

## Music History Beyond the Classroom: Active Learning through Local History

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In all of my music history classes, I encourage students to listen historically. By putting ourselves in the position and mindset of past audiences, we can better understand their perceptions and values. While we can only know so much about these audiences and their values, inserting this human element into our musical narratives can help students relate to music that may otherwise seem inaccessible. Introducing students to tangible historical objects and physical spaces helps to build an even more direct connection with the past. When students interact with pieces of history in the form of documents, objects, or historical buildings, they make a connection to the past that is far more direct than those generated by classroom discussion alone, with learning outcomes that encompass much more than a knowledge of the musical styles and facts emphasized in the traditional music history classroom.

In the spring of 2013, students in my “Classical and Romantic Music” course at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, presented a concert of Civil War Songs at a local historical site that is now a museum. In an event open to the public, students in the class performed war songs, discussed the historical contexts of each piece, and read letters and other documents from the museum’s archives. In written comments and personal conversations, both students and Crawfordsville residents reported learning a great deal about Civil War music and history, and also noted that the personal perspectives shown in the songs and documents brought the composers’ and authors’ experiences to life. Many also commented on the ways in which the venue added a sense of immediacy to these narratives; at the end of the concert both students and audience members enthusiastically expressed their fascination with the material and enjoyment of the presentation.

In this essay, I show that interactive community-based projects such as the Civil War concert exemplify active learning techniques by allowing students to experience history, while also serving as a means of teaching students to

empathize and understand others' perspectives.<sup>1</sup> The Civil War concert additionally serves as a model for similar projects in other music history courses and other communities, as opportunities to engage with local historical venues and resources exist near any campus. Perhaps above all else, the immediacy of local narratives enables an especially meaningful dialogue with the past.

### Planning and Programming

My students at Wabash were familiar with the local Lew Wallace Study & Museum in Crawfordsville, Indiana, although many of them had never visited the site. Lew Wallace was a Civil War general for the Union Army and later governor of the New Mexico Territory, best known today for authoring the novel *Ben Hur* in 1880. Upon returning to Crawfordsville after the war, General Wallace built his study—a tall square brick structure resembling a large mausoleum—as his writing space. The study sits on a large tree-filled green space the size of an entire city block near the center of town. Surrounded by brick walls and a gate, it is open to the public for tours and special events, including community festivals on the grounds. The former horse stable serves as the museum office, and Wallace's home (now privately owned) is adjacent to the property. Although the study is the centerpiece of this large green space, the structure itself is rather small, and the fifty people attending our event filled the space to capacity. The study consists primarily of one room, resembling a Victorian-era home library, which holds several pieces of Wallace's furniture and personal belongings. The space itself was of specific interest as a local historical site, but it also helped the class make connections to broader ideas of parlor song and chamber music genres that during the nineteenth century would have been performed in precisely this type of environment.

Early in the semester, I approached the museum's director, Larry Paarlberg, to discuss ideas for a collaborative project. Paarlberg was enthusiastic about the concert format, and he informed me that the museum archive holds dozens of letters written during the war by Wallace, his wife, and local residents, which we were welcome to incorporate into the event. Along with providing these immensely helpful documents, the museum staff was eager to reach out to the Crawfordsville community and made all necessary arrangements for ticketing

1. For another perspective on the pedagogical benefits of staging a Civil War concert, see Wendy K. Matthews, "Understanding the Music of the Civil War: Performing Ensembles and Multimedia Arts Integration Projects," *College Music Symposium* 53 (2013). The project in which Matthews was involved was a much larger-scale collaboration among multiple departments and over 170 participants. Its multimedia format, including video integration, also sets it apart from the event at Wabash. Yet, both efforts worked with the same goal, as Matthews puts it, "to show the impact on humanity by telling the story of the war through those who experienced it," while building student skill sets in several areas.

(the event was free but seating was reserved and limited due to the small space), local advertisements, and a short blurb in the local newspaper.

The students in “Classical and Romantic Music” that semester did well in their studies of nineteenth-century music, although their lack of familiarity with the repertoire necessitated a conscious effort on my part to make analogies and connections to styles, genres, and experiences more familiar to them. Wabash is a liberal arts college with a small music department, and unlike performance-oriented students at many larger institutions, most of my students had not previously encountered the course’s repertoire. In this context, the inclusion of more American music proved to be an added benefit of the Civil War project. By discussing one slice of American music-making in great depth, especially through a local lens, the Civil War music we studied became more tangible and more real to students than did much of the European music that typically constitutes the majority of repertoire in survey courses.

Since our class had only eight students, we had to make use of the limited performing forces available to us. As a group, we chose several songs from Richard Crawford’s edited collection, *The Civil War Songbook*.<sup>2</sup> All students sang, a French horn player added some fanfare-like motives, and two guitar students arranged parts from the piano accompaniments, as there was no piano at the museum. The students successfully arranged these parts themselves, occasionally consulting with me or other faculty members. Because these students were not focusing primarily on performance in their musical studies, and because this event was a relatively small component of the course, we did not investigate period guitar music or performance practices for this particular project. Although these creative arrangements arose out of necessity, they did in a certain sense replicate the historical character of the concert, as this music was originally meant for amateurs to sing and play informally. Understanding that nineteenth-century performers had also needed to adapt this music according to the available instruments and voice parts helped the students to form a closer connection to the historical context of the Civil War period.

Students who did not spend time arranging the music researched some of the songs and the perspectives they provided, and then spoke briefly about these historical contexts to the audience.<sup>3</sup> Although I had expected to edit these contextual statements, I was quite impressed with the students’ work—perhaps

2. Richard Crawford, ed. *The Civil War Songbook: Complete Original Sheet Music for 37 Songs* (New York: Dover, 1977).

3. Suggested contextual readings include Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), in which each chapter discusses one type of civil war song based on its perspective—songs of the Union, the Confederacy, from the home front, etc. McWhirter explores not only the ways in which the songs reflect responses to the war, but also demonstrates how the songs helped to form public responses. Steven H. Cornelius’ *Music of the Civil War Era* (Westport,

its quality was in part a result of their own excitement about the project—and suggested very few revisions. Several students also read excerpts from letters found in the museum’s archives. These letters between local soldiers and their families provided some of the most fascinating and moving perspectives on life during the Civil War. Many of the letters referenced local activities and places, and ranged from discussions of life on the battlefield to passages that reflected the agonizing uncertainty of soldiers’ families waiting at home. Many of the letters’ authors were killed in battle. In each of these cases, the student reader stated the demise of the author after reading the letter, and the silence that spontaneously filled the room following these statements attested to the moving experience provided by the immediacy of the historical space and personal perspectives. We ended the concert on a patriotic note with the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” during which we invited the audience to sing along. The crowd, which filled the space to its full capacity, enthusiastically joined us.

We were careful to select songs (shown in **Figure 1**) for their feasibility, musical variety, and difference in perspective (that of a soldier versus a wife at home, for instance).

**Figure 1:** Program for “A Concert of Civil War Music”

“Battle Cry of Freedom”  
by George Frederick Root

“The Soldier’s Return”  
Music by J.R. Thomas  
Text by W.H. Morris

“When Johnny Comes Marching Home”  
by Louis Lambert

“The New Emancipation Song”  
Music by Mrs. E.A. Parkhurst  
“Ashokan Farewell”<sup>4</sup>  
by Jay Ungar

“Battle Hymn of the Republic”  
Music by William Steffe  
Text by Julia Ward Howe

The personal perspectives shown in the songs had a profound impact, but the letters referencing nearby locales, and most significantly the immediacy of the physical space, made the experience even more meaningful.

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CT: Greenwood Press, 2004) takes a broad approach in discussing Civil War music, musicians, and contexts, including both rural and urban.

4. This work was written in 1982 by Jay Ungar for the music camp run by Ungar and his wife.

### Connecting with the Past: Objectives and Outcomes

In *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*, John Biggs and Catherine Tang discuss types of student engagement, ranging from low-level tasks such as memorization, to high-level activities such as application and theorization.<sup>5</sup> This spectrum relates to the level of activity required of the student, from the passive lecture to active problem-based learning. It is not surprising that the level of engagement is directly proportional to the level of activity. Of course, some students will thrive even at the passive lecture-style level of activity, but even these students will perform better with active learning.<sup>6</sup> Active learning modes are especially effective at engaging less-highly motivated students. The Civil War project exemplifies active learning by necessitating active hands-on roles for students, requiring students to become the teachers, and encouraging students to apply their newly-acquired skill sets in other contexts.

Because the project culminated with a performance, students needed to be actively involved in the music, readings, and discussion of their research. If nothing else, a desire to avoid public embarrassment or letting down their classmates provided motivation, as each student was responsible for his (I say “his” because Wabash is a college for men) own portion of the research and music. The fact that the project culminated at an off-campus location also stimulated students to do their very best. No longer confined to academia or the classroom, the students’ studies took on a new importance as part of a larger public initiative.

Seeing the public’s interest in one of our course projects not only further sparked the class’s interest; it also showed students the value and potential for public discourse surrounding academic subject matter. The project demonstrated that musicology—or any academic discipline—need not be confined to a college or university environment, and also that academic and public musicology are not mutually exclusive.<sup>7</sup> It was important for my students—especially as undergraduates in a liberal arts setting—to engage with the public as a part of their academic experience. Doing so enabled them to create a dialogue between their work inside and outside the classroom, and also between public and academic spaces.

5. John Biggs and Catherine Tang, *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Maidenhead, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill/Society for Research into Higher Education/Open University Press, 2011), 6.

6. Biggs and Tang, *Teaching for Quality Learning*, p. 6.

7. The relatively recent movement promoting public musicology and alt-ac careers has tended toward this mutual exclusivity, and there are certainly many valuable outlets for public musicology outside of academia. Of course, many academics engage with public musicology and aim to bring academic research to the public, but rarely does the academy itself reach out to the public through off-campus events.

The project's public setting also allowed the students to become the teachers, and to exhibit a high level of active learning and student engagement.<sup>8</sup> As educators, we know that explaining an idea or concept to another person works to solidify that material for the person in the role of the teacher. Even more significantly, the Civil War project allowed students to take ownership of the material. They did not simply present ideas and facts they had learned from a textbook; they were sharing their own discoveries and research.

Finally, the students learned valuable lessons about empathy and perspective through this project, as the archival materials and song texts showed war from multiple points of view. Such a consideration of others' ideas through historical sources encourages students to apply a similar approach to understanding diverse perspectives in other contexts. This ability to apply skills to other situations demonstrates one of the highest levels of active learning.<sup>9</sup> Although we cannot expect every student to reach this level of application, these types of activities provide students with the necessary tools to apply their skills elsewhere.

To demonstrate a variety of perspectives on the war, we paired the archival readings with songs whose texts emphasized similar narratives. We began with texts that presented a glorified, masculinized approach toward war. With lines of text such as “Down with the Traitor, Up with the Star; While we rally round the flag boys,” our first musical selection—“The Battle Cry of Freedom”—demonstrates relatively generic themes of camaraderie (indeed, Confederate troops appropriated it with only some small changes). The reading paired with this song exhibited similar sentiments. The text was written by a fellow soldier describing General Wallace in an idealized, heroic manner:

General Wallace was a princely figure, particularly in the saddle, and he rode a handsome blooded roan stallion, a single-stepper that was the pride of the division. As he came riding up, his military accoutrements flashing in the red light of the rising sun, and the charger moving as though to the sound of music, he presented a sight that is not seen more than once in a lifetime.<sup>10</sup>

The glamorous portrayal of war (e.g. Wallace as a “princely figure” riding a stallion that is the “pride of the division” while his “military accouterments”

8. Biggs and Tang, in *Teaching for Quality Learning*, 62, note that teaching someone else the material constitutes “the most active” form of learning. On this, they cite M.C. Wittrock, “The Generative Processes of Memory,” in *The Human Brain*, ed. M.C. Wittrock (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1977).

9. Biggs and Tang, *Teaching for Quality Learning*, 6.

10. The description of General Wallace is attributed to General John M. Thayer and is quoted in Wallace's autobiography. See Lew Wallace, *Lew Wallace: An Autobiography*, vol. II (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1906), 543, fn 1. Wallace's wife, Susan, finished the autobiography after Wallace's death.

shine in the sun) perfectly echoed the stereotypical masculine vigor of “The Battle Cry of Freedom.”

Certainly the intended audience for these two texts—a song and a letter—were quite different. In her article on teaching the Civil War with primary sources, Anne E. Ward notes that students should consider the audience and format of primary source documents.<sup>11</sup> Although we did not specifically address these issues with the public, my students and I talked about the purpose of these texts. The role of a song such as “The Battle Cry of Freedom” was to rally and to build morale, while the description of Wallace was intended to be a private document and shows a quasi-voyeuristic perspective.

Both the song and the letter portrayed war in a positive light as the epitome of masculinity or nobility. While stereotypes of machismo and courage in soldiers carry some truth, I felt it was important to demonstrate multiple points of view within this traditionally masculine space of war culture by also including portrayals of soldiers’ vulnerability and horror.<sup>12</sup> With this in mind, our second song showed a much more personal point of view. “The Soldier’s Return” is sung from the first-person perspective of a soldier, but instead of glorifying war, the lyrics emphasize the soldier’s nostalgia for a loved one at home:

We parted with a cheerful smile/ When last I pressed her hand . . . Her glowing glance in memory/ Unceasingly will burn . . . When gazing at the glimmering stars/ And resting on the ground . . . How oft, to hold that little hand/ And hear her vows I yearn . . .<sup>13</sup>

The smooth and lyrical musical line, originally written for solo voice with piano accompaniment, reflects the sentimentality of the text. This second selection thus provided a stark contrast to the first, and the concert took on a more serious tone.

11. Anne E. Ward, “Teaching Civil War Mobilization with Online Primary Sources.” *OAH Magazine of History* 26, no. 2 (April, 2012): 39. Also see Susan H. Veccia, *Uncovering Our History: Teaching with Primary Sources* (Chicago: ALA Edition, 2004), p. 61. Veccia’s audience is elementary and secondary educators, but many of her points can be applied to college-level teaching.

12. On the topic of masculinity in war songs, also see Carol Beynon, “(Re)Constructing and (Re)Mediating Societal Norms in Masculinity: Reconciling Songs of War,” in *Exploring Social Justice: How Music Education Might Matter*, ed. Elizabeth Gould, June Countryman, Charlene Morton, and Leslie Stewart Rose (Toronto: Canadian Music Educators’ Association, 2004), 38-51. On the similar topic of Civil War ballads emphasizing the perspectives of mothers whose sons were at war, see Richard Leppert, “Civil War Imagery, Song, and Poetics: The Aesthetics of Sentiment, Grief, and Remembrance,” *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* 40/1 (Summer, 2016): 20-46. This issue of *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* is a special issue on “Music, the Civil War, and American Memory,” with several interesting articles.

13. Lyrics by W.H. Morris, “The Soldier’s Return,” in *The Civil War Songbook*, ed. Richard Crawford (New York: Dover, 1977), 54-7.

A letter by Major Sullivan Ballou provided another personal and moving perspective from a soldier at battle. Ballou's words are much more somber than the nostalgic "The Soldier's Return." Major Ballou's text is a heart-wrenching goodbye to his wife, as he senses he will not come home alive.<sup>14</sup> Ballou demonstrates conflicted feelings about war, stating that "I have no misgivings about, or lack of confidence in, the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter," then adding: "I cannot describe to you my feelings on this calm summer night . . . I [am] suspicious that Death is creeping behind me." He then expresses gratitude for his wife, and near the end of his letter offers her some comfort: "I shall always be near you; in the gladdest days and in the darkest nights . . . and if there be a soft breeze upon your cheek, it shall be my breath; or the cool air fans your throbbing temple, it shall be my spirit passing by."<sup>15</sup> This letter demonstrated not only yet another perspective on war, but also showed the complex and contradictory feelings of a single individual.

While one student read Ballou's letter aloud, another student and I played the beautifully haunting "Ashokan Farewell" by Jay Ungar, which is best known as the theme of Ken Burns' 1990 documentary miniseries, *The Civil War*. Indeed, the idea of pairing Ballou's letter with this particular song comes directly from Burns' documentary. For our performance, I transposed the original violin part and played it on the cello, while a student played the arpeggiated guitar chords from the original score. Although this is a modern work—a point we made clear to the audience—"Ashokan Farewell" was an extremely effective accompaniment to Ballou's words. After the student finished reading the letter, we played until the music reached the final cadence. The reader then stated that Sullivan Ballou was killed a week later at the First Battle of Bull Run. The room was silent for several seconds, and the rallying excitement of the "Battle Cry of Freedom" seemed far away and naively lighthearted.

For college students in Crawfordsville, Indiana, war often seems like a distant concept, very much removed from their own reality. A historical event such as the Civil War seemed even more removed, as the people, ideologies, and conditions of the conflict were too far in the past to be particularly meaningful. Seeing the experiences of actual people through informal documents such as letters—and perhaps even more importantly, seeing *multiple* historical points of view—helped students to understand that the experiences of each soldier were unique, personal, and complicated, often simultaneously embracing pride and worry, excitement and profound sadness.

14. The full text of this letter is printed on the National Park Service's website: "Manassas National Battlefield Park: "My Very Dear Wife"—The Last Letter of Major Sullivan Ballou," *National Park Service*, accessed 31 March 2016, <https://www.nps.gov/resources/story.htm?id=253>.

15. Ballou, "Last Letter."

Letters by General Wallace's wife also added to the realism of the war and of other historical events. The physical space we occupied certainly enhanced the experience, and the fact that Susan Wallace's letters were written from Crawfordsville provided another tangible connection to the war. Her voice also added an important perspective on the home front, as she often noted her anxiety for her husband fighting on distant battlefields. For example, at one point, she laments: "It was not till Thursday we could get reliable news—how the days went by I leave you to imagine!"<sup>16</sup> In another letter she admits that she was "feeling quite well though bearing about a constant anxiety and weight of dread."<sup>17</sup> Many narratives and song texts of the Civil War focus on the soldiers themselves, while the perspectives of those at home, which are perhaps easier to identify with, are too often left out. By including writings by women, and showing a wide spectrum of emotions from soldiers' perspectives, the project helped to enrich traditional masculine portrayals of war.<sup>18</sup> Through the project, soldiers became more than flat stereotypes heroically fighting for their cause; their worries and nostalgia helped to portray them as real people instead of figments of the distant past.

Scholars including Melanie Lowe have discussed the importance of helping students relate to history by drawing connections to the present via creative assignments and discussions that ask students to compare past and current trends.<sup>19</sup> I build upon this idea by suggesting further ways that we as educators can help students to bridge the gap between past and present. In this case, the immediacy of the physical space and the perspectives of local figures provided the connection to my students' lives in Crawfordsville today. Furthermore, as students examined the letters and song texts describing the atrocities of war, they came to the unsettling realization that many of the authors were young men their own age, making all of the sentiments expressed in the letters and songs much less distant.

16. Susan Wallace, letter to Miss Bronson, 4 March 1862. From the collections of the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum, Crawfordsville, Indiana.

17. Susan Wallace, letter to Miss Bronson, 21 July 1862. From the collections of the General Lew Wallace Study & Museum, Crawfordsville, Indiana.

18. For more on the traditionally masculine associations with war, see C.H. Gray, *Postmodern War: The New Politics of Conflict* (New York: Guilford Press, 1997). For more on women taking on traditionally masculine roles during the war, see various essays in LeeAnn Whites and Alicia P. Long, ed. *Occupied Women: Gender, Military Occupation, and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), as well as Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

19. For further discussion of helping students make connections to the present when studying music of the past, see Melanie Lowe, "Teaching Music History Today: Making Tangible Connections to Here and Now," *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 1, no. 1 (Fall, 2010): 45-59. Also see Mary Natvig, "Classroom Activities," in *The Music History Classroom*, ed. James A. Davis (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company), 23.

## Historical Narratives, Community Engagement, and the Music History Curriculum

Low Wallace, along with the museum dedicated to his life and career, is a source of great local pride, and connecting our studies to a local venue benefited both the students and the community. Students connected the historical narratives we studied in class to real people and places, and discovered that their own community served as a player in these broader narratives. As Kevin Levin notes in his discussion of taking classes to Civil War battlefields, “even with all the resources now available to a twenty-first-century classroom, there is still no substitute for finding ways to connect students to the history in their own communities.”<sup>20</sup> My students similarly saw that music history could be a part of *our* history, and not simply an ephemeral idea residing in an unfamiliar time and place.

Furthermore, as one of my students aptly noted, the project enabled us to engage more directly with the community not simply by encouraging the public to attend a college event on campus, but by bringing our project to an off-campus community space. We might think of this type of community engagement as a branch of service learning, as it creates a dialogue, not only between the past and the present, but also between the community and the college.<sup>21</sup> Following the Civil War concert’s success, I have considered other community-based projects that my classes might undertake at other local historical sites. Countless similar opportunities present themselves in many other communities as well.

In follow-up conversations, many students spoke about the ways in which the primary sources and the local historical venue enhanced the experience, and they advocated for similar community-based projects in future courses. I sat down with several of the students nearly a year later, before presenting on the project at the 2014 Teaching Music History conference in Chicago. As the students discussed the value of the project, I was astonished by the amount of detail they remembered from the event.

One potential objection to incorporating this kind of project into a music history survey—in this case a course covering the Classical and Romantic

20. Kevin Levin, “Teaching Civil War History: From the Classroom to the Battlefield,” *Civil War History* 62, no. 1 (2016): 78.

21. Many pedagogical studies have emerged within the past decade on service learning, but most discuss practices more directly related to volunteer work and providing services to fill community needs. For more on community engagement in higher education, see Dan W. Butin, *Service-Learning in Theory and Practice: The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), especially Chapter 7; Marshall Welch’s *Engaging Higher Education: Purpose, Platforms, and Programs for Community Engagement* (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2016), discusses community engagement primarily on a broader curricular and institutional level.

eras—is that doing so places a disproportionate amount of emphasis on one historical time, place, and event. Musicologists and historians have recently engaged in a great deal of discussion about balancing large-scale narrative and case studies, especially in courses intended to cover a lengthy chronological period. Some historians, for example, celebrate the concept of “big history,” which balances breadth and depth by discussing the entire existence of the universe from the Big Bang to present day by examining only a handful of crucial moments.<sup>22</sup> In music history, some pedagogues strive to demonstrate a breadth of musical styles and trends by discussing dozens of musical works throughout the course of a semester, while others have advocated for a pared-down curriculum that closely examines several case studies.<sup>23</sup>

Certainly any approach toward a historical narrative will create some important connections while missing others. A broad approach with wide coverage will maximize students’ understanding of musical style and chronology, although it will omit many nuances and build some false assumptions. On the other hand, focusing on fewer case studies emphasizes building students’ skills in analysis and research, but does so at the expense of chronology and a larger sense of a narrative. For my purposes in a liberal arts classroom, I have steered toward the latter model, focusing on building student skill sets by focusing on fewer examples. In part because most of my students are not pursuing careers in performance, much of the music we study is unfamiliar to them. In order to give students the tools that they will need in order to research, write on and think critically about music history, we therefore need to find ways to make these topics relevant.<sup>24</sup>

While a project such as the Civil War concert places disproportionate emphasis on a single moment in history, it allows students to develop invaluable skills and make meaningful connections. These skills range from directly pragmatic skills including research, performance, and public speaking, to

22. Textbooks following this approach include David Christian, *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), and David Christian, Cynthia Brown, and Craig Benjamin, *Big History: Between Nothing and Everything* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013).

23. Musicology faculty at Vanderbilt University were among the first to advocate a thematic, rather than chronological, approach to music history which strives to examine several case studies in depth instead of covering vast amounts of repertoire. Melanie Lowe’s talk at the American Musicological Society conference in Milwaukee in 2015 and subsequent article outline the approach at Vanderbilt. See Melanie Lowe, “Rethinking the Undergraduate Music History Sequence in the Information Age,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 5, no. 2 (2015): 65-71.

24. This lack of student familiarity is certainly not the only reason to promote the case-study model of constructing narratives of music history. Vanderbilt University, for instance, is a strong performance school and as noted above, was among the first to adopt a non-traditional and non-chronological music history curriculum.

ephemeral skills such as the development of perspective and empathy, and the ability to consider the complex and differing views of others. While there are many ways to encourage students to understand the mindset of past listeners, or listeners with differing experiences or points of reference, historical objects and spaces provide a uniquely tangible connection with the past, and opportunities to engage with local history present themselves near almost any college campus. Local historical sites do not necessarily need to relate specifically to music history in order to provide valuable learning opportunities; rather, students can build contexts around period-appropriate music in virtually any historical space. Indeed, part of the advantage of making use of a local venue without a specifically *musical* history is that students will need to ask thoughtful questions and pull together contexts themselves, weaving together narratives of daily life and music history. Finally, engaging the community through experiential learning gives students an additional sense of purpose, while also demonstrating the vast opportunities for outreach and dialogue between the academy and the public.