses especially those courses aimed at students who are pursuing some sort of career in music—conservatory students and serious music majors.

Kenneth Levy, Professor of Music at Princeton University, is deservedly renowned both as a medievalist and as a teacher of one of the famous undergraduate courses for non-majors. Out of this teaching has come his textbook *Music: A Listener's*

\*The four essays presented here are partial revisions of papers read at a joint session of The College Music Society and the American Musicological Society, held at their 1987 annual meetings in New Orleans.

*Introduction.* His essay takes a somewhat different tack on the usefulness of musicology in dealing with a much broader population of students.

Margaret Murata, Professor of Music at the University of California, Irvine, is a specialist in Roman Baroque opera and cantata, with a book published by UMI Research Press, *Operas for the Papal Court, 1631-1669*. She teaches in a department that is largely performance-oriented, offering the Bachelor of Arts degree, the Bachelor of Music, and the Master of Fine Arts in performance. She speaks of her special concerns for non-major interdisciplinary courses and new ways of organizing them, as well as relationships between musicologists and studio teachers.

Katherine T. Rohrer is in a sense one of the products of the teaching of another member of the panel. She received her Ph.D. at Princeton and had her first teaching experience in 1976 as a preceptor in Kenneth Levy's introductory course. Between 1986 and 1988 she was director of the music appreciation course at Columbia University, heading a staff of forty faculty members and graduate students. She is now Director of Studies at Wilson College of Princeton University. Her musicological research deals with seventeenth-century England; she is writing a book for Princeton University Press about the linguistic basis of Henry Purcell's text-setting techniques.

## “Music History” as a Set of Problems: “Musicology” for Undergraduate Music Majors

JAMES A. HEPOKOSKI

ONE OF THE GENERAL QUESTIONS facing this panel is: “How does one’s research influence one’s teaching?” In the best of educational worlds, one should be surprised that this is a controversial matter at all. In principle, there should be no sharp division between research and teaching, for ideally one brings similar attitudes and the same kinds of critical thinking to both. But in the real world what probably comes to mind as the sticking point of this question is the issue of data selection: whether the information gathered by specific, highly specialized research can be imported in unfiltered fashion into the undergraduate classroom.

My own field of research, for example, is nineteenth-century Italian opera, and I must admit that most of the specific results of my work were not reported in my Nineteenth-Century Survey course for Oberlin Conservatory sophomores and juniors. One simply does not find much occasion—or desire—to reveal that “There is a provocative detail to be found on fol. 76<sup>v</sup> of the *Otello* manuscript,” or to wax eloquent about the allure of sketch-study or musical revisions to students who are sometimes not deeply familiar with either the composer or the piece in question. And, clearly, this is to be expected: these things are specialized concerns, of interest mainly to those who are already acquainted with the fundamentals and are now prepared to grapple with and savor the details of individual compositions.

The looming problem, then, is this: in what sense can knowledge of the specialized inform our teaching of the general? And that is a far larger question. Much more important than this matter of “my research” is a sense of the whole enterprise—“everyone’s research”. Much more important than the issue of which “facts” are to be transmitted is the question of attitude—the manner in which one approaches an evolving body of knowledge at the undergraduate level. My preferred solution to this problem of the specialized and the general pivots on this cardinal point of attitude. That is, although one does not often engage specialized intricacies in lower-level courses, one must nevertheless sensitize students to the existence and the texture of the “higher” musicological enterprise that they might wish to touch more directly one day. If musicology is not always taught *per se*, it should at least be referred to frequently, “invoked,” much as one might invoke the Calculus (as a kind of mathematical promised land) to those students beginning Algebra I.

Now again—and more specifically—each year at Oberlin I taught two semester-surveys for Conservatory students: courses in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. And as I reflected on this “foretaste-of-musicology” concept (which has apparently been a tacit assumption of mine for some time), I developed a set of four principles—mostly articulations of common problems to avoid, as it turns out. Each principle is informed by and directly related to the concerns of one’s own musicological research. Each invites the classroom teacher to make frequent reference to that wider world of musicology, in order to help the students sense some of the excitement and sheer contentiousness of the discipline.

The first suggestion is: *Do not teach material or employ methodologies that will have to be discarded at a higher level of interest or expertise.* This is difficult counsel – perhaps impossible counsel – to follow, but it drives to the heart of the matter. At the most general levels we may not be able to use sketch-study, or sophisticated literary-critical or philosophical argumentation, or full-blown Schenkerian analysis or other new twentieth-century analytical techniques, but we can – and should – present our materials in a way that is at least congruent with these things. We should try to introduce some of the flavor of the higher modes of thought, and to do so in such a way that students coming to these topics full-strength later will experience not something totally new but a sense of recognition. This applies particularly to theoretical approaches to music. The simplest example that I could come up with along these lines – a perhaps too simple example – is the inevitable discussion of the “*Petrushka* chord” or the typical *Rite of Spring* harmonies. For the past decade or two many prominent theoretical discussions (by now commonly known) have been casting doubt on unqualified or unelaborated “bitonal” or “polytonal” interpretations of these sounds. Taken at mere face value, bitonality and polytonality are things that students will have to qualify radically, or even “un-learn,” if they ever begin to deal seriously, for example, with octatonicism and octatonic-diatonic interactions, or other provocative new approaches to Stravinsky. But the “newer” concepts (and their surrounding controversies) can be presented, or at least introduced in some way, at the earliest levels, even if they cannot be expanded in full detail. Anticipatory nods can be made in their direction. The same thing applies to all such topics that are currently central concerns of musicological thought, such as the problems endemic to the Schubertian practice of employing double secondary tonalities (or “three-key expositions”) within the first portions of his sonata forms, or the issues and implications surrounding Brahmsian “developing variation,” or Carl Dahlhaus’s paradigms of the driving aesthetic forces in music over the past four or five centuries. Even in relatively introductory classes one can touch upon the Schenkerian concept of sonata form (at least some issues can be introduced in an elementary format, with simplified diagrams), or the possibility of what have been called double-tonic complexes in the works of Wagner and Mahler, or the much misunderstood basic nineteenth-century Italian operatic structures, and so on. Clearly, no single teacher can become acquainted with all higher levels of all subjects. But the idea remains as a goal. Thus, to restate the first principle: “Even though the highest levels of thought cannot be presented fully unfurled in class, be sensitive to and aware of how these levels are currently treating the topic at hand.”

The second principle: *Avoid conveying an image of “Music History” as a static, settled body of data. Rather, include provocative new discoveries, recent controversies, quarrels about values and methods of inquiry, and so forth.* Musicology, I think, teaches us a valuable lesson. Knowledge and “facts” are tenuous things. They are subject to revisions and turns of fashion, challenges, and changes. Accordingly, we should “let students in” on some of the more spectacular or controversial issues – precisely to stress this notion of a live and growing body of knowledge, few portions of which can be assumed to be immutable and protected from reinterpretation. I suppose that the “hidden program” of the *Lyric Suite* is now commonly mentioned in classrooms, but how about the most recent theories of Schumannesque or Wagnerian “narrative” or “symphonic”

structures? And the point is to mention names: who discovered or proposed what, and when? Or: "Prior to the work of [Mr. or Ms. X] it was thought that . . . . But now, however, . . ." and so on. Students respond to controversy and to things that are not settled, that leave room for their own thought. The second principle urges us to conceive the undergraduate classroom as an introduction to a set of problems—problems considered within a content-rich, "fact-rich" environment. The guiding maxim is, if possible, to avoid giving the impression that one is passing on uninterpreted data or inert facts (the "telephone-book" approach to music history), for the truth is that no information is ever conveyed "neutrally," liberated from the axioms underlying its selection. Rather, one should strive to "expose" these underlying axioms (in however friendly a manner—it need not be hostile) and then to weave the crucial facts into coherent strands of a compelling narrative fabric: each datum arrives interpreted, and everyone in class needs to know it. Facts are valuable, that is, only insofar as they make reflection possible. This past year my nineteenth-century survey was fundamentally "about" the problem of creating and validating absolute instrumental music—a perhaps somewhat Dahlhausian concern. I tried not to lobby or to take sides, and (I hope) avoided pat answers. But the "facts" were placed within this general context and treated as something like individually proposed "answers" to the larger questions of nineteenth-century history. The unstated invitation of the class was to master enough factual material to be able to take part in the ongoing debate.

The third principle follows directly from the second: *Alert students early (and frequently) to the factors of bias, ideology, or misleading oversimplification in textbooks—and in one's own lectures.* How sad if students ever equate "music history" with a textbook! I must confess that I do not like textbooks much, particularly when they are used unquestioningly, that is, when they are perceived not as "interpretations" but as presumed collections of objective fact itself—sadly, the standard undergraduate response. My view is different. Nearly all of the principal textbooks seem to me to be unashamedly biased (nearly always either towards the concerns of nineteenth-century German and Austrian composers and "Romantic/progressive" compositional values or towards manifestly Austrian or, far less often, French "modernist" ideologies); and most of the textbooks are overly generalized, too self-confident in their data-assembling, too covertly suggestive that all the facts and values therein are unalterable. This "Germanic-Romantic" perspective—encountered typically as a set of hidden, unstated postulates driving the assessments and guiding the language-choices—is especially obvious to those scholars pursuing work outside of that immediate field of interest (work in Italian opera, for instance, or in nineteenth-century nationalism), or to those striving for relevant new perspectives on the canon (such as socially oriented, feminist, or "listener-response" perspectives, or, most recently, the perspectives of structuralism or deconstruction). The larger point here, again, is to use the techniques of "musicology" as a device to convey a lesson in controversy, critical thought, the hazards of bias, and the power of word-selection. By no means does this approach downplay the mastering of basic factual content. On the contrary, it should enhance it by raising its level: to adopt some of the language of the current general educational debate, "cultural literacy," or, for us, "music-historical literacy," needs to be given its full measure of respect. Still, within a fac-

tually saturated, content-rich course, the classroom activity can become a model for thought — for the posing of hard questions — and this is very much an “introduction to musicology”.

Fourth, and finally: *Avoid implying that the crucial “aesthetic” features of the music of prior periods are easily accessible to us today; emphasize the importance of cultural contexts and differing modes of social and musical expectation and perception.* This, too, is a fruit of musicology that can find its way into the classroom. Music is not a “universal language”. Different cultures will perceive different things within a piece (such are the direct concerns, for instance, of *Rezeptionsgeschichte*); music often “meant” different things to its first audiences. Some of today’s more sophisticated music majors (or Conservatory students) come to class believing that certain pieces or styles are easy to absorb, as pleasant consumer items: a Schubert song, perhaps, or a Bach chorale, or Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. But these pieces are not “easy,” and, moreover, I am increasingly convinced that “familiar” or presumably “simpler” music presents the greatest challenge of all, precisely because it lulls us into thinking erroneously that we actually do understand it. But in some important ways things like Donizetti’s cabalettas can be more difficult to “understand” than, say, the individual scenes of Berg’s *Wozzeck*, because of the predisposed attitudes that we all too often bring to them. Our “individualistic-Romantic” attitudes are already “in place” for the Berg — what we need now are technical skills to reinforce them; but for the presumably simpler Donizetti pieces we need to remake our whole value system, to step outside of ourselves and our own twentieth-century quick responses and habits — a far harder task. For music majors and Conservatory students we occasionally need to defamiliarize the classics, to make them more difficult, to expose levels of meaning and apparent intention that the students had no idea that the music had. And the techniques used and the methods appealed to are eminently “musicological”.

One class that I found particularly rewarding was a discussion of the first portion of Chopin’s *Andante spianato*. We heard it three or four times throughout the hour, with the perhaps unusual goal of making this seemingly transparent piece more “difficult,” more alienated from conventional, late-twentieth-century “new world” aesthetic values. The procedure was to appeal to the work’s nineteenth-century sociological context, to what we know of the qualities of the pianos that Chopin preferred and what little we know of his performance habits, and to conceivable nineteenth-century views of its structure and patterns of ornamentation. The point of the class — its refrain, so to speak — was that Chopin was having a private conversation with, in this case, upper-middle-class and upper-class Parisians in the 1830s and 1840s, a conversation founded on the particular social and aesthetic assumptions of those classes in that time and place. In the modern world, these are not our natural starting-points, and because Chopin’s “conversation” was not intended for us to overhear, we are likely to miss much of its thrust. This point of view seems to me to be far healthier than an adherence to the “universal-language/easy access” fallacy. And it works: as mentioned above, students respond well to the honesty of the approach.

A word of warning, however, is appropriate at the close. No “method” or set of procedures can save or vitalize an ineffective communicator. Teaching is a func-

tion far more of personality than of method. But with this general caveat in mind, I would suggest the following in summary. The attitudes of musicology that can and should be in the undergraduate classroom are: that no issue is closed; that it is far easier to say something that is not true than something that is; and that the pursuit of knowledge—a rough-and-tumble enterprise—is the real heart of “musicology,” and it is the very feature that makes it so compelling to those who are driven to think about music.

## Musicologists and Generalists: A Medieval Perspective

KENNETH LEVY

**E**ACH OF US faces a different set of conditions in our teaching. Let me set out the ones to which my remarks now apply. I wear two hats at my school. Under one, I am a medievalist. With graduate students and an occasional undergraduate I look for some leading edge of the medieval discipline and try to bring order and light to what I find. Under my other hat I am a generalist. Each year I lecture to about half a thousand non-musician undergraduates. They are likely to receive just that one exposure to music during their college careers. I try to give them some of the basic orientations and skills needed to expand their musical perspectives. In some cases, this may lead them from Mozart and Schubert to Mahler and Schoenberg; in others from heavy metal and Springsteen to Mozart and Schubert. Change does not come easily, but I think this endeavor is important. Those who address non-musicians are forming the concert and opera audiences of the new generation. In a small way they are influencing future support for the arts in America. That is why I feel no lesser commitment to generalist teaching than I do to the objectives of higher-flying medievalism.

Now what does the musical medievalist do with these two kinds of teaching? How does one put them together? I would like to encourage an interest in medieval music among future scholars; and I would like to foster support for groups that perform early music. Do I try to distill my little bits of insight about Gregorian chant, or Notre Dame polyphony, or the *Ars nova*, so that their esoteric styles and rationales become more accessible to the general student? Or do I ignore the kind of music where my own professional stake is greatest and deal only with music that has less of a gap to bridge in order to reach the general student?

My answer is a reluctant one. When teaching large groups of non-musicians under tight constraints of classroom time, I think it better to ignore the medieval and concentrate on the classics of major-minor tonality, and then to mount an advocacy for the music of our own time. Only under a very generous dispensation of teaching hours do I believe in including the medieval.

If there is to be medieval music, then plainchant is the way to begin. Its single strand speaks readily to the novice listener; its churchliness adds an obvious appeal. Indeed, it may speak too readily. Plainchant falls easy prey to romantic misconceptions, and the focus must be kept on tougher issues: scale and mode; conceptions of “form”; processes of “composition”; functions of oral and written transmission. After plainchant there might be Parisian organum or the Summer Canon; a ballade of Machaut or a madrigal of Jacopo. But with these I think one has already gone beyond the usefulness of medieval materials. With limited time in a general course, I prefer to use music whose values speak readily to present-day minds and ears. I would abandon the music in which I am most interested.

Yet if medieval music itself does not stand high on my list of generalist priorities, there are still some things that a medievalist preoccupation contributes to the fabric of my teaching. One concerns the quantity of raw fact—names, dates, places, devices—that the student is asked to absorb. To obtain a working knowledge of medieval music one must control a lot of out-of-the-way and often accidentally-preserved fact. Yet memorizing such quantities of material has little value for a general introduction to the nature of musical discourse. Most of the useful facts about Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Perotin, can be gotten from reference works outside of a course. Within curricular time, and certainly within lecture time, I think it much better to disregard such externals and concentrate on learning some skills of analytic listening.

Another issue is the use of musical notation. Everyone who deals regularly with plainchant neumes is reminded that the five-line staff is a direct descendant of the oldest *campo aperto* notation. Those first chant manuscripts give representations that are not altogether specific; there are precise analogues of the pitch succession—of the intervallic continuity; but there are not the details of actual pitch, or all the nuances of rhythm. Those are left to the memories of choir directors and singers. The chant notations were incomplete—they were selective “diagrams”. What I propose is that we take a lesson from the medieval practice and make the written interface between our undergraduates and the music depend, not on the surfeit of information supplied by a composer’s score, but on much simpler means: on *listening diagrams* that support the novice’s efforts at hearing and remembering. I don’t believe we should use a full score, a piano score, even a line-score. Acquiring an elementary skill in score-“reading” gives only an artificial sense of accomplishment. It leads to recognizing, acknowledging, “following” the music, not to the sort of contemplative involvement in sound-pattern that produces deeper understanding. I also see little value in the kind of listening “diagrams” that have the student follow the music with stopwatch in hand, waiting to hear—again, to “acknowledge”—the appearance of a French horn at 1:32 or a tympani stroke at 3:17. Those are superficial.

I do teach a bit of staff-notation, but only what can be gotten into a quarter-hour. Instead, for a given piece, I try to pick some elements that are worth students’ attention, and to render these in a map of the musical continuity. This may chart thematic, motivic, or tonal features (sometimes tone color); and these are translated as words, doodles, bits of musical notation. Each piece may have a different sort of diagram. My aim in these charts of musical events is to encourage



analytic listening—to engage the students in evaluating the composer’s choices. I want them to “hear” the shape of the forest, not just see the noted twigs. A further point: such diagrams are not to be taken as representatives of “authority”—the way a full score is. Precisely because they are independent of the composer’s written formulation, they can be viewed as tentative, incomplete, susceptible to improvement, provocative of further inquiry.

To conclude, my interest in medieval music reminds me of the obstacles that a novice listener must face when dealing with the foreign language of music. To reduce those obstacles, I look for synthetic means. I think that, like the medieval notator whose concern was to support the chorister’s memory, today’s musical generalist should be concerned with devising visual aids that support the beginning students’ processes of listening and remembering. So in the end, I don’t advocate a direct use of medieval music in generalist teaching. But I believe that an involvement with medieval materials can have some useful lessons.

## Musicology and the Music Major

MARGARET MURATA

THE REWARDS AND EXCITEMENT of teaching music to the general college student are often immediate and can also be long lasting, not infrequently because the biology or engineering student may play as well as or more ably than a music major and because he may be motivated to make the most of the limited number of music courses he can fit into his course of study. Such a student may take a music appreciation course of the kind Professor Levy describes, or a course surveying the history of music, a “period” course, or some interdisciplinary course that includes music. He may easily end up taking more classes from the musicologists on the faculty than does the music major, who often takes only the required semesters of a music history survey. Certainly we teach more in courses than just the course material, as Professor Hepokoski’s points demonstrate; but nevertheless, the limited contact between the “musicologist” and the undergraduate music major hardly provides the opportunity to present the variety and the scope of the skills and interests of most musicologists. The music student should not go on to a career in music imagining that “musicology”—whatever it is thought to be—is an ancillary or a circumscribed aspect of music.

The job of the musicologist-teacher, however, is not to prove that his territory is broad; rather it is to broaden the resources and musical experiences of his students. As a group, music majors have the most intense and constant involvement with music, but typically it is also narrow and restricted in terms of style and repertory. Trying to analyze a Mozart wind serenade with great reluctance, one oboist protested to me recently, “But I’m an instrumentalist, and all I want to do is play

my instrument!" Today's music majors will fill the teaching studios of tomorrow, and the breadth or narrowness of their educations will determine the breadth or narrowness of the next crop of musicians.

Because the music historian may teach any one student for as short a time as a single quarter or semester, while a performance student may work with a studio teacher for as long as four years, the indirect way for "musicology" to present itself to undergraduates is in cooperation with the studio faculty. I teach in a modestly sized music department with two other music historians and thirty studio instructors, so musicology is not off in its own department, emerging only to give service courses. We have plenty of opportunity to interact with performers, composers, conductors, and students, and do so regularly. Still, it takes an effort to diminish the instructional gap between the studio and "academics". I have said how important I think it is to remove this gap, whether it is real or perceived. My few suggestions here for doing so are addressed as if to music historians, but they can easily be read as a set of expectations for musicology in the undergraduate environment.

1. *Be recognized as a resource person*, for information about editions, repertory, reference works, ornamentation and such like, or for translating texts for singers and choral conductors. The more informal such exchange can be the better.
2. *Be an academic middleman* between colleagues in other disciplines such as physics, literature, anthropology, or ethnic studies, and the music classroom — not necessarily your own classroom. At Irvine, for example, we had a successful series of lecture/master classes for voice students on specific repertoires, such as settings of Goethe or French poets, which the students prepared to perform and professors from the French and German faculties discussed. Mallarmé is difficult enough to interpret as literature, and the average music student does not have enough French to take an advanced poetry course; yet we expect a sophisticated French set of all voice majors! One master class given by Professor Renée Hubert on Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Éluard explicated specific poems and placed them in a historical and interpretive context that was as illuminating to the music faculty who attended as to the undergraduates in the performance class.

Furthermore, most music students either don't have the time or the motivation and guidance to "shop around" for general courses. It is really up to the music faculty to bring acousticians, actors, literary critics, and cultural historians into the study, interpretation, and composition of music, on an imaginative and lively *ad hoc* basis.

My third and fourth suggestions are less concrete and more difficult to implement. Both pertain to that currently elusive concept called "performance practice," because the most common exchanges between studio teacher and musicologist concern questions in this area. Today, performance practice is not just a field collecting more and more "how to" recipes for playing music of increasingly specific times and locales. It is a field also trying to establish a more general framework for understanding performing, for thinking about what constitutes those practical, intellectual, and cultural elements that turn a score into music.

3. Therefore, *the notion of “performance practice” itself has to be made more open and “user friendly”*. Currently we have sets of possibilities from which performers make better or worse decisions. “Alternative” options have penetrated well into the nineteenth-century repertory. Pluralism in various mixes has replaced purism (e.g. Simon Rattle adapting his lessons on early violin to his wonderful performance of Haydn’s *Creation* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic). Some areas of musicology, like some performers, are testing scores as increasingly open texts. This spirit of experimentation needs to be conveyed to the student to encourage musical involvement and creativity, though without diminishing the basic discipline to be learned from so-called “literal” readings. Coaching student singers and accompanists or the occasional chamber ensemble is a direct way to try out different articulations, tone productions, tempo adjustments, bow strokes, phrasings, etc., in the guise of rehearsal techniques. This increases flexibility of response in the student, as it casts different lights on the score. To paraphrase Professor Hepokoski’s second and fourth points: avoid conveying an “image” of any musical composition as a static, ideal entity. Avoid implying that the “aesthetic” features of any musical composition are fixed and immutable. These injunctions are as applicable to Mozart as to Landini.
4. The musicologist, then, has also to *be a present force for historical consciousness – not only on behalf of compositions, but also on behalf of how they are played*. That Trevor Pinnock differs from Thurston Dart is not just a matter of new knowledge from archives, treatises, and instrument restorations. That Munch’s Debussy differs from Boulez’s is not a matter of a new critical edition. The musicologist, more than any other music professional, is in a position—I would say *is obligated*—to articulate and make explicit the tensions and shifts between changing “oral traditions” in Western musical performance and changing modes of reading scores. This, too, is a part of music history. It is a part not contained in the shelves upon shelves of Monuments of Music, and it is certainly absent in music history textbooks. Every undergraduate deserves a discussion of “fidelity to the score” as meant by Schnabel, Salzer, and Toscanini; it is a topic inversely related to the frustrated cry of a professor of piano, “How do you *teach schmalz?*”

The constant, underlying complaint of undergraduates is that music courses don’t have related goals, that they don’t apply to each other. Of course they do, but the students do not realize where the synthesis takes place. “Performance” to them usually signifies *doing* something: moving your fingers, modifying your embouchure, keeping your larynx down. Students are not aware that harmony and history, as well as studio lessons, are *all ear-training* in part, and that it is the ear that makes the musician. Several years ago, Edward T. Cone pointed out that critics (musicologists) and composers were also performers,<sup>1</sup> in the sense that all are readers and interpreters of scores. The organ that does this reading and interpreting for all types of performers is not the hand or eye, but the “inner ear”. The

<sup>1</sup>Edward T. Cone, “The Authority of Music Criticism,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34 (1981):1-18.

different courses that form the music major's core education all help him develop this inner ear. As they must, these courses teach him first to deal with what is in the score. Beyond this, musicologists, like studio teachers, also can and must convey knowledge about essential aspects of music that are *not* present in scores. These unwritten aspects are the sources of both the infinite variety and the vitality of our arts of sound.

## Machaut for the Masses, or, How Musicology Ruins Your Teaching

KATHERINE T. ROHRER

AT THE VERY END of my time today I will tell you something about new ideas on seventeenth-century English vocal music, the field in which I do most of my work; but to start I want to talk about the way in which graduate studies in musicology prepare us to do all the wrong things in the classroom.

My remarks are directed towards the teaching of an introductory music appreciation course, something that most of us do from time to time. At Columbia University we taught a one-semester music appreciation course that is required of all undergraduates and is part of the famous Columbia College core curriculum. On principle this course is taught not by large lecture classes but in small sections—twenty-five students to a class—and there were almost thirty sections of the course every semester. Of course there were not enough faculty members to cover this huge teaching demand, so the course was staffed mainly with graduate students. I suppose I taught this course about twelve times in my years at Columbia, and for two years I was the director of the course and had the opportunity of watching other people teach it. This experience reminded me of what I learned when I first started teaching, which is that one has to throw away ninety percent of the musical interests and instincts one develops in graduate school in order to teach undergraduates successfully.

For instance, one big lesson we learn as scholars is to tell the truth—not to pass on old ideas without examining them, not to generalize from partial knowledge, not to speak out on a subject without having thoroughly investigated it first. That's great when we write our dissertations, but what happens when we hit the classroom? Instant paralysis. Everything we thought we knew as undergraduates looks shabby and dubious in the cold light of scholarship. We're afraid to open our mouths on the simplest subject without spending hours in the library reading the latest research. Now in fact this is a *good* instinct, not a bad one, but in my teaching life at least it has caused a lot of pain and fear—fear of saying something that is not entirely true.

Another thing we learn is to tell not only the truth, but the whole truth. If we apply ourselves in school, we come out with a marvelous knowledge of how things

developed, what genres succeeded what, which personal styles exerted mutual influence, how notation reflects and doesn't reflect performance, and lots more. Then we start to teach and try to stuff all this fascinating material into fourteen weeks of an introductory class, and it doesn't work. Having just finished a seminar on, say, Mozart's operas, how do you schedule an effective two-hour class on the same for an introductory course? Suppose you're an *Idomeneo* freak; do you teach the quartet instead of doing *Don Giovanni*? I would say no, because the needs of our students have to come before our own. We have to remember that we ourselves learned to love *Figaro* or *Don Giovanni* long before we'd even heard of *Idomeneo*, and no matter how compelling its music is, our students just aren't as likely to have the opportunity to go see it in the opera house.

Graduate studies do tend to set us on fire with the lore of esoterica. This is reflected by a joke once passed on to me by Chappell White. A bunch of musicologists are sitting around, and the name of Beethoven comes up in the conversation. Everyone looks blank for a minute until someone says "Oh yes, wasn't he a student of Albrechtsberger?" Now when I was a student at Princeton we all knew who Beethoven was, but we were more comfortable discussing the sketches for the unfinished works between 1815 and 1817 than the way to teach the Ninth Symphony. It's so easy for us to lose our sense of priorities. I was horrified one day when I heard one of our graduate student instructors at Columbia explaining some aspect of conductus to a baffled student at a departmental review session. Now I love conductus, and I'm sure you do too, but in my book conductus has no place in a one-semester introductory music course. We're supposed to teach our students to love music, to patronize it in the concert hall and the record store, to make it a cherished part of their lives—we *don't* have to teach them the full story of the development of Western music in a single semester. The hardest thing I've had to do in the teaching of this course is to keep cutting and simplifying until I'm concentrating on the most basic issues in ways that will communicate my own love and understanding of the music to my students.

So what good is graduate study in musicology for teaching, then? Well, it does keep us from telling out-and-out lies, even if we can't always tell the whole truth. And it does help us to answer questions in a responsible way. If our teaching is clear and direct enough, uncluttered by those nasty details we learn in graduate school, we'll probably be rewarded by some of those gratifying questions that make us say "I'm so glad you asked that! And you're lucky to have a musicologist as a teacher, because I know the answer."

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I don't get to use much of my own research in teaching undergraduates, even in upper-level music courses, because it takes so long just to explain the theoretical basis of speech stress, rhythm, and intonation in English that I never have time to fit it in. But I do have a couple of suggestions for you that stem from recent thought about English Restoration music in my own work and that of others.

First, don't ever say something like "In this piece the music fits the words perfectly" without knowing precisely what you mean. If you mean that the expressive qualities of the music enhance the meaning of the text, say that. If you're talking

about the sound effects of the text—stress, rhythm, intonation—and their translation into music, be aware that at least for English we can now talk with some authority about the language but that the picture is pretty complicated. It's not really valid to examine your own speech habits and ascribe them to Henry Purcell, for instance.

Second—and this may be of more use to you—when you teach music of the later seventeenth century, especially in upper-level history classes, think about choosing one of Purcell's big stage works to look at instead of *Dido and Aeneas*. *Dido* is a terrific piece, infinitely worthy and all that, but it's hardly typical of Purcell's achievement or of the exciting things happening on the Restoration stage at the end of his lifetime. The more important pieces are the ones we are now calling “dramatic(k) operas,” after a contemporary term; they are stage works in which the music is primary and the text (i.e., spoken dialogue) secondary—in other words, plays written to provide an excuse for music, as in the Broadway musical. The two dramatic operas of Purcell's that are most often recorded and written about are *King Arthur* from 1691 and *The Fairy Queen* from 1692 and 1693; both are full of music of great beauty and variety, and both are of great cultural interest as literary/musical extravaganzas. As far as I'm concerned, too, they are operas—*Carmen* has spoken dialogue too—so it's not accurate to tell your class that the only operas composed in Restoration England were Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Purcell's *Dido*. You can find useful material on *King Arthur* in an article by David Charlton, “*King Arthur*: Dramatick Opera,” in *Music and Letters* 64 (1983):183–92; on *The Fairy Queen* in an article by Roger Savage, “The Shakespeare-Purcell *Fairy Queen*: A Defense and Recommendation,” in *Early Music* 1 (1973):201–21; and on both in Curtis Price's recent book *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).