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From Answers to Questions: Fostering Student Creativity and Engagement in Research and Writing

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In an earlier article for this journal, called “Using Blogs for Better Student Writing Outcomes,” I claimed that the informality of the blog format inspired student writing that was richer, deeper, and had fewer usage and stylistic problems than what I had read in their traditional term papers. While I argued for the benefits of casual, peer-reviewed writing, I hoped to make it clear that I also valued (and assigned) traditional writing assignments, and that the “decision to assign a blog *or* a research paper is not an either/or proposition.”¹ Given my students’ excellent blog writing, I knew that they were capable of much more than the awkward, pedantic, jargon-filled term papers that I was used to grading. Looking back at the blogs, I found the most inspired writing was what students wrote from the position of the specialist. Instead of awkwardly rearranging the thoughts and words of other scholars, these students were writing about music from their own knowledge, and I wanted to recapture that natural intelligence in the more formal, research-based writing assignment. In an effort to reinvigorate the research paper for my music history survey students, I discovered that I had to disabuse them of an assumption that they often make: that the burden of education is largely the professor’s while the student remains relatively passive.

Students who do not feel confident with the complex subject matter of a research assignment often write awkward papers; indeed, writing expertly about music is difficult. It is unreasonable to expect an undergraduate to acquire the requisite mastery in a survey course. Instead of struggling against the issue of mastery, I decided to take a different tack. Inspired by the work my students had done in their informal blogs, I decided to change the emphasis of the formal research assignment from the daunting task of acquiring knowledge from external sources to a focus on questions that students generate themselves. In order to get the students to write with more authority, I urged them throughout

1. Sara Haefeli, “Using Blogs for Better Student Writing Outcomes,” this *Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 39–70, <http://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/101/126>.

the research and writing process to look not for answers but, instead, to embrace questions. The students who succeeded were the ones who were most comfortable with the ambiguity of inquiry. I found that when the students began their research project with an open question instead of a research “topic,” the quality, depth, and breadth of the research and writing improved dramatically. For example, instead of writing an “all about” paper on the basset horn, one student asked, “Why did the basset horn all but disappear in the mid 1800s, considering its popularity—especially as a solo instrument—in the late 1700s?” Students who were able to keep a question at the center of their project wrote with authority and used evidence to support their own findings. Good research questions inspire a natural interest in the research and writing process. This approach had the additional benefit of giving students a sense of ownership over their learning: they discovered that they were ultimately in charge of their own educational outcomes. They were no longer passive recipients of “facts,” but were part of the creation of the body of knowledge we call history.

At Ithaca College we teach the music history survey over three semesters. During the first semester the students formulate a research question on materials before 1750 and write an annotated bibliography. They do not “answer” their research question but rather gather sources that would start them down the path toward an answer. The second semester, in which we cover Classical and Romantic era topics, is a college-designated “writing intensive” course. Students now formulate a new research question, compile an annotated bibliography, and write a research paper in multiple stages (free writing, outline, opening statement with thesis, draft, final draft, revision, and reflection). In both semesters, much of the work the students do (including an intensive peer-review process) is collaborative. The focus of *this* essay, however, is on the students’ work with research questions both semesters. I outline the approach that I adopted to teach my music history students how to create initial research questions, and how I urge them to push the questions into areas of deeper inquiry throughout the research and writing process. Before describing the details of the research question assignments, however, it is important to understand the educational philosophy behind this pedagogical maneuver.

The Skill of Creative Inquiry

Too many of our students come to us with the notion that it is the job of the scholar, the specialist, or the professor to *have the answers*. While specialists may have a lot of answers, the truth is they have far more questions. As teachers, we are challenged to encourage these students who have largely been trained to memorize and repeat answers to become comfortable with the ambiguity of *questions* and to recognize that the best research is riddled with them. It would

be convenient to blame this answer-focused mindset on the K–12 public educational system’s focus on standardized testing, but unfortunately, the structure of most of our higher education programs is also not conducive to creative intellectual work, for students or professors alike. The challenge is getting the students to understand that inquiry is a *skill* and although we are teaching content through research and writing, we are also teaching the essential cognitive skill of seeking and articulating interesting questions.

In a recent book review, Andrew Granade points the reader to a recent comic strip from the series “Pearls Before Swine.” The strip pokes fun at how we study history in the internet age. Why bother memorizing facts when we have almost immediate answers via Google? Granade points out that “Most of our students in the music history classroom carry in their pockets a quick portal to all the names and dates, the basic facts, they need; memorizing chronology and opus numbers is no longer the basis of music history pedagogy.”² Access to facts is now relatively simple, but contextualizing and understanding these facts is a different issue altogether. The ability to contextualize, understand, and question information are skills—skills that are not easily attainable via Google.

The ability to ask questions is essentially a creative act, and, according to social psychologist and creativity specialist Teresa Amabile, in order to cultivate creativity we need to

- recognize creative work;
- encourage risk taking;
- create a supportive, encouraging environment;
- create challenging work that feels important;
- allow freedom to decide how to do one’s work;
- provide sufficient resources to complete the task.³

According to Amabile, factors that discourage creative work include

- surveillance while working;
- competition;
- lack of self-determinacy;
- constrained choice;
- expected evaluation or criticism of one’s work;

2. Andrew Granade, review of *Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries and Anthology for Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries*, by Joseph Auner, *College Music Symposium* 55 (2015): para. 2, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18177/sym.2015.55.rev.10874>.

3. Teresa Amabile, “How to Kill Creativity,” *Harvard Business Review* Sept.–Oct. 1998, <https://hbr.org/1998/09/how-to-kill-creativity/ar/1>. Amabile has published prolifically on the nature of creativity and how to encourage it.

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- external motivation, e.g., work done for reward (such as grades);
- extreme time pressures.

Using these criteria, it is clear that the framework of the typical music history survey actually discourages creative work. For example, the course is usually required for graduation, and assignments are typically narrowly defined and closely graded. While the course work is difficult, students often don't perceive the challenging work as important. Students are often motivated by the "reward" of a good grade, but the pressure of the grade discourages creativity. Cameron Ford explains, "People are most creative when they feel motivated by the interest, enjoyment, and challenge associated with a particular task. External pressures, such as direct rewards or evaluations, tend to block creativity."⁴

I am not alone in deemphasizing memorization of facts in order to focus on creative inquiry. In a 2002 *New York Times* article, Julie Flaherty asked leaders in higher education the question, "what should you get out of college?" Nancy Cantor, chancellor at Rutgers University (then at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign) answered that "There isn't a pat answer anymore . . . the best we can do for students is have them ask the right questions."⁵ Similarly, Leon Botstein, president of Bard College, said:

The primary skills should be analytical skills of interpretation and inquiry. In other words, know how to frame a question. How do you evaluate the safety record of an airline? How do you evaluate the risk when you smoke? . . . You should not be dependent on the sources of information, either provided by the government or by the media, but have an independent capacity to ask questions and evaluate answers.⁶

While Botstein is speaking of a liberal arts education in general, the music history classroom is an excellent forum for inquiry, and the research paper assignment is a particularly apt vehicle to exercise the skill of creative inquiry and interpretation. Access to facts is quick and easy, but the ability to formulate research questions and to evaluate answers through the writing process are essential skills, as is the ability to cope with the ambiguity and risk associated with creative work. Students are accustomed to history classes that focus on the acquisition of information, but not on the acquisition of skills, and the acquisition of skills is different from the acquisition of information. Skill acquisition

4. Cameron Ford, "Creativity Is a Mystery: Clues From the Investigators' Notebooks" in *Creative Action in Organizations: Ivory Tower Visions and Real World Voices*, ed. Cameron Ford and Dennis Gioia (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1995), 36.

5. Kate Zernike, "Tests Are Not Just for Kids," *New York Times*, August 4, 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/04/education/tests-are-not-just-for-kids.html>.

6. Zernike, "Tests."

takes time, requires practice (just like learning an instrument), and demands active engagement. To demonstrate this kind of active engagement I tell my students about buckets and ice cubes.

A Bucket vs. an Ice Cube

One fairly traditional educational philosophy assumes that the learner is like a bucket. Students start the educational process as empty buckets and the bits of knowledge we teach them are like chunks thrown into their buckets. We can measure the level in the bucket with tests or other types of assessments, whereupon significant measuring points are celebrated with graduations and awards. There are a number of assumptions in this educational philosophy that are problematic. First, this model assumes that we are all more or less uniform learners who can acquire and retain knowledge and skills similarly. Second, by necessity, this model assumes that the bucket stays still. How can the teacher throw in the educational lumps if the bucket is fidgeting, interrupting, or asking questions? Since the buckets are passive and uniform, the burden of success with this model is on the teacher. In his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire calls this pedagogy the “banking” approach to education; instead of buckets, he uses the metaphor that students are “bank accounts” and teachers make deposits into them. Freire claims that this system is “an instrument of dehumanization.”⁷ The bucket or banking pedagogical approach is designed to produce students who can regurgitate correct answers; it does not support the skills necessary to create independent, creative researchers and writers. There is no room for questions in the bucket.

The social psychologist Kurt Lewin proposed an alternative model. Lewin suggests that instead of buckets, learners should be like ice cubes.⁸ As learners we start the educational process with a very predictable and stable mindset—hence the frozen cube metaphor. The educational process is like the ice cube moving toward a heat source such as a candle. As the ice cube gets close to the candle, part of it melts. This process is uncomfortable for most learners. It is a process of dismantling the existing mindset and might involve quite a bit of confusion. For students who are familiar with the bucket pedagogy, this process feels like losing ground. Most people find this period of ambiguity very uncomfortable, and the obvious reaction is to back away from the heat source. The last stage is that of “refreezing” as our new mindset crystallizes and the ambiguity abates. As we “refreeze” we never assume the old cube shape—we assume an

7. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1970), 54.

8. See Edgar H. Schein, “Kurt Lewin’s Change Theory in the Field and in the Classroom: Notes Toward a Model of Managed Learning,” *Systems Practice* 9, no. 1 (1996): 27–47.

interesting, new, slightly more complex shape. Initially, the ice cube is “pushed” toward the flame; that is, we push the students toward transformative change through required assignments and class meetings. But as all educators know, the student is in control of the transformation. (Not all come away from our classes changed.) Ideally the students will become comfortable enough with the ambiguity of transformational change that this process of “melting” and “refreezing” takes on its own momentum. Hopefully this process continues as the cube returns again and again to the flame under its own motivation, continually transforming until it is a unique and complex creation. Similarly, Freire argues for “co-intentional education.” He claims that teachers and students “are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling . . . reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating . . . knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators.” Freire claims that this model is not one of “pseudo-participation, but committed involvement.”⁹

Students are empowered by the melting ice cube metaphor, but the metaphor loses power as time passes. In my classes, the students need regular reminders that I expect creative, co-intentional (“ice cube”) engagement. This education model is unfamiliar to them; it has to be explicit in the classroom and continually reviewed. My role as an instructor has changed as a result of this model: whereas in the past I did my best to give students clear study guides, I now encourage them to make their own study guides through engagement with the music. If I am clearly and consistently guiding the students’ educational pathways they might become more musically sophisticated in some ways, but they will remain passive learners and they won’t know how to continue the process without an instructor.

Ideally, the educational environment that we help to create provides the open, ambiguous-yet-safe, motivating experience that inspires this kind of transformation. The ice cube model recognizes that we are not uniform learners. Some students may find the recognition of their differences empowering; others will find it intimidating. The understanding that the burden of acquiring this kind of education is firmly on the learner and not on the instructor is challenging for students, especially those who are extrinsically motivated and are working for the expectation of a reward or grade. However, if the student is intrinsically motivated, learns how to formulate good research questions, and can operate in the field of ambiguity that accompanies inquiry, then their educational process will drive itself, as Robert Frost put it, like the ice cube on a

9. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 69.

hot stove, riding on its own melting.¹⁰ Questions can be that “heat source” that encourages transformative change.

In an economy driven by credentialism, students are too often focused on the grade or the degree and not on the transformative experience. Explicitly focusing on questions instead of answers in the research paper assignment is one way to turn from the expected, measured, predictable (awkward, boring, “bucket”) student paper to writing that is more creative, less contrived, and surprisingly engaging. Focusing on questions encourages the students to *own* their research projects, to know that they are in control of the process, and as a result to write with more natural authority.

Teaching the Skill of Inquiry

The best research projects are the ones that start from questions that rise from ambiguity and may create more of it. This premise may seem obvious, but most students propose research projects that start with *answers* instead of *questions*. When we ask students to propose a *topic* for a research project, we are actually encouraging them to start with an answer. Starting with a real question is very difficult for students, because it creates an ambiguous situation: “What if I can’t actually find the answer? What if all I’m left with at the end are *more questions?*” Many students are not well prepared for this kind of assignment. Some actually panic, but they do learn by the end of the project that successful research clearly and convincingly explains why the original question begets only provisional answers and inspires more, perhaps even better, questions!¹¹

When we begin work on the research paper in my classes, the first assignment is a reading assignment: the class reads “A Day at the Park” by Kostas Kiriakakis (**Figure 1**). This is a charming tale of two creatures, one of which collects questions and the other answers. Through this story Kiriakakis points out that answers are not as valuable as questions. They are “static in nature” and only “one frozen snapshot” of reality. Answers are “useful to have around, but kind of boring too.” Questions, on the other hand, are always valuable. Even the seemingly useless questions (which don’t create good answers) can create *better questions*. According to Kiriakakis, questions are the ones that “participate in the ever transforming dance of the whole universe.” The Kiriakakis cartoon thoughtfully unpacks the role of questions and answers and points out how

10. Robert Frost, “The Figure a Poem Makes,” *The Robert Frost Reader: Poetry and Prose*, ed. Edward Connery Lathem and Lawrance Thompson (New York: Henry Holt, 2002), 442. Frost asserted that the creation of a poem has to have this kind of momentum: “Like a piece of ice on a hot stove the poem must ride on its own melting.”

11. A great tool to use with students in order to dispel the myth that their work should be centered on answers is Stuart Firestein’s TED Talk, “The Pursuit of Ignorance,” http://www.ted.com/talks/stuart_firestein_the_pursuit_of_ignorance?language=en.

Figure 1: Kostas Kiriakakis, “A Day at the Park” (excerpt), 2015, <http://kiriakakis.net/comics/mused/a-day-at-the-park>. Image used by permission.



easily we can get attached to answers that have lost their value or usefulness. I talk about the value of questioning *everything* that has been handed down to us. Did Charles Ives *really* write a piece that depicts two marching bands crossing? Why did Bruckner revise his symphonies so many times? What does it mean when we talk about Mozart as a genius?

After establishing the value of questions, we start to look at how musicologists use questions to frame their research. In class we look at several examples together, starting with articles that have clear research questions stated explicitly as questions in the opening paragraphs. For example, Stephen Bonta’s article “The Uses of the *Sonata da Chiesa*” is built on the following questions: “Were instrumental pieces used as preludes or postludes to liturgical chants? Were instrumental or vocal pieces used as substitutes for these chants? And, if so, what happened to the liturgical texts of these chants?”¹² We then move to examples of scholarship in which the question is not stated as such, but which is still easily discernable. For example, we look at Marc Vanscheeuwijck’s article “Recent Re-evaluations of the Baroque Cello and What They Might Mean for Performing the Music of J. S. Bach.”¹³ I ask the students to recreate the author’s original research question based on the opening statement. They might offer a reconstruction of the question that is something like, “What was the nature of the Baroque cello during Bach’s time?” Or, “Is the cello that Bach wrote for the same cello that we have today? If not, what difference does it make or *should* it make to modern performers?” I then give them an assignment to complete as

12. Stephen Bonta, “The Uses of the *Sonata da Chiesa*,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 22, no. 1 (1969): 54.

13. Marc Vanscheeuwijck, “Recent Re-evaluations of the Baroque Cello and What They Might Mean for Performing the Music of J. S. Bach,” *Early Music* 38, no. 2 (2010): 181–92.

homework in which they identify the research questions in opening statements from three different published articles.¹⁴

Creating a Research Question

After studying research questions in existing scholarship, the students start to create their own research questions. Questions do indeed start from “topics” or areas of interest and curiosity. The students are required to do some basic background research on the topic, but they have to move beyond a topic. They then start interrogating this existing research by asking typical questions: why? how? when? what? They are encouraged to create as many questions as possible and to write them down as quickly as they come to mind. They should not judge or try to refine the question at this point. After generating a number of questions, the students then return to the list and ask, “Is this question closed or open?” Closed questions are easily answered with “yes,” “no,” or just a few words. Open questions lead to complex, contextual, critical analyses.¹⁵ It might be helpful at this point to have a discussion about the difference between open and closed questions and have the students offer examples. Students may come to recognize that they are used to closed questions and the clear answers they generate and that open questions are daunting. Some may find at this point that they aren’t actually asking *real* questions, but instead are trying to disguise a topic in the form of the question. For example, the question, “What were young girls expected to know when it came to music education in England during the Elizabethan period?” is less an open question than a topic about music education. However, it might be a good starting point for a student that will discover an open question as he or she continues their research.

Returning to the three research questions described earlier will provide an opportunity to examine the intricacies of working with research questions in more detail: (1) Did Charles Ives *really* write a piece that depicts two marching bands crossing? (2) Why did Bruckner revise his symphonies so many times? (3) What does it mean when we talk about Mozart as a genius? The first question about Ives might be a closed question, as there are multiple bands in *Three*

14. I teach the formulation of research questions during the first semester of the music history survey so the articles I have chosen for the students focus on the musical materials from that semester. Articles I have used in the past include Peter Downey, “The Renaissance Slide Trumpet: Fact or Fiction?” *Early Music* 12, no. 1 (1984): 26–33; Harold Powers, “Tonal Types and Modal Categories in Renaissance Polyphony,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34, no. 3 (1981): 428–70; and Joseph Dyer, “The Place of *Musica* in Medieval Classifications of Knowledge,” *Journal of Musicology* 24, no. 1 (2007): 3–71.

15. See especially the excellent work of Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana, *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2011), 73–86.

Places in New England. The question about Mozart and genius—while an open question—might be impossible to answer. Perhaps it is possible to push the question about the multiple bands in *Three Places in New England* into the realm of an open question (e.g., *How does Ives depict multiple ensembles within one larger ensemble? What does it mean that they cross?*). And perhaps it's possible to limit the Mozart question in a way that would make it a more manageable, more meaningful question for study (e.g., *Given that we think of Mozart as a "genius," why was it so difficult for him to secure employment? How was it possible for his work to remain in continual performance from his lifetime until today?*). It is helpful to workshop difficult questions in class, in small groups, and during one-on-one conversations during office hours. After brainstorming as many questions as possible, the students change the closed questions to open questions as they push topical interests into areas of true inquiry.

At this point in the process the students should have several potential open research questions, all connected to their original area of interest. They then "test" their questions with the following guidelines:

1. *Is your research question clear?* Does it give you enough guidance to know what it is you are going to be searching for? Does the question help you direct your research in the vast field of knowledge?
2. *Is your research question focused?* Is the question specific enough to be well covered in the limited space available (i.e., 5–7 pages)?
3. *Is your research question complex? Does your question require both research and analysis?* These open questions should require critical thinking and analysis and active engagement with the sources and scholarship; there is no pat answer. The question may even explore an area of contention.

In addition to the formal guidelines given above, I ask the students to test their question with an informal guideline that pushes them toward exploring an area of ambiguity: "Are you unsure of the outcome? Does this question scare you?" The answer to these prompts should be "yes."

As the students begin their research I urge them to try to delay finding an answer. If they do happen upon an answer right away, that quick and easy answer should serve as a provisional way station on their journey toward a better question. I expect the research questions to change over the course of the writing assignment. In addition, every student is required to include in the concluding paragraph of the research paper a question for further research. This provision is usually a standard requirement of the conclusion, but in this new light, the typically perfunctory suggestion for further research can take on new significance as it emerges organically out of the question-driven writing process.

Students find that this orientation radically changes their approach to research. They find themselves reading more broadly and with more interest than they had previously. With a topic-driven research project they would simply search for evidence that they could quote in their paper. With research driven by an open-ended question—and a question that was likely to transform as they made discoveries through their research—they were more likely to diversify their sources and to look to different types of scholarship. Instead of searching for answers, they used research to test their questions. They start to understand that the final product of their research should be an answer perhaps, but a provisional one, one that would be replaced by a more interesting and sophisticated question.

Research Guided by Questions Instead of Topics

I would like to offer here some qualitative evidence that this approach creates better writing outcomes by offering student examples of excellent research questions. The first question is the original research question proposed at the beginning of the semester. The second question is the research question as it appeared in the paper, ideally substantially refined and revised. The third question is a question for further research, required in the concluding paragraph of the final draft of the research paper.

Example 1

Original research question:

What did a typical piano lesson taught by Carl Czerny look like? (I hope to explore his teaching style and pedagogical legacy.)

Final, refined research question:

What does Carl Czerny teach us about the role that improvisation played in the musical development of pianists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?

Question for further research:

How can understanding the cognitive processes involved in improvisation affect teaching approaches? What additional non-music-related benefits might improvising have on a person?

This is an excellent example of a set of questions that properly developed as the student explored the evidence. The question started as a legitimate, if somewhat unsophisticated, question (with a topic lurking parenthetically in the background). The refined question is focused, clear, and original. It is evidence of higher-order thinking because the student has gone beyond understanding

and applying the existing research in this area of inquiry to evaluating Czerny's creative context and has created a new connection between the fields of improvisation, technique, and memorization. Had the student started with the topic "Czerny's pedagogy and legacy," I doubt the student would have ventured into this relatively uncharted area of study on improvisation.

Example 2

Original research question:

What was the role of lullabies during the Romantic Period, and how did their musical characteristics help to fulfill their function?

Final, refined research question:

What are the fundamental musical elements of lullabies, and how do these elements help lullabies, including those of the Romantic Period, to effectively soothe and lull children to sleep?

Question for further research:

What musical features, or *gestures*, cause listeners to naturally sway back and forth while listening to music, including lullabies? How might this explain why traditional lullabies are typically sung in triple or compound duple meter?

This question is from a student who is a music minor and whose main field of study is physical therapy. I urged students from the beginning to embrace their own expertise in their questions and this student did so beautifully. She drew on her analytical skills as a musician as well as her ability to understand and interpret the scientific literature on brain development in infants. The sources for this paper were a balance of historical, musicological, and scientific studies on the effect of lullabies on babies. Note that the suggestion for further research is situated even further into her chosen field of cognitive sciences and therapy. This is an example of a genuinely engaged student.

Example 3

Original research question:

What was going on musically during the nineteenth century in Iceland?

Final, refined research question:

What role did the *rímur* tradition play in nineteenth-century Iceland?

Question for further research:

What other folk music traditions does Iceland have to offer? What role did liturgical music play in that country?

Again, this is a question that was appropriately refined and narrowed through the research process. This student started with a legitimate and admittedly

terrifying question. She knew nothing about music in Iceland before the twentieth century. She tested her research question by consulting the *Grove Music Online* article on Iceland and found that one of the largest collections of Icelandic music and primary sources was at Cornell, less than three miles away. Her research took her into the archives at Cornell, and she was able to explore just one of the Icelandic musical and poetic traditions of the nineteenth century. This was a valuable introduction to primary sources. The question for further research, however, is too easy. I would have liked her to discover an even more refined question about the *rímur* tradition specifically, say its social function, or theoretical issues connected to the musical practice.

Surprise No. 1: Silo Thinking

Some of the research questions this past semester arose naturally out of class discussions. One such question was about the nature of rococo style in the court of Louis XV and another concerned the advertising of Mozart's operas. These were legitimate, open questions that came directly from moments of curiosity in the classroom. On the other hand, there were a number of students who had significant difficulty finding a question. Some had proposed clumsy questions that either didn't connect to their skill sets or that seemed overly safe or strategized. They needed help. When these students came to me during office hours, I would ask what they were working on in their lessons or ensembles. When I urged students to start asking questions about their private lesson literature they often said, "We can do that?" I was surprised by a tendency *against* integration of their performance literature and their work in music history class. It was evidence of silo thinking and an outcome from years of standardized "bucket" experiences in school.

One student (a string player) came to me with a question about C. P. E. Bach keyboard sonatas. I asked her why she had chosen that area for her project, and she said that she assumed there would be a lot of existing scholarship to work with. (This is the kind of "strategizing" that I often see; i.e., students choosing a topic that they believe will be easy rather than exploring an area that is either relatively unexplored or of genuine interest.) But she didn't have any natural interest in C. P. E. Bach or his music. When I asked her what she was working on in her lessons, she finally came around to confessing that she was working on the Beethoven "Ghost" Trio (op. 70, no. 1). I asked her if she had any questions about that piece, and she answered no. We talked about the piece, the challenges inherent in it, and finally she said, "Did you know that there are supposed to be quotes from his Second Symphony in the piece?" This unleashed a torrent of questions: *Where? Why?* This turned into a genuine set of open questions connected to the student's natural interests and existing skill sets.

Surprise No. 2: Students' Hesitancy to Trust Their Own Ideas

There were at least four times during the semester when I met with students who thought that they were going to have to abandon their research questions. They were frustrated because they thought they had great questions, but they couldn't find sources that answered their questions. The student who wrote about the role of improvisation in Czerny's pedagogy said that she thought that improvisation was connected to memorization (she had found that Czerny's students were more likely to play from memory than others) and to technical fluency. *But she couldn't find a single source that said this.* I was surprised that I had to tell her that she was allowed to have her own ideas and the role of research is to offer evidence to support her conclusions; this was surprising to her, as it was to other students. In this case, the student had access to Czerny's letters, memoirs, and *étude* books, as well as excellent secondary studies on the composer and his pedagogy.¹⁶ What was most impressive, however, was the student's ability to apply current research on memorization and improvisation pedagogies to this historical study, supporting her conclusion through a creative synthesis of otherwise unrelated (or loosely-related) fields.¹⁷ While she couldn't find a single source that confirmed her hypothesis, she was able to make a compelling case through the integration of existing primary and secondary sources.

Outcomes and Conclusions

In the book *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions*, Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana claim that teaching K–12 students how to ask and refine questions produces a behavioral and affective change in the students. The skill of asking and refining questions makes the students feel more confident

16. Carl Czerny, *The Art of Finger Dexterity for Piano*, ed. Harry Dexter (London: Hansen House, 1975); "Recollections from My Life," trans. Ernest Sanders, *The Musical Quarterly* 42 (1956), 302–17; *A Systematic Introduction to Improvisation on the Pianoforte*, Op. 200, trans. and ed. Alice L. Mitchell (New York: Longman, 1983); *Letters to a Young Lady, on the Art of Playing the Pianoforte*, trans. J. A. Hamilton and ed. Bea Friedland (New York: Da Capo Press, 1982). Secondary sources on Czerny included the collection of essays in David Gramit, ed. *Beyond The Art of Finger Dexterity: Reassessing Carl Czerny* (Rochester: Univ. of Rochester Press, 2008); and Martin Gellrich and Richard Parncutt, "Piano Technique and Fingering in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Bringing a Forgotten Method Back to Life," *British Journal of Music Education* 15 (1998): 5–23.

17. Jennifer Mishra, "A Century of Memorization Pedagogy," *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 32 (2010): 3–18; and Robin Moore, "The Decline of Improvisation in Western Art Music: An Interpretation of Change," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 23 (1992): 61–84.

working in areas of ambiguity and solving problems for themselves.¹⁸ Similar research on university students has yet to be completed; however, in my experience with my own classes, I have witnessed this behavioral and affective change and have anecdotal evidence of increased problem-solving skills. I was hoping to find evidence of an increased sense of ownership in the students' reflections on their work. Indeed, when asked what they did well in the research paper they overwhelmingly said that they had good ideas, that they were able to integrate research with their own ideas well, or that they felt that the overall content of the paper was strong. While I was initially disappointed that only one student said that the strongest aspect of his or her paper was a strong and original research question, I came to realize nonetheless that by creating a clear research question, the students took ownership of the content of the paper. In comparison, when I taught students to write topic-driven research projects, they struggled far more with the content of their writing. The topic-driven assignment might have given the student a superficial sense of engagement in scholarly discourse, but the inquiry-based research made the student a co-creator of knowledge.

While the students felt that the content was one of the strongest aspects of their papers, I was surprised by the sheer creativity of their scholarly projects. In comparison to topic-centered papers, these papers focused on unique areas of inquiry.¹⁹ A number of recent headlines have lamented the lack of creativity in recent graduates, and many employers claim that creativity and creative problem solving is one of their most highly prized skills alongside the ability to work well in teams and to communicate effectively.²⁰ Part of our student learning outcomes need to focus on teaching divergent thinking and creativ-

18. This research is based on K–12 educational settings with the most attention paid to the lower grade levels. Similar research has not, as far as I know, been systematically applied to higher educational settings and students. Rothstein and Santana, *Make Just One Change*, 82.

19. The following are some of the strongest research questions from this assignment: (1) How did Gluck's *Armide* influence later settings of the text, specifically Rossini's *Armida*? (2) How and why did Beethoven revise the duet 'O namenlose Freude!' for his opera *Fidelio*, and how did these revisions change the drama of the opera? (3) Who was cast in the original production of *The Beggar's Opera*, why were actors (and not singers) cast, and how did audiences of the time react? (4) Does Tchaikovsky's Fourth Suite "Mozartiana" foreshadow the Neoclassicism that emerges in the early twentieth century?

Not all the questions were unique and creative. Some of the questions resembled the typical "all about" topic-driven paper. These questions asked about the instrumentation of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto, Mozart and the Freemasons, appropriate performance practice of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 109, etc.

20. See Scott Jaschik, "Well-Prepared in Their Own Eyes," *Inside Higher Ed*, January 20, 2015, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/20/study-finds-big-gaps-between-student-and-employer-perceptions>, and Hart Research Associates, "It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success," *Liberal Education* 99, no. 2 (2013): <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/it-takes-more-major-employer-priorities-college-learning-and>.

ity. Inquiry-based research is essentially creative problem solving and involves both divergent and convergent thinking. Research is often a matter of quickly alternating between the two: divergent thinking imagines something new, convergent thinking asks if this something new is worthy of consideration given what I already know. Some students found that their creative research question was not worthy of consideration given the existing research. Some started with an original question, but backslid into old patterns of convergent thinking and wrote “safe” papers. However, many were able to adapt their question in order to find a balance between a new idea or hypothesis and existing research.

The following is a (surely incomplete) list of skills that we want to engender in our students so that they may continue asking questions and continue to value questions over answers, even in their own writing. We want them to:

1. Be curious and constantly interrogate the musical world around them. We want them to make connections between areas of study, ensembles, private lessons, and the larger musical world through inquiry, research, and writing.
2. Have the drive and initiative to pursue the questions and the ability to sustain an attitude of inquiry throughout a long project such as a research paper.
3. Be comfortable with a sense of autonomy. Even though most of what we do is built on the work of previous scholars, hopefully we are contributing something genuinely new. That is equally frightening as it is exciting.
4. Practice the skills of good observation, evaluation, and analysis. The ability to ask good questions stems from the skill of creative inquiry. Answers (“facts”) are means to better questions.
5. Engage primary sources in order to pursue the good questions. Inquiry will naturally drive the students toward this kind of evidence as they question existing scholarship.

Philosophers of education such as Freire have been thinking about how students can take control of their educational experiences and outcomes for a very long time. While public schooling has recently been moving toward an increasingly standardized “bucket” or “banking” model, educators have long understood that true transformational change happens in an environment of ambiguity.²¹

21. See recent research on confusion as a powerful educational tool: Steve Kolowich, “Confuse Students to Help Them Learn,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 14, 2014, <http://chronicle.com/article/Confuse-Students-to-Help-Them/148385/>, and Blair Lehman, Sidney D’Mello, and Art Graesser, “Confusion and Complex Learning During Interactions With Computer Learning Environments,” *Internet and Higher Education* 15, no. 3 (2012): 184–94.

These philosophers argue that inquiry and the ability to cope with the ambiguity that accompanies inquiry are skills that must be learned and practiced.

The research paper can be an arcane relic, especially for our students who have grown up with easy answers at their fingertips. My Ithaca College students in particular seem to be especially risk-averse (especially those conscientious students whose grades are tied to their scholarships). Students perceive ambiguity as risky and thus it is difficult for us to get them to engage in inquiry. Putting questions at the center of the research project challenges the students to work through (or indeed within!) ambiguity. The focus on questions recognizes that our students are curious human beings who already have the basic ingredients for interesting inquiry. If they are reflective enough to recognize it, they are living in a world of questions. Validating those questions validates their status as students, as thinkers. It also empowers the students to become not just passive recipients of knowledge but co-creators of knowledge. While we cannot change the “bucket” educational experience that most students have internalized coming into our classes, we don’t have to abandon a more independent, question-based, skills-focused pedagogy of research and writing.

Beyond the Trigger Warning: Teaching Operas that Depict Sexual Violence

KASSANDRA L. HARTFORD

In November of 2014, in the midst of continuing debates about trigger warnings on syllabi in a series of articles in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and just ahead of the now-retracted *Rolling Stone* article on a violent rape at the University of Virginia, I went to the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.¹ I sat in my usual seats—row G of the balcony—and found myself seated in the middle of a class visit from what I later learned was a local college. Judging from students' reactions, I expect most of them were unfamiliar with the plot of *Lady Macbeth*. A lively performance featuring the gifted Eva Westbroek elicited more gasps of horror and surprise, more sudden movements in seats, and more wide-eyed exclamations beginning with "Holy," than I had yet encountered at the Met. These were particularly pronounced in the infamous finale to Act I, staged in this version as a literal deflowering: a red rose rising over Katerina and Sergei marked the scene as one of passion. From conversations at intermission, it was clear that students were stunned not by the scene's sexual violence but rather by its—to them titillating—sexual content. As we left the opera, I turned to the person next to me to ask if she found this reading strange: after all, in this scene, Katerina exclaims "Let go!" again and again over a frenetic, violent orchestral gallop. "Well," she said, "it seemed like Katerina wanted it, so it didn't really bother me."

1. Laurie Essig, "Trigger Warnings Trigger Me," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 10, 2014, <http://chronicle.com/blogs/conversation/2014/03/10/trigger-warnings-trigger-me/>; Sarah Roff, "Treatment, Not Trigger Warnings," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 23, 2014, <http://chronicle.com/blogs/conversation/2014/05/23/treatment-not-trigger-warnings/>; Mason Stokes, "In Defense of Trigger Warnings," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 29, 2015, <http://chronicle.com/blogs/conversation/2014/05/29/in-defense-of-trigger-warnings/>; Sabrina Rubin Erdely, "A Rape on Campus: A Brutal Assault and Struggle for Justice at UVA," *Rolling Stone* 1223 (2014). The article has been retracted, but can still be accessed online at the following archive link: <http://web.archive.org/web/20141119200349/http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/features/a-rape-on-campus-20141119?page=7>.

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By contemporary legal definitions, the actions of the last scene in the first act of *Lady Macbeth* constitute rape.² Katerina does not consent: she repeatedly asks Sergey to leave. She informs him that he is frightening her. When he grabs her, she repeatedly tells him to let her go. Yet I had just sat through a performance in which the audience—including a group of college students present with an instructor—failed to recognize this as a rape scene. Perhaps even more concerning, I actually *heard* an audience member articulate one of the most damaging myths about rape in response to the production: that women secretly want it.

As an opera goer and an opera lover, I have no wish to discourage students from going to an opera or from having the kind of deep emotional engagement with it that the students attending this performance had. Yet the extraordinary sensory power of opera—the power of an art enacted in time, live, before us—gives it a unique power to affect us. It is designed to do so: that is precisely what Schiller points to in his essay “The Stage as a Moral Institution.” For Schiller, the stage is not just, as his title suggests, a moral institution—one that “pronounces a terrible verdict on vice”—but also “a guide for civil life,” one that teaches us by example about socially appropriate behaviors.³ Few of us in the world of the twenty-first century expect the theatrical or operatic stage to serve as the kind of moral compass Schiller imagined more than two hundred years ago. And yet because of its power, opera *can* shape the way students think about, respond to, and feel about contemporary issues. The reactions that I saw demonstrated that, for at least some audience members, the Met’s production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* perpetuated rape culture. What is “rape culture”? Bonnie Gordon describes it as an ideology that “normalizes rape as part of a larger system of attitudes and understandings of gender and sexuality.”⁴ It does so in part by fostering a body of myths about rape that encourage victim blaming and shaming and that tacitly sanction perpetrators. Common rape myths include the assertions that a woman’s manner of dress may suggest that she is “asking for it”; that most women are raped by strangers; that women cannot be raped by their husbands

2. Although states do report the crime somewhat differently, the Uniform Crime Report’s statistics—those used to measure crimes across states by institutions such as the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation use the following definition: “The penetration, no matter how light, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.” Office of the Attorney General, “Attorney General Eric Holder Announces Revisions to the Uniform Crime Report’s Definition of Rape,” Jan. 6, 2012, <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-eric-holder-announces-revisions-uniform-crime-report-s-definition-rape>.

3. Friedrich Schiller, “The Stage as a Moral Institution,” in *Dramatic Theory and Criticism: Greeks to Grotowski*, ed. Bernard F. Dukore (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974), 441, 442. The text is reprinted from Schiller, *Complete Works*, vol. III (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1902). The translator is anonymous.

4. Bonnie Gordon, “Why We Matter,” *Women in Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 19 (2015): 119.

or boyfriends; and that women say no when they mean yes. If we understand that *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*—at least in some stagings and without prior critical commentary—can perpetuate rape culture, what does that mean for the opera’s place in our classrooms? Must Katerina Ismailova—one of the most compellingly written female characters in twentieth-century opera—necessarily be cast aside? And how are we to deal with *other* canonical works in which sexual violence figures? It is hard to imagine even an introductory class in music in which operas appear and in which sexual violence, or the threat of it, is entirely absent. For example, one popular textbook, Thomas Forrest Kelly’s *Music Then and Now*, features three such works, Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, Berg’s *Wozzeck*, and Bernstein’s *West Side Story*; another well-respected introductory text, Joseph Kerman and Gary Tomlinson’s *Listen*, features all three and *Rigoletto*.⁵

In this article, I suggest that we need not abandon these operas. Rather, I want to argue that it is possible to teach these works in such a way that we not only avoid perpetuating rape culture, but also work to transform it—an idea borrowed from the influential edited collection *Transforming Rape Culture*.⁶ The conversation about trigger warnings in higher education circles in recent years has focused on the needs of trauma survivors. The purpose of a trigger warning is to alert those who have experienced trauma to discussions, texts, and media that may cause them to re-experience trauma, in order that they may better prepare emotionally for the experience or, if necessary, absent themselves from the discussion. Yet by their very nature, trigger warnings are issued for those who have experienced trauma. In confining the way we speak about sexual violence in classrooms to survivors, we can easily overlook the ways that such scenes affect the remainder of our students. In essence, that is, we risk failing to reckon with the broader problem of rape culture when we simply issue a trigger warning—which is why I propose here that we must think beyond the trigger warning.

I outline here four strategies for approaching sexual violence in opera. First—and most importantly—sexual violence must be named as such. As I show, this suggestion is well-supported in both feminist theory and research in the social sciences. Second, instructors can prepare students for such discussions and allot classroom time for the reaction to and processing of these issues. Third, instructors can be cognizant of the ways that particular productions shape students’ understanding of an opera’s meaning; they must choose productions carefully and discuss these productions with students. Finally, I suggest that it is important to identify campus partners among the staff and faculty and to create dialogues about the best practices in conjunction with

5. Thomas Forrest Kelly, *Music Then and Now* (New York: Norton, 2013); Joseph Kerman and Gary Tomlinson with Vivian Kerman, *Listen*, 7th ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012).

6. Emilie Buchwald, Pamela R. Fletcher, and Martha Roth, eds., *Transforming a Rape Culture: Revised Edition* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2005).

those campus partners. By thinking more holistically about the ways that we respond to operatic depictions of rape, I assert that we can retain important and powerful works in the courses that we teach, stimulate students to engage critically with operatic texts and relevant contemporary issues, and work to change rape culture on campus.

Naming Sexual Violence: Theory and Practice

In *Transforming a Rape Culture*, feminist advocate Carol J. Adams notes that “in the absence of naming violence and understanding the dynamics of sexual victimization, it is difficult to believe victims, even though they usually understate the abuse.”⁷ For Adams, the goal of naming sexual violence is to draw the issue out of the shadows in which it hides, and to make it easier both for survivors to come forward and for them to find advocates who will believe them rather than dismissing their experiences. Yet naming sexual violence in the classroom has a secondary purpose: it can clarify what the term *means* for students. As psychology professor Renae Franiuk notes, “Consent is the key issue in cases of sexual assault, and research shows that many people do not fully understand this term in the context of sexual situations.”⁸ Franiuk’s claims are supported by a wealth of new research that locates particular obstacles in gender differences in students’ understanding of consent and in the fact that even victims tend not to recognize experiences of sexual assault as such when they do not adhere to “rape scripts”—that is, a relatively narrow conception of rape that aligns with predominant rape myths (i.e., rapes happen outside, rapists are strangers).⁹

7. Carol J. Adams, “‘I Just Raped My Wife! What are you Going to Do about It, Pastor?’: The Church and Sexual Violence,” in *Transforming a Rape Culture*, ed. Buchwald et al., 80.

8. Renae Franiuk, “Discussing and Defining Sexual Assault: A Classroom Activity,” *College Teaching* 55, no. 3 (2007): 105.

9. For example, Jozkowski et al.’s recent research study notes gender differences in heterosexual college students’ understandings of consent: while women indicate that they tend to *grant* consent verbally, men tend to *interpret* consent through body language, a communication gap that opens the possibility of sexual assault, “as nonconsent that is not recognized and honored by a partner could lead to sexual assault.” This work echoes the findings of earlier research by Terry Humphreys regarding gender differences in the negotiation of sexual consent. Cleere and Lynn have examined the ways in which internalized “rape scripts” have led many unacknowledged victims of sexual assault to characterize experiences that met the definition of sexual assault as “a serious miscommunication.” These results are particularly concerning given that Cleere and Lynn’s research indicated that acknowledged and unacknowledged victims held similar levels of psychological distress in response to these events on all measures except PTSD. Jozkowski et al, “Gender Differences in Heterosexual College Students’ Conceptualizations and Indicators of Sexual Consent: Implications for Contemporary Sexual Assault Prevention Education,” *The Journal of Sex Research* 51, no. 8 (2014): 909–10, 913; Terry Humphreys, “Perceptions of Sexual Consent: The Impact of Relationship History and Gender,” *Journal of Sex Research* 44, no. 4 (2007): 313; Colleen Cleere and Steven Jay Lynn, “Acknowledged Versus

How might this change pedagogy in music history classrooms? First, we as instructors must question received wisdom and take a critical look at the synopses of the operas we teach. The current Grove Music Online summarizes the last scene in the first act of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* by noting that Katerina “succumbs to [Sergei’s] seduction.”¹⁰ Yet Katerina’s text in the libretto simply does not support that reading: she asks Sergei to leave, she tells him he is frightening her, and she repeatedly asks him to let go. Musicologists often refer to the scene as a seduction or as an “ambiguous” scene, but it is a textbook example of express verbal nonconsent. My use of the phrase “textbook example” here is advised: Franiuk describes a strategy for helping undergraduate students understand the meaning of consent by asking students to rate whether or not a given situation constitutes a sexual assault. One of her situations—a date rape in which a woman tells a man she does not wish to have sex, and he continues despite her protestations—mirrors the scene in *Lady Macbeth*.¹¹ Franiuk’s undergraduates all correctly identified her date rape example as a rape, a first-to-fourth degree sexual assault in the state of Wisconsin, where the study was conducted.¹² Confronted with the same interactions in opera, musicologists do not do the same.¹³ And yet the arguments for reading the scene as anything *but* a rape rely upon the myths of rape culture: that women, and particularly Katerina, secretly want to be raped; that women, and particularly Katerina, cannot be raped by a man they have been attracted to, and Katerina has been attracted to Sergei in Act I, scene ii; that women’s—and particularly Katerina’s—sexual fantasies center around rape; and that Katerina’s desire for “passionate embraces” should thus be read as a desire to be raped—in short, that Katerina says no when she means yes.

One might suggest that the simplest solution to this problem is to avoid *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, which has generated a host of controversies in different eras. The damning *Pravda* review that sidelined the work for decades “Unacknowledged Sexual Assault Among College Women,” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 28, no. 12 (2013): 2594, 2604–05.

10. Laurel Fay, “Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O002507>.

11. Franiuk, “Discussing and Defining Sexual Assault,” 105

12. Franiuk, “Discussing and Defining Sexual Assault,” 106.

13. In a review of a 2007 Canadian Opera company production, for example, Herman Trotter notes that “the handsome hired hand Sergei . . . with only perfunctory resistance beds the wild Katerina” (24). Arthur Jacobs and Stanley Sadie note that Sergei seduces Katerina “without much effort,” which one might attribute to the dated nature of the text if it were not consistently reproduced in more contemporary writings: Charles Osbourne’s *The Opera Lover’s Companion*, for example, describes the scene as a “passionate embrace” and notes that the men in an earlier scene are “playfully molesting Aksinya.” Herman Trotter, “Shostakovich: *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*,” *American Record Guide* 70, no. 3 (2007): 24–25; Arthur Jacobs and Stanley Sadie, *The Limelight Book of Opera* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1996 [1984]), 510; Charles Osbourne, *The Opera Lover’s Companion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 404, 403.

responded not to concerns about the sexual violence depicted at the end of Act I, but rather to the obscenity of the explicitly sexual music that accompanied the scene.¹⁴ While Richard Taruskin has described the anonymous reviewer as “puritanical,” he elsewhere voices his own very different set of concerns about the opera, pointing to the fact that Katerina and Sergei’s ruthlessness in pursuit of their own happiness is disturbingly reminiscent of the broader approach of Stalin’s Soviet state.¹⁵ The sexual violence in *Lady Macbeth*—not only in Katerina’s rape but also in Aksinya’s sexual assault—might seem like the straw that breaks the camel’s back, a final fatal flaw that dooms the work to obscurity (at least within the confines of the music history curriculum).

As I suggested above, however, these issues arise in *many* of the operas that we teach in introductory and survey classes. Ironically, these operas become most problematic when well-meaning authors and editors use euphemisms that obscure the opera’s content. The well-respected Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca text provides one such example. It summarizes the opening of *Don Giovanni* thusly:

Leporello, Don Giovanni’s servant, laments his sufferings in an opera-buffa style aria, with a touch of aristocratic horn calls when he declares his wish to live like a gentleman rather than a servant. He is interrupted by a clamor as Don Giovanni emerges from [Donna Anna’s] house, where he has tried to have his way with her.¹⁶

By Donna Anna’s own account of that incident, in “Or sai chi l’onore,” she finds a cloaked intruder in her bedroom at night. She briefly takes him to be a known suitor, Don Ottavio, but soon realizes her mistake. He makes advances, and she resists, physically and violently—first by screaming and calling for help, and then by “struggling, twisting, and turning” against Giovanni’s embrace until she frees herself of the intruder and pursues him into the night.¹⁷ What Donna

14. “Chaos Instead of Music,” in *Strunk’s Source Readings in Music History, Vol. 7: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Robert P. Morgan (New York: Norton, 1998), 1397–99.

15. Taruskin describes the opera as “a profoundly inhumane work of art.” He continues on to note: “Its technique of dehumanizing victims is the perennial method of those who would perpetrate and justify genocide, whether of kulaks in the Ukraine, Jews in Greater Germany, or aborigines in Tasmania. So, one must admit, if ever an opera deserved to be banned it was this one, and matters are not changed by the fact that its actual ban was for wrong and hateful reasons.” Richard Taruskin and Christopher H. Gibbs, *The Oxford History of Western Music: College Edition* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 961; Taruskin, “Shostakovich and the Inhuman,” in *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 509.

16. J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 9th ed. (New York: Norton, 2014), 554.

17. The translation is from Burton D. Fisher, ed. and trans., *Mozart’s Don Giovanni* (Coral Gables, FL: Opera Journeys, 2002), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10075776>. The original Italian is

Anna describes is *not* a callous lover who seduces women and leaves them: she describes an attempted rape, from which she escapes only with considerable physical struggle. While the first half of Donna Anna's exchange with Don Giovanni happens offstage, there is little reason to doubt her account, which is entirely consistent with the rage she shows in the opening scene.¹⁸ *A History of Western Music* is hardly alone in its description of the scene, however. Kerman and Tomlinson note that Don Giovanni "commits crimes and moral sins—and not just against the woman he seduces," a phrasing that draws attention to Don Giovanni's flawed moral compass but that covers over his attempts to rape both Donna Anna and Zerlina.¹⁹

With a summary that acknowledges the possibility of seduction or rape, Taruskin and Gibbs's account in *The Oxford History of Western Music: College Edition* is the most straightforward about the events that transpire on stage.²⁰ And yet even that description, which opens with the possibility of seduction, is not likely to resonate with students' understandings of rape in the twenty-first century, precisely because the opening scene in *Don Giovanni* resonates so deeply with the "rape scripts" that students know.²¹ To the virtuous noblewoman Donna Anna, Don Giovanni is a masked stranger and an intruder in her home; she only later realizes that he is an acquaintance. She struggles with him violently, even pursuing him into the street once she has broken free of his grip in an attempt to ascertain his identity. Rather than allowing his identity to be revealed and facing punishment, Don Giovanni murders her father in front of her. A summary of these events as a frustrated seduction is at odds with the campus messaging that students are likely to learn elsewhere in their college education, feminist writing on rape culture that has made its way into the mainstream media, and in recent and well-publicized changes in the legal definitions of rape and sexual assault. Liane Curtis has suggested studying the opera in its entirety in order to work through these issues in conventional summaries—an approach that is rewarding but time-intensive, particularly in survey and introductory-level courses, where there is much material to cover.²² Yet even the simple and practical measure of filling out our summaries of the opera and acknowledging sexual violence more explicitly can have a measurable impact.

"svincolarmi, torcermi, e piegarmi."

18. Further, as Julian Rushton notes, there is little *musical* evidence to cause us to doubt Donna Anna's account. Julian Rushton, *Don Giovanni* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 102.

19. Kerman and Tomlinson, *Listen*, 196.

20. Taruskin and Gibbs, *Oxford History of Western Music*, 446.

21. Cleere and Lynn, "Acknowledged Versus Unacknowledged," 2603.

22. Liane Curtis, "The Sexual Politics of Teaching *Don Giovanni*," *NWSA Journal* 12, no. 1 (2000): 121.

The power of naming rape and sexual violence in such scenes, and drawing attention to the myths about sexual assault that underpin readings of these encounters as seduction, is supported not only by feminist thought but also by research in the social sciences. One research study indicated that while students exposed to a story depicting rape as an erotic experience had a greater acceptance of rape myths, including even a paragraph-long textual debriefing had a statistically significant effect in lowering their acceptance of these myths.²³ This research suggests that taking the classroom time to acknowledge that a scene enacts rape, and to point out that the real-life consequences are different from those portrayed in the opera, may have a measurable effect on students' perception of the myths of rape culture.

To those who might fear that we are judging the past by present standards, I should note that my suggestions do not preclude a historically informed approach to understanding the opera's depiction of sexual violence. A number of scholars working in Classics have successfully designed projects that asked students to think critically about the depiction of rape in ancient texts. By asking students to compare modern and ancient definitions of rape, encouraging them to think about the etymology and translatability of the term rape, and focusing attention on commonalities and differences in ancient and modern understandings of gender and power, instructors in Classics are tackling texts rife with sexual violence in ways that offer opportunities for deeper intellectual engagement and greater contemporary relevance in the eyes of students.²⁴

What might that mean for teaching an opera like *Lady Macbeth*? Musicologist Elizabeth Wells's article "The New Woman: *Lady Macbeth* and Sexual Politics in the Stalinist Era" offers this kind of historical grounding, contextualizing the depictions of the sex and violence in this opera in Soviet discourses of its era.²⁵ Wells's analysis positions *Lady Macbeth* in the context both of high rates of sexual violence and debates about what the "New Woman" might mean in the early Soviet era, demonstrating the resonance between Shostakovich's own ideas and that of the Soviet feminist Alexandra Kollontai.²⁶ Wells points to historical details, noting that Aksinya's assault in Act I, scene ii, was widely understood as

23. Neil M. Malamuth and James V.P. Check, "Debriefing Effectiveness Following Exposure to Pornographic Rape Depictions," *The Journal of Sex Research* 20, no. 1 (1984): 8. While this is an older study, Malamuth and Check's research continues to be cited in the social sciences. See, for example, Lee Ann Kahlor and Dan Morrison, "Television Viewing and Rape Myth Acceptance Among College Women," *Sex Roles* 56 (2007): 729–39.

24. See Rosanna Lauriola "Teaching About the Rape of Lucretia: A Student Project," *Classical World* 106, no. 4 (2013): 686; Yurie Hong, "Teaching Rape Texts in Classical Literature," *Classical World* 106, no. 4 (2013): 671–73; Elizabeth Gloyn, "Reading Rape in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: A Test-Case Lesson," *Classical World* 106, no. 4 (2013): 678–79.

25. Elizabeth Wells, "'The New Woman': *Lady Macbeth* and Sexual Politics in the Stalinist Era," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 13, no. 2 (2001): 163–89.

26. Wells, "Lady Macbeth and Sexual Politics," 179.

a rape at the time of the production's premiere.²⁷ It is thus striking that Aksinya and Katerina sing the same motive on the same pitch in their interactions with Sergei during Aksinya's assault and Katerina's so-called seduction.²⁸ Wells's work thus suggests that critically interrogating the sexual violence in an opera may, in some cases, help us better understand the opera's musical and dramatic text and context.

One common objection to describing or staging the scene as a rape is that it defies Shostakovich's intention. In a recent review of both Martin Kušej's and Robert Jones's productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, with De Nederlandse Opera and the Royal Opera respectively, Marina Frolova-Walker notes that Jones's staging of the Act I Finale —as a “side-splittingly funny caper of mutual consent”—is “in keeping with Shostakovich's original version, whose obscene trombone glissandos had to be removed from the score before its initial publication.”²⁹ Frolova-Walker's review thus suggests that Jones's reading of the scene is more in keeping with compositional intent. Yet here there is scant evidence for reading *Katerina's* consent, or lack thereof, precisely because the argument centers on the trombone's phallic gesture, which tells us much about Sergei's response but little about Katerina's. The parallels in Aksinya's and Katerina's musical and textual language in their refusal of Sergei's advances suggest that these kinds of claims may overstate our knowledge of Shostakovich's intent. Shostakovich juxtaposes a dirty joke in the trombone and a calculated repetition of one vocal line and the broader musical style of what Rena Moisenko deemed “perhaps the most revolting scene in the entire opera,” in which “shrieks of pain of the raped girl intermingle with coarse and cynical comments from the crowd of onlookers.”³⁰ The frenetic orchestral gallop, which has often been read simply as lusty, can equally be read through its musical correspondence both

27. Wells, “Lady Macbeth and Sexual Politics,” 168.

28. Wells, “Lady Macbeth and Sexual Politics,” 181.

29. Marina Frolova-Walker, “Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk: Bleak Tragedy or Black Comedy? (review).” *The Opera Quarterly* 25, no. 1–2 (2009): 152. Frolova-Walker's reading suggests—throughout—that she accepts the myths of rape culture, and that these myths influence her appraisals of the operas at hand: she notes that “Paradoxically, it is the stronger and more knowing woman of the Amsterdam production who is raped . . . while the awkward girl of the ROH production is ready and willing” (155). Frolova-Walker fails to acknowledge that this is “paradoxical” only if one assumes that a “stronger and more knowing woman” is less likely to be raped than one who more closely matches an “ideal” rape victim, who “wears the unsexy, girlish clothes of a virgin” (155). Further, Frolova-Walker's account of Act I, scene iii as “side-splittingly funny” reads somewhat differently when one juxtaposes it with the earlier scene with Aksinya, during which the crowd laughs uproariously as she cries “Oh, you swine, my breast's covered in bruises! The shameless brute, he's pinched my breast all over.” The crowd declares this so funny that they may “split [their] sides.”

30. Rena Moisenko, *Realist Music: 25 Soviet Composers* (London: Meridian Books Ltd., 1949), 203–04.

to Aksinya's rape and Sergei's flogging, underscoring the violence of the act.³¹ If, rather than instructing students in a received interpretation that attempts to smooth over these complexities, we encourage them to seek evidence from the score (and here, the libretto, which is co-authored by Shostakovich), we are able to avoid projecting a set of troubling ideas that may or may not reflect the composer's own concerns into the work.

In *Don Giovanni*, which has a longer and richer interpretive tradition, these questions become more pressing. Recent scholarship has suggested that some of the gendered readings of *Don Giovanni* in the past represent a tendency that, at best, engaged insufficiently with Mozart's own contexts and at worst, slipped into outright misogyny, as in the claim that "it would be beneficial to [Donna Anna's] personal growing-up if she had been pleasantly raped by Don Juan."³² Kristi Brown-Montesano argues persuasively that much of the interpretive tradition surrounding *Don Giovanni*, in which Don Giovanni is a heroic figure and Donna Anna is secretly in love with him, is as deeply rooted in E. T. A. Hoffman's nineteenth-century reimagining of the work as it is to Mozart and DaPonte's opera.³³ Yet such challenges do not come exclusively from explicitly feminist scholars like Brown-Montesano. Mary Hunter has similarly shown that a tendency to read Don Ottavio "essentially as a wimp" emerged out of Hoffman's reading, which contrasts "the forceful manliness of Don Giovanni" with a "feminized Ottavio."³⁴ Hunter's own analysis suggests that Don Ottavio is better read through the discourse of "noble simplicity," which turned in part on "extraordinary restraint in a situation where extravagant expression . . . would be ordinary."³⁵ From this perspective, Don Ottavio is not gendered as a weak or effeminate man, but rather, marked as an ideal nobleman in the expectations of his class and time precisely through the sharp contrast to Don Giovanni's excesses. In very different ways, Hunter's, Brown-Montesano's, and Wells's arguments point to the fact that ideas about gender performance and conventions for sexual roles are shaped by particular historical and social contexts and, in many cases, closely tied to class or social status. This example illustrates the danger in speaking for composer intention in broad strokes in our discussions of these operas: without sustained study of the gender dynamics and roles of the *opera's* time, we risk projecting the gendered conventions of our time onto the opera—and identifying them, once thus projected, as the composer's intent.

31. Wells, "Lady Macbeth and Sexual Politics," 168, 180–81.

32. William Mann, quoted in Kristi Brown-Montesano, *Understanding the Women of Mozart's Operas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 12.

33. Brown-Montesano, *Understanding*, 11.

34. Mary Hunter, "Nobility in Mozart's Operas," *Art and Ideology in European Opera: Essays in Honor of Julian Rushton*, ed. Rachel Cowgill, David Cooper, and Clive Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), 190.

35. Hunter, "Nobility," 186.

Because these operas deal with a theme of contemporary relevance for our students, acknowledging the issues at work may in fact spur students to a deeper critical engagement with these operas than they might otherwise have. In my most recent introductory course in Western concert music, I required students to select one of the four operas that we had studied in class, to listen and watch a production of the opera in its entirety, and to write a short response. Taken collectively, the papers on *Don Giovanni* were the strongest that I received: students engaged more deeply both with the libretto's text and the music than they did with other operas. In class, we had studied the opening scene, "Or sai chi l'onore," and the finales to Acts I and II. In class discussion, we had examined the theme of sexual violence both in the opening to Act I and in its finale. For students, this opened questions about the contrast between Don Giovanni's superficial charm and the violence of his actions throughout the opera, and this made them more attentive to *other* issues of power throughout. More than one student, for example, had rich interpretations of Don Giovanni's interactions with Leporello, turning attention to the ways in which Don Giovanni's relationships with social inferiors were plagued by some of the same issues as his interactions with women. Further, students clearly realized the relevance of the issues examined in opera to their lives on campus: one theater major, for example, critiqued a number of elements in the staging she had seen and proposed an effective contemporary staging of *Don Giovanni* on a college campus.

Planning, Preparation, and Reaction

The second intervention that I suggest unfolds in two stages: preparing students for difficult materials and allowing them classroom time and space for reactions. I do not use trigger warnings marked as such on my syllabi, in part because that is not part of institutional culture at my current college or the university where I previously taught. I do, however, prepare students for potentially disturbing materials ahead of time, through a combination of annotations in the syllabus and short verbal commentaries both at the course's beginning and in the class session that precedes our discussion of a work. Unlike a traditional trigger warning, my explanations and annotations acknowledge both the opera's difficult themes and its importance. I also leave room for students to enjoy opera. For example, when I teach *Don Giovanni*, I often note that one of my former students, a jazz performer who was a fan neither of opera nor of classical music, studied *Don Giovanni* and became a convert: she asked for tickets to a live performance at the Metropolitan Opera for her next birthday and joined the college's symphony orchestra the following year. This warning allows students to prepare themselves for the experience of responding to an opera that treats themes of sexual violence, and, if necessary, to request an alternate

assignment ahead of time—although I have never had a student ask for one. It also prepares students for difficult material in a way that addresses one of the primary criticisms of trigger warnings: namely, that they prepare students to understand the material they are about to study as in some way harmful.³⁶ This strategy opens a window of opportunity to discuss opera's emotional complexity and the intensity of our engagement with it. Further, it leaves students room to engage with difficult operas—even to love them—without becoming apologists for their treatment of sexual violence and gender roles (and, by extension, issues of race, colonialism, or class).

My pedagogical strategy focuses equally upon discussion in response both to the assigned materials and to in-class listenings and viewings. On days when students have been assigned reading or listening that discuss sexual violence, I begin class by eliciting students' responses to them with an open-ended question such as, "What are your reactions to this opera?" This allows students who have found materials difficult, frustrating, or disturbing to express those concerns immediately, and defuses tensions because students are sure that both their classmates and I have heard their concerns at the outset. When such concerns or responses result from a misunderstanding of the assigned material or a misreading of a text, it allows for discussion that helps to focus students' reading comprehension and textual interpretation. When students disagree, it encourages them to practice the skills that are at the core of music history courses: developing an interpretation of a musical or musical-dramatic text, finding the evidence to support that reading, and framing it as an argument. I continue this exercise with each in-class listening and viewing assignment for the day, which helps to ensure that students who might struggle with the material have ample opportunities to reflect and debrief.

In an interdisciplinary course for non-majors that I taught recently, "Representing the First World War," I asked students to watch the entirety of Berg's *Wozzeck*. I had warned the students (all non-majors) that the opera was violent, but had left alone the question of the ambiguous Act I scene between Marie and the Drum Major. The first student who spoke drew attention to the apparent power differential between Marie and the Drum Major and to the Drum Major's aggressive posturing and language. Drawing upon these elements, she suggested that the scene was best understood as a rape, since Marie's ability to consent was impaired by the class and power differential between the two characters and her consent was not affirmative. The student's observation prompted a lively discussion. Students pointed to Marie's apparent concession—"it's all the same to me," she says, after a lengthy protest—and

36. Ellen Kaplan, "Trigger Warnings Scare Students When They Should Be Gently Guided," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Aug. 11, 2014, <http://chronicle.com/article/Trigger-Warnings-Scare/148351>.

debated whether that constituted affirmative consent. Ultimately, the majority of my students understood this as a rape, a consensus they reached after drawing attention not only to Marie's text but also to the violent brass outbursts at Marie's "Lass mich!" ("Let me go!") and her ascent into the high register for "Ruh mich nicht an" ("Don't touch me"), which read to them more like a shriek. Responding to a student's concerns about the potential sexual violence in the scene thus led directly to a thoughtful discussion in which students responded directly to both textual and musical elements, drawing evidence from the opera to support their readings. One of the concerns that has been aired about trigger warnings specifically is that they forestall critical thinking and censor curricula.³⁷ As this example demonstrates, however, I have found that a modified trigger warning, and a carefully prepared discussion of difficult materials, has precisely the opposite effect. My students—both male and female—often deeply engage with these works and the themes they present, which resonate with broader campus conversations and concerns.

Preparing students for the conversations that we will have and allowing them time to debrief in class acknowledges the emotional impact of this powerful idiom, even as it encourages them to think critically about works that make audiences uncomfortable—sometimes in productive ways. Indeed, there is much to be gained from teasing out the line *between* objecting to or drawing attention to materials that make one uncomfortable and censoring them. This can be particularly productive in a discussion of *Lady Macbeth*. Students often encounter only a short excerpt from or summary of the debate over *Lady Macbeth*. Yet if one assigns both the review itself and a section of the opera, and allows students to form their own reactions separate from the *Pravda* review and debates about censorship, it opens room for critical thinking about music, drama, and questions about opera's social function. This can lead students to examine why the plot unfolds as it does, to consider what function a scene that makes us uncomfortable might have, and to exploit opportunities to put present-day concerns in dialogue with music history. Thus, it allows students to appreciate *Lady Macbeth*—or similar works—in ways that are much more complex (and here, of course, I echo Liane Curtis's suggestions on teaching *Don Giovanni*).³⁸

37. See, for example, Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt, "The Coddling of the American Mind," *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/the-coddling-of-the-american-mind/399356/>; Craig Klugman, "Trigger Warnings on College Campuses Are Nothing But Censorship," *Pacific Standard*, Dec. 22, 2015, <https://psmag.com/trigger-warnings-on-college-campuses-are-nothing-but-censorship-a71cf8de272e#.wy7xe4z2b>.

38. Curtis, "Sexual Politics," 121.

Selecting Productions

One of the challenges in dealing with these operas is deciding whether to show stagings of these operas and, if so, which stagings to show. Opera is a powerful idiom precisely because it encompasses multiple sensory domains. It is also a remarkably *flexible* genre; an innovative staging of an opera, like Chereau's *Ring* production, can rework the most problematic elements in a text; an unsuccessful one can exacerbate them. Yet what kind of staging is successful in this context? It might seem like the best staging for a class is the one in which the presentation is *least* disturbing—one like last fall's Met production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Yet the audience reaction I described at the opening of this paper suggests the problem with this kind of staging. If we show a staging in which a scene that meets contemporary legal definitions of rape is presented as titillating or pleasurable, we risk reifying the myths of rape culture. Showing productions that show sexual violence for what it is will make students uncomfortable—but sexual violence *should* make students (and us) uncomfortable. That is to say, this kind of discomfort is productive and thought-provoking. The alternative—productions that stage rape as scenes of passion—encourages audiences to consider the events as not-rape, and thus to accept a broader body of myths about rape that enable rape culture.

This is not to suggest by any means that *Regietheater* is off the table. In upper-level classes, I often discuss operatic stagings with students. When students have had several opportunities to discuss and critique particular productions in class, with an eye to the ways different productions shape meaning, I ask them to imagine a staging of a work that raises thorny issues of contemporary relevance. I have not yet asked students to consider this approach in a work treating sexual violence, although I have asked them to imagine a staging of a work with themes like anti-Semitism, racism, and colonialism. By asking students to consider how *they* might stage a given work, the assignment invites students to develop an investment in the work and its performance, but it requires them to tackle the ethical issues such operas raise. Because even staging a portion of a work requires both score study and careful examination of the themes that might be brought out in staging, the assignment tends to encourage deep critical engagement with operatic works. By way of a caveat, such assignments depend on a continual engagement with opera over the course of a class and a command of score study, and are thus better suited to upper-level courses and assignments that fall later in the semester.

Working With Campus Partners

Much of the concern about trigger warnings has been precisely that trigger warning policies handed down from administration reflect an infringement of faculty's rights to determine the content of their own curricula. I approached this differently: at the time that I began working on this issue, I was working at a large research university that had no administrative or departmental policy on trigger warnings. I was concerned, however, about finding a way to meet the diverse needs of the student population, which—statistically speaking—was likely to include both a number of sexual violence survivors and a number of students who accept a broad body of myths about sexual violence that the operas we study in my classes might either challenge or reinforce. I took my concerns to the experts on the issue. On that campus, the staff from Counseling and Psychological Services ran not only the counseling program, but also workshops on sexual violence in first-year seminars; they were housed partially in the Wo/Men's Center and had offered a SafeSpace workshop I had attended two years previously focused on supporting LGBTQ students. Ultimately, I had three primary questions for them:

1. If we want to be sensitive to the needs of both sexual violence survivors and the general student body at large, should we include trigger warnings on syllabi?
2. Should we show productions of these kinds of operas in class?
3. If we *do* show productions, what kind do we show?

While I had my own ideas about what was appropriate, I felt that referring the question to a campus partner with greater experience with sexual violence survivors and sexual assault prevention could only be productive—and I was prepared to concede I needed a new approach on their recommendation. Rather than a simple answer, however, I found my questions prompted dialogues; I spoke and corresponded with staff members and discovered that in fact sexual assault educators face some of these same challenges. As a musician, I often think of music, theater, and film as the only domains on campus where art happens in time, and therefore with a kind of immediacy and emotional impact that separates them out from other arts and humanities disciplines. Yet precisely *because* of that emotional power, sexual assault educators often use mediums like film or live theater in order to dramatize the importance of these issues. As they explained it, sexual assault educators at that institution made their own informed decisions about whether or not to show potentially disturbing scenes

that illustrated the issues at hand, although they always both prepared students for such materials and allowed time for discussion and debriefing.

When I took on a new teaching position at a small liberal arts college in the fall of 2015, I reached out to the co-director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and chair of the Women and Gender Studies program to ask about the campus climate surrounding trigger warnings at this institution. While there was no existing policy on the issue, she invited me to take part in a Faculty Center for Teaching discussion on the issue. The event drew interest from faculty not only in Women's Studies and the humanities, as might be expected, but from a number of departments—including those where such issues infrequently come into play, such as mathematics. In this context, faculty were able to share ideas and teaching strategies in an environment conducive to frank but collegial conversation.

In both of these cases, perhaps the most important thing for me—particularly as a young faculty member who given my field of study must engage with these complex issues—was the opportunity to work collaboratively alongside other members of the staff and faculty in considering and responding to depictions of sexual violence in the classroom. When it is possible, this approach helps to break down the polarities between campus constituencies, so that faculty, staff, students, and administration are not deadlocked against one another but can instead work collectively to create a better campus environment.

Conclusion

In this article, I have laid out four strategies for negotiating the challenges facing instructors who teach operas that depict sexual violence. These suggestions are grounded in both a healthy realism and a healthy optimism. For if, as instructors, we need to be realistic about the rape cultures on our campuses, the possibility that we can be part of meaningful change by thoughtfully attending to these issues is fundamentally heartening. Further, work in the social sciences suggests that there is an evidentiary basis for this optimism. By working beyond disciplinary, departmental, and administrative boundaries, we can address sexual violence in music history classes in ways that take a proactive stance on one of the most pressing pedagogical challenges in classrooms today—while fully embracing the broader goals of engaging students in critical thinking, historical inquiry, and attentive listening.

Teaching Research and Writing Across the Music History Curriculum

JEFFREY WRIGHT

Teachers of music history often have many pedagogical aims. Not only are they responsible for covering historical content, but they are frequently tasked with teaching bibliographic skills, the process of scholarly inquiry, and components of good academic writing. Final research papers often serve as a capstone project in music history courses, allowing faculty to evaluate these myriad skills. Yet, these final research papers are often well-below instructor expectations. Musicologist Pamela Starr, for example, describes grading research papers as one of the most discouraging aspects of a professor's job, concluding that students are not prepared to engage with sophisticated scholarly discourse.¹ Pedagogical literature abounds with potential solutions to the "final paper problem." Suggestions include providing students with intermediary assignments to better guide them through the research process on the one hand or advocating for the replacement of research papers with other styles of assignment on the other.² While both of these solutions have merit, each focuses on the teaching of writing from a semester-long perspective. This view is logical as faculty tend to teach courses that are a semester in length. Musicologists and other teachers of music history, however, often have the advantage of teaching the same body of students across a sequence of classes. Therefore, I advocate for a multi-semester approach to teaching writing in the music history classroom. Few would argue

1. Pamela Starr, "Teaching in the Centrifugal Classroom," in *Teaching Music History*, ed. Mary Natvig (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 172.

2. Carol Hess advocates for requiring outlines and multiple drafts in her chapter "Score and Word: Writing About Music," in *Teaching Music History*, 193–204. Other sources advocating for other assignments include Michele L. Henry and Laurel E. Zeiss, "Musicians as Authors: Teaching the Art of Writing Program Notes," *College Music Symposium* 44 (fall 2004): 121–31; Erinn E. Knyt, "Rethinking the Music History Research Paper Assignment," this *Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 23–37, <http://ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/95/123>; and Nancy Rachel November, "Literacy Loops and Online Groups: Promoting Writing Skills in Large Undergraduate Music Classes," this *Journal* 2, no. 1 (2011): 5–23, <http://ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/31/59>.

that the art of scholarly inquiry and discourse could be taught in a semester's time, yet institutionally that tends to be the most common mode of instruction and assessment. By using a multi-semester model, faculty can better prepare students to write in the discipline of musicology. Even if multiple instructors teach the various courses of the sequence, it is often a relatively small number of faculty who can collaborate to create a multi-course writing pedagogical plan.³

The approach to writing pedagogy laid out in this article relies on a systems approach to instruction. A system is simply a collection of interrelated components that work together toward a common goal, often providing a method of feedback to determine whether a goal has been met. (In current higher education parlance, we often refer to this feedback loop as assessment.) While teaching has always been a systematic process below the surface, it is only when a system is explicitly laid out that it can be evaluated, critiqued, and changed.

This article provides a three-step approach to designing a writing curriculum. First, I rely on the model of backward design as discussed by Mary Huba and Jann Freed in order to create both a final learning outcome as well as a series of sub-goals related to it.⁴ Second, I use the Dick and Carey model of instructional design and analysis in order to determine an effective order for the teaching of sub-skills related to the final learning outcome.⁵ Finally, I utilize curriculum mapping to create a complete system of teaching writing that shows what skills will be introduced, reinforced, and assessed in various courses. While Huba and Freed focus primarily on large-scale curricular learning outcomes, Dick and Carey focus on the instructional design within individual courses. For programs that utilize a sequence of music history courses, a hybrid approach to the two models proves particularly effective.

Backward Design

The methodology of backward design is predicated on the seemingly obvious idea that learning outcomes at all levels of instruction should be compatible with each other. For example, learning outcomes in the various courses of a music program should align with the broader learning outcomes for the music degree as a whole.⁶ The degree outcomes should, in turn, support the learning outcomes of the institution. The backward-design model argues that this is best achieved if learning outcomes are conceived as part of a broad-to-narrow progression,

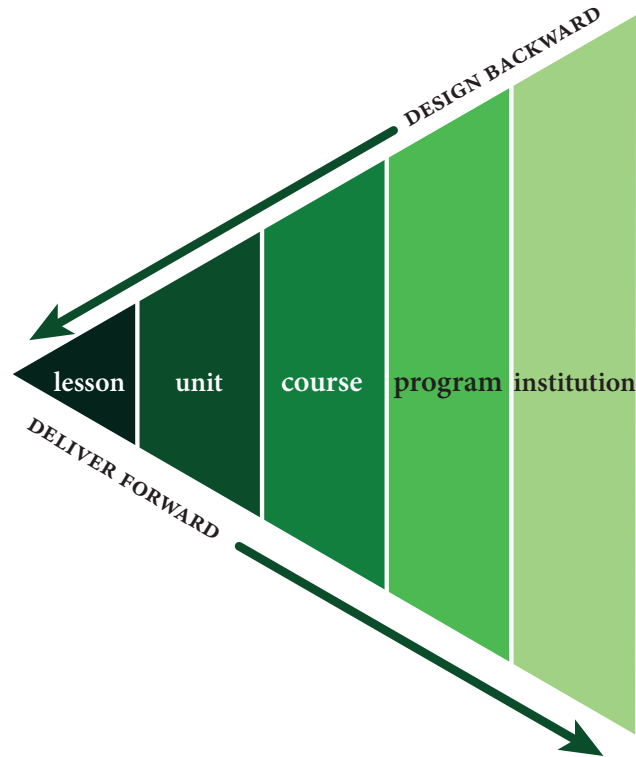
3. The multi-semester approach to teaching and the concept of skills sequencing is not entirely novel within the music history classroom. Instead, this article presents but one specific approach.

4. Mary E. Huba and Jann E. Freed, *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses: Shifting the Focus from Teaching to Learning* (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2000).

5. Walter Dick and Lou Carey, *The Systematic Design of Instruction*, 4th ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 1996).

6. Huba and Freed, *Learner-Centered Assessment*, 107–11.

Figure 1: Huba and Freed, *Learner-Centered Assessment*, 108. Image adapted from “Assessment Primer: Curriculum Mapping,” UConn Assessment, <http://assessment.uconn.edu/assessment-primer/assessment-primer-curriculum-mapping/> (accessed 10 January 2016).



but instruction is delivered in a forward manner. **Figure 1** provides a visual aid for this relationship. Although the teaching of writing within the music history classroom may not occupy enough of an individual course’s curriculum to have learning outcomes for every level of instruction (i.e. individual class periods), instructors can tailor this model to their own individual approaches.

For example, I teach a two-semester music history survey at my current institution. Additionally, I teach a first-year experience course that functions as an introduction to the study of music/how-to-survive-college course. Taken together, these three courses may constitute a multi-semester program of writing instruction. My final desired learning outcome with respect to writing is stated in the syllabus for the last course in the sequence: “the student will be able to construct a musicological argument and effectively defend a position in a paper of approximately 3000 words.”⁷ Using the process of backward design, I

7. For the sake of brevity, I am discussing backward design solely with respect to my three courses, but it is worth noting that this final learning objective is in line with broader

formulate various sub-goals that must be achieved before students can successfully achieve this final learning outcome.

In order to successfully construct a musicological argument, students must be able to do several key tasks. First, they need to be able to identify appropriate scholarly sources. Second, they need to have the ability to evaluate these sources and the arguments they present. Students must also know what the components of an academic argument are, and finally they must be able to demonstrate proper grammar and the principles of good writing. When laid out in this way, it becomes apparent that mastery of all of these tasks over the course of a single semester, particularly in a course not solely dedicated to writing, would be near impossible. By dividing the instruction of these tasks across multiple semesters, students have more time to achieve mastery of these skills and are ultimately more successful.

Instructional Design and Analysis

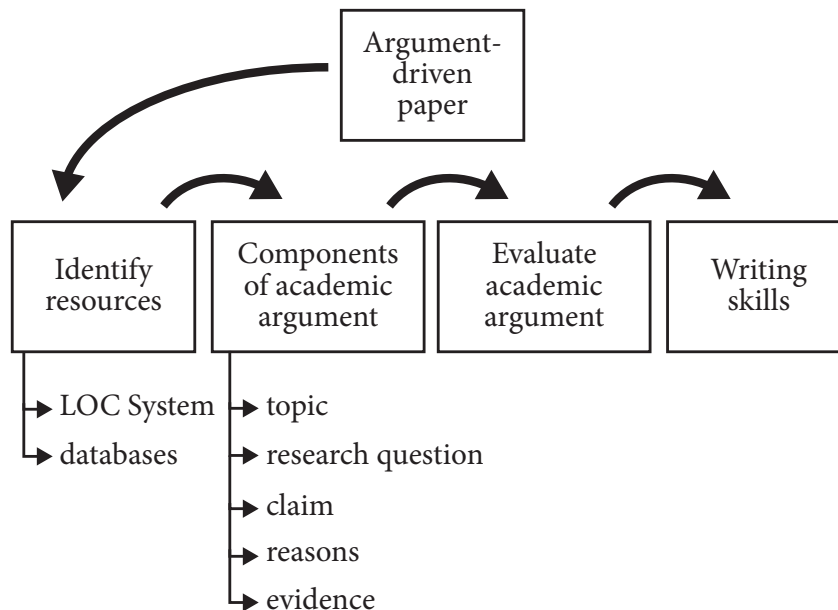
Having created a list of sub-goals, one can create an instructional design to configure a pathway of instruction that most effectively teaches these skills. Walter Dick and Lou Carey identify ten components of the systems approach model for instruction. In this article, I will only focus on the first five components as they provide the most global perspective for creating a system of writing instruction.

1. Determine instructional goal
2. Analyze the instructional goal
3. Analyze learners and contexts
4. Write performance objectives
5. Develop assessment instruments

Having already completed the task of determining an instructional goal and various sub-goals that complement it, I have completed a significant portion of the analysis of the instructional goal (components 1 and 2). The primary purpose of an instructional analysis, however, is not only to identify the skills that a student must master in order to accomplish the instructional goal but rather to determine the sequence in which these skills need to be learned.

Figure 2 presents a visual chart of the instructional design for my writing curriculum. The top of the chart shows my ultimate learning outcome and under this is a flow chart of the various sub-goals that I identified, but in a precise instructional order. For example, I feel it necessary to teach students to identify resources before I teach them the components of an academic argument.

departmental goals for all music majors.

Figure 2: Instructional analysis

Further, it is necessary for students to know the elements of an academic argument before they would be prepared to evaluate another author's argument. In my instruction, as reflected in Figure 2, I use the elements of an argument as presented by Booth, Colomb, and Williams in *The Craft of Research*, but any other model an instructor adopts can be effectively substituted.⁸

Step 3 in the Dick and Carey model analyzes learners and context, focusing on key traits regarding the target audience of instruction. The process of sequencing sub-goals in step 2 makes implicit assumptions with respect to the students and the context in which they are being taught. For example, I assume a set of behaviors and prior knowledge that students possess before entering my course. For instance, I do not begin my writing pedagogy by teaching the alphabet. Although this is a key component in being able to write, I assume that my student population has already achieved mastery of this. Depending on a program's academic admission standards, the entry behaviors and prior knowledge will vary from institution to institution. But entry behaviors are not solely based on students' prior knowledge. It is also important to be aware of student attitudes toward course content and their motivations for learning. As teachers of music history are all too familiar, students in undergraduate programs often

8. In my undergraduate courses, I use the abridged version of Booth, Colomb, and Williams as presented in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, 8th ed., rev. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 1–62.

have a negative attitude with respect to music history and being aware of this can help to understand our students and influence our instruction.⁹

In step 4, one creates performance objectives for the skills outlined. A performance objective states what it is that a learner will be able to do in order to demonstrate mastery of the skill and under what conditions. For example, one of the sub-goals laid out in my instructional design is that a student will be able to evaluate another author's argument. Although this statement reflects a key component and skill with respect to my writing pedagogy, it does not state how the learner will demonstrate achievement of this goal. A performance objective has three components: the skill identified in the instructional analysis, the conditions under which a student will carry out the task, and the criteria used to evaluate the student's performance.¹⁰ In order to create a performance objective for the skill of argument evaluation, I need to add the additional information. Instead of stating merely that students will be able to analyze an author's argument, I say:

Given a musicological article published in an academic journal (condition), the student will be able to write a 3–4 page paper (condition) that outlines and evaluates the article's argument (skill) by correctly identifying the article's thesis, supporting reasons, and evidence (evaluation).

This performance objective is much more specific and strongly influences step 5, the development of assessment instruments, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

Curriculum Mapping

With a completed instructional design, I can proceed to map the various sub-goals onto the courses that I am teaching. Curriculum maps provide a visual representation of how instruction is aligned with particular desired learning outcomes. Traditionally, curricular maps are used in assessment of curricular-wide learning objectives, but in this scenario I will use a scaled-down model focusing just on writing across my sequence of courses (**Figure 3**).

The top row of the map lists the sub-goals laid out in my instructional design and the left-most column lists the courses that I teach: the first-year experience course, the first course in the music history sequence, and the second course

9. A full learner and context analysis goes beyond these questions, though these areas are the most pertinent to developing a global writing pedagogy. For more information see Dick and Carey, *Systematic Design*, 90–97; Robert Davis, Lawrence Alexander, and Stephen Yelon, *Learning System Design: An Approach to the Improvement of Instruction* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1974), 129–58; and Robert M. Gagné, *Conditions of Learning and Theory of Instruction*, 4th ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985).

10. Dick and Carey, *Systematic Design*, 119–27.

Figure 3: Curriculum map

I = Introduced; R = Reinforced and practiced; M = Mastered and assessed.

| Course | Identify resources | Elements of argument | Evaluate resources | Writing |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1. First-year experience | I | I and R | I | I |
| 2. Music history 1 | R | | R | R |
| 3. Music history 2 | M | M | M | M |

in the sequence. Within the map, I mark where sub-goals are introduced (I), where they are reinforced and practiced (R), and where they are mastered and assessed (M). Curriculum maps ensure that topics are being taught and assessed in an appropriate manner.

Not surprisingly, in my first-year experience course I make sure to introduce all of the sub-goals. Instructionally, this means that I do the following: introduce the students to the structure of the Library of Congress system and the way in which our library is set up; have students read the abridged portion of *The Craft of Research* to understand the elements of an argument; guide the class through several texts to provide students with a low-stakes opportunity to evaluate an argument; and provide students with many opportunities to complete low-stakes writing assignments. Most frequently, I employ “Reading Response Assignments.” These assignments are short, 1–2 page writing assignments that foster the students’ critical thinking and provide me with a baseline for assessing their writing. In this course, principles of good writing are only being introduced, thus I provide extensive comments on writing style and grammar within the body of the text, but I give the student a grade based on a “good-faith effort.” I find that this allows for the exercise to be more instructive as the student sees my comments as constructive critique as opposed to a destructive force to their grade. Further, after reading each student’s paper, I focus on one element of writing that I would like to see improved for the next assignment. This specificity provides a focused approach to writing instruction at the introductory level. The final writing project for my FYE course is an analysis of an author’s argument where, in prose, they are asked to identify an author’s main thesis, the supporting reasons and evidence used, and provide an assessment of the article’s effectiveness, thus reinforcing the skill of an academic argument.

In the second course in the sequence (Music history 1), I reinforce a majority of the skills introduced in the earlier class with the exception of analyzing elements of an argument. Because this is a course covering early music topics with which students tend to be less familiar, I focus more on identifying

resources and bibliographic development as opposed to the creation of an academic argument. With this in mind, I have students complete both an annotated bibliography as well as a performance-practice literature review on a piece of their choice. This not only reinforces the students' abilities to identify and evaluate resources, but it also makes a connection in their mind between the music history curriculum and the performance focus that the majority of students tend to have.

In the final course of the sequence (Music history 2), students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the learning outcome of constructing their own musicological argument. By this point, I rely on students to review each other, and all of the writing assignments lead to one final musicological paper on a topic of the student's choice. Assignments in this class include a topic proposal with preliminary bibliography, a research report, partial drafts, a complete draft, and then the final paper. For each assignment, at least one student critiques his/her peer's work. All of the assignments include a rubric on how the student will be assessed.

Using this systems approach across multiple semesters provides numerous benefits. First and most importantly, it allows extra time for students to achieve the learning outcome. The process of research and writing is one that takes time to develop and too often faculty attempt to restrict it to a one-semester time frame. Second, it provides a model to ensure that all areas of writing are being taught and assessed in a logical order. Third, it borrows "content time" (time devoted to music history or whatever the main topic of the course is) from several courses so that no single course is being sacrificed in order to teach writing. And fourth, it provides a model for assessment and change. By laying out the various sub-goals, it is possible for the instructor to identify where students begin to fall behind with respect to writing. If a student turns in a final research paper that is poorly constructed (and this is the only artifact of assessment), it may be difficult to determine whether the paper's true shortcoming lies in the student's writing skills, a lack of argument development, or a lack of bibliographic control. But by completing an instructional analysis, it is possible to diagnose where precisely students begin to struggle and to adjust the instructional design accordingly. Ultimately this thorough systematic pedagogical model allows faculty to assess and alter their teaching in productive ways that will likely lead to increased student learning.

**Mervyn Cooke, ed. *The Hollywood Film Music Reader*.
Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
ix + 382 pp. \$38.95
ISBN 978-0-195-33119-6 (paper)**

**Julie Hubbert, ed. *Celluloid Symphonies: Texts and
Contexts in Film Music History*. Berkeley, Los Angeles
and London: University of California Press, 2011.
xiv + 507 pp. \$42.95
ISBN 978-0-520-24102-2 (paper)**

ALEXIS LUKO

For years, film music was an unexamined, underappreciated, and overlooked field of study. Fortunately, the past decade has witnessed a steady build of interest in film music scholarship thanks, in part, to annual conferences of Music and the Moving Image (MAMI), regular meetings of the International Musicological Society's Music and Media Study Group (MAM), and scholarly journals such as *Sound and the Moving Image*, *Music and the Moving Image*, and the *Journal of Film Music*. Film music is a “neglected art” no more.¹ Many music departments in colleges and universities across North America can boast at least one undergraduate film music course—a change of tides that has led to the publication of invaluable academic texts such as Roger Hickman's *Reel Music: Exploring 100 Years of Film Music* (2005); *Hearing the Movies* (2015) by James Buhler, David Neumeyer, and Rob Deemer; and Mervyn Cooke's *A History of Film Music*.²

1. Roy Pendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music in Films*, 2nd edition (New York and London: Norton, 1992).

2. Roger Hickman, *Reel Music: Exploring 100 Years of Film Music* (New York: Norton, 2006); James Buhler, David Neumeyer, and Rob Deemer, *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History*, 2nd ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). These three texts are

Those who have taught music history survey courses will appreciate the value of complementing general history textbooks with primary source documents such as the thought-provoking readings from Weiss and Taruskin's *Music in the Western World* and Strunk's *Source Readings in Music History*.³ Primary documents breath fresh life into history and help students "hear" the voices of the past. Now we have comparable sourcebooks for film music: Julie Hubbert's *Celluloid Symphonies: Texts and Contexts in Film Music History*, Mervyn Cooke's *The Hollywood Film Music Reader*, and *The Routledge Film Music Sourcebook* edited by James Wierzbicki, Nathan Platte, and Colin Roust.⁴ The Hubbert and Cooke titles examined in this review serve as crucial resources for film music students studying American Hollywood music.

To create a book of source readings dedicated to American film music history is a daunting endeavor. The sheer diversity of topics in the field is mind-boggling. After all, there are multiple perspectives to consider (those of composers, musicians, sound technicians, philosophers, journalists, conductors, and exhibitors), musical styles (Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, classical, jazz, modernism, electronic music, pop), venues, exhibition practices, scoring, compositional style, copyright law, financing, and the different elements that make up the soundtrack itself (music, silence, sound effects and dialogue).

With 507 pages and fifty-three source documents focused on American narrative film music history from 1896 to the present, the readings in Hubbert's *Celluloid Symphonies* "reveal how composers as well as directors, producers, and industry executives have affected the sound, structure, and placement of music in films," and "describe the major practical, technical, commercial, and aesthetic concerns and innovations that have shaped the use of music in film history" (x). The book is divided chronologically into five periods, with readings on "the practical, political, and aesthetic forces that affected the film industry" (xi): (1) Silent Film (1895–1925), titled "Playing the Pictures: Music and the Silent Film," (2) The Early Sound Film (1926–1934), titled "All Singing, Dancing, and Talking: Music in the Early Sound Film," (3) Hollywood's Golden Age (1935–1959), titled "Carpet, Wallpaper, and Earmuffs: The Hollywood Score," (4) "The Recession Soundtrack: From Albums to Auteurs, Songs to

reviewed by Blake Howe, "Textbooks for Film Music History: An Overview," this *Journal* 6, no. 1 (2016): 63–71.

3. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, eds., *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Schirmer, 2008); W. Oliver Strunk and Leo Treitler, eds., *Source Readings in Music History*, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 1998).

4. It is important to note that Hubbert's and Cooke's source readings focus exclusively on film music in narrative film of the United States while the Routledge Sourcebook also covers international film music. James Wierzbicki, Nathan Platte, Colin Roust, eds., *The Routledge Film Music Sourcebook* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012).

Serialism (1960–1977),” and (5) “The Postmodern Soundtrack: Film Music in the Video and Digital Age (1978–present).”

One of the greatest strengths of Hubbert’s book is her “big picture” view, which highlights how historical shifts are driven by myriad influences, including changes in popular taste and aesthetics, political, economic and social factors, and so forth. In this way, the subtitle of *Celluloid Symphonies*, “Texts and Contexts,” is key to understanding Hubbert’s approach. Throughout, she provides a deep contextual perspective, casting her net far and wide, drawing documents from a variety of sources: books, interviews, trade journals, cue sheets, magazines, newspapers, and film archives. This allows her to include non-academic publications by forgotten writers among more famously cited authors, composers, and critics.

At 382 pages with thirty-one source documents, Mervyn Cooke’s *The Hollywood Film Music Reader* is divided into three sections. Like Hubbert, Cooke organizes his book chronologically: (1) “From ‘Silents’ to Sound,” (2) “Film Composers in Their Own Words,” and (3) “Critics and Commentators.” As stated in his introduction, a large part of the book focuses on film music composition and is “devoted to the personal reminiscences of some of the leading film composers who helped change the face(s) of Hollywood scoring as it branched out from its classically influenced origins to embrace modernism, nationalism, jazz, and popular music” (vii). Cooke does not aim for the same degree of detail and nuance as Hubbert, and he does not attempt to chronicle the history of Hollywood film music comprehensively. Instead, he concentrates on a few significant topics: early film music, composers, and critics. In Part 2, titled “Film Composers in their Own Words,” the seventeen collected articles provide the reader with a “one-stop-shop.” This is different from Hubbert’s book, which sprinkles articles by and about film composers across Parts 3, 4, and 5, making it difficult to compare composers’ approaches to scoring.

Note that Hubbert’s sourcebook surveys the history of film up to 2005, even addressing links between film music, videogames, and MTV, whereas Cooke’s cuts off in 1999 and omits mention of more contemporary films, marketing techniques, and popular styles. Another big difference between the two sourcebooks is their approach to introductions and critical commentaries. Above and beyond Hubbert’s well-chosen source readings is the critical commentary in the extensive introductory essays to each of her five sections, which range between twenty-three and thirty-eight pages. Her introductions are rich in detail about general film history, American history, politics, economics, and technology. The impressive breadth of her investigation encourages a historical view of film music that is at once holistic, inclusive, and comprehensive. She paints with broad brushstrokes, identifying general trends and developments in film music history. Although she clearly highlights references in her

introductions with boldface lettering, it might have been preferable to include brief contextual biographical and/or historical commentary directly preceding each document. But this is a minor quibble, given the truly impressive results Hubbert achieves. Averaging 2–5 pages, Cooke’s mini-introductions to the three sections of his book are more humble than Hubbert’s. But Cooke prefaces each individual primary document with introductory remarks that convey essential contextual and biographical information. Many instructors might find this approach preferable, as it saves having to conduct background research on each author and is particularly advantageous in a course where only certain select readings are assigned. In the remainder of this review, I will take a comparative approach, focusing on the treatment of certain topics in the Hubbert and Cooke anthologies.

Early Silent and Sound Film Highlights

Hubbert provides twelve documents that highlight the importance of the “silent” unmechanized aspects of early film (Part 1) and seven documents about early sound film (Part 2), making her book *the* unrivaled go-to source for early film music history documents. Exactly how “silent” was the silent era of film? Not as silent as previously thought, argues Hubbert, who reminds us of how music and sound thrived in early film exhibition halls. Amongst the most notable articles Hubbert selects for Part 1 is Louis Reeves Harrison’s infamous “Jackass music” (a satirical take on how *not* to accompany film) with its biting attack of caricatured musicians: Lily Limpwrist, Freddy Fuzzlehead, and Percy Peashaker. Unlike Cooke, Hubbert does not reproduce H. F. Hoffman’s hilarious cartoons, which inject a welcome dose of humor into class readings and lectures. Hubbert also includes thematic cue sheets for films from the mid 1920s and a practical no-nonsense guide by Eugene A. Ahern about how to play “appropriate” music, create sound effects, and convey the mood of a scene. Particularly useful is how Hubbert makes sense of these documents for students. She identifies a shift where the piano accompanists and percussionists employed in music halls and nickelodeons in the first decade of film are replaced in the 1920s by large orchestras in “movie palaces” like the Capitol, Rivoli, and Rialto. She discusses changes in “compilation scoring,” using evidence from the source documents to show how films of the first decade featured popular music, while films from the 1920s drew more from classical excerpts by Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner. The section concludes with a newspaper article on a 1924 US court ruling, which established copyright compensation for songwriters, composers, and music publishers. Hubbert uses this document to demonstrate the benefits of examining history from as many angles as possible. The case shows how financial rather than purely aesthetic drivers fuelled the

shift from popular music to classical music in early film. Part 2, “Music in the Early Sound Film (1926–1934),” features seven documents from 1926–1935. Hubbert’s introduction describes the simultaneous existence of silent films, talkies, and “half-talkies” as theater owners slowly upgraded the technology in their venues. Here, she aptly cautions against viewing the switch from silent to sound film as an overnight revolution.

In Part 1 of his *Hollywood Film Music Reader*, Cooke includes four articles from the silent and early sound periods. He starts with Max Winkler (missing from Hubbert’s survey) who describes his process and justification for “inventing” the cue sheet. Like Hubbert, Cooke includes an indispensable excerpt from Ernö Rapée’s *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* and from Leonid Sabaneev’s *Music for the Films* (I find Hubbert’s extract fascinating, whereas Cooke’s is rather dry and technical). Also of note is an article by T. Scott Buhrman about Hugo Riesenfeld. This time, I prefer Cooke’s article (penned by Riesenfeld himself) as it reveals much about Riesenfeld’s sophisticated methods of matching up music and image, even “editing segments of film himself or requiring the projector to be run at variable speeds so that the images might fit better with his musical selections” (16).

Film Composers

Given the centrality of Max Steiner in establishing the style and sound of Hollywood film music for the “talkies” it is no surprise that both Hubbert and Cooke reproduce his 1937 article “Scoring the Film.” Steiner outlines his scoring process, from cue sheets to mickey-mousing, creating leitmotivic character themes, and using the “special measuring machine.” The Aaron Copland article “Our New Music,” also included in both sourcebooks, articulates an alternative to Max Steiner’s methods. Copland recommends thinner orchestration and famously defines film music as a “small flame put under the screen to help warm it.”

I find that the most stimulating composer-focused documents in Hubbert’s book are the interviews. Danny Elfman speaks about his eclectic musical influences (from pop and rock, to classical and musical theater) while Howard Shore reflects on his working relationship with David Cronenberg and his approach to scoring, which he defines in terms of intuition, editing, and reduction. Particularly noteworthy are his reflections on the soundtrack of *Silence of the Lambs*, which he built together with sound designer Skip Liesay, thus blurring the “ontological distinction between sound and music” (399). One captivating group of documents in Part 4 of Hubbert’s text includes writings by and about Bernard Hermann, Ennio Morricone, and Lalo Schiffrin, all of whom experimented with alternatives to orchestral scoring. Morricone reflects

on composing “music that is born within the scene” (335) by using ambient and “found” sounds, while Lalo Schifrin reveals his love for experimentation and flexible shifts between musical genres and styles, particularly when scoring auteur-directed avant-garde films. An article that could easily pass under the radar of television music aficionados, especially given the title (“Jazz Composers in Hollywood”) features an interview in which composers Benny Carter, Quincy Jones, Henry Mancini, Lalo Schifrin, and Pat Williams compare writing music for the mediums of film and television.

I consider the highlight of *The Hollywood Film Music Reader* to be Part 2, which is wholly dedicated to film composers. Here, Cooke offers a treasure trove of insider perspectives about the art of film music composition. A transcript of a radio interview with Franz Waxman discusses leitmotivic principles, repetition and variation and how to musically get “inside a film character” (143). Another article by documentary film music composer Gail Kubik emphasizes the social and moral role of music in conveying political messages in propaganda and documentary war films. On the topic of musical style and genre, Cooke includes an interview with Jerry Goldsmith about using electronic music; an interview with John Williams about his nineteenth-century Wagnerian style and the revival of the orchestral score in *Star Wars* (also featured in Hubbert’s book); an interview with Thomas Newman about his “no looking back” approach to composition through the novel use of timbre, instrumentation, and electronic music; and an article by Miklós Rózsa about scoring *Quo Vadis*, where he calls for stylistic accuracy, musical realism, and historical authenticity. Other articles by Henry Mancini and Adolph Deutsch protest those decisions made during film production that fail to take composers’ ideas into account. Mancini, whose article reveals every step of his scoring process, candidly expresses disappointment in directors who have cut, subdued, or used his music in unintended ways. Finally, in a truly stimulating read by Bernard Herrmann, he muses about aural “closeups,” promotes the idea of elevating the status of sound effects in film (212), calls *2001: A Space Odyssey* “the height of vulgarity in our time” (213), complains about the assembly line model for film scoring, and even joins the “auteur” debate stating, “no director can make a film by himself” (212).

Directors and Critics

In Part 4 of her text, Hubbert includes a subsection of articles dedicated to film directors’ compilation soundtracks. Documents about William Friedkin, Stanley Kubrick, and George Lucas describe how, by cutting out the role of the film composer and using pre-composed music, these directors exercised ultimate control over the aural dimensions of their films. Hubbert ends Part 4 with an article by David Raksin that calls into question the purity of the aesthetic

aims of “compilation scoring,” which he denigrates as an overused technique employed to appeal to youth, increase sales at the box office, and sell records, with little thought about the meaning of the film.

Cooke provides little space for articles by or about film directors, opting instead to round out his book with a final chapter of nine articles that fall under the rubric of “Critics and Commentators.” In a way, this is a continuation of Part 2, as many of the personal testimonies are actually penned by composers who Cooke argues “successfully distanced themselves from their own creative work in order to publish their markedly contrasting viewpoints” (257). Note that this section is filled with mostly negative appraisals of film music. For example, George Antheil discusses the stylistic gulf between his modernist concert hall music and the conservatism of his film music. With some embarrassment, he refers to the “corniness” of the latter. There is also an article by Stravinsky in which he calls film music “wallpaper” that merely “explains” and “describes” action in a film, suggesting that its primary function is to “to feed the composer” (277). In articles by Sidney Lumet, Frederick W. Sternfeld, and in an excerpt from *Composing for the Films* by Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler, we find a range of complaints against antiquated techniques and film clichés: leitmotifs, illustrative music, melody, unobtrusiveness, mickey-mousing, dissolves, and stingers.

But not all of Cooke’s Part 2 is negative. At least a few critics make useful suggestions about the importance of expanding public taste to include more modernist styles in film. One of the more expansive articles by Lawrence Morton analyzes exemplary music excerpts by Hollywood composers. This reaction piece defends against attacks by Hans Keller (who colorfully refers to the “stench” of Hollywood music) and Antony Hopkins—inflammatory anti-Hollywood articles that could have provided fodder for a fascinating classroom debate had they also been included in the reader.

Cartoons, Television, LPs, Radio, and Music Videos

Both Cooke and Hubbert discuss other media in the context of film music. Unlike Hubbert, Cooke chooses to include some thought-provoking articles about cartoon music. An article by Ingolf Dahl describes cartoon music as “the only completely creative combination of the aural and the plastic arts in movement” and encourages readers to reconsider the significant role of cartoon music in early experimental film sound (95). Another article by Scott Bradley, who worked on *Tom and Jerry*, advocates freedom in composition by using progressive approaches such as the modernist language of Schoenberg heard in *The Milky Waif*.

Hubbert ventures more deeply into explorations of other media with articles about the money generated by movie soundtrack LPs, radio, and MTV videos. In the process, she exposes much about commercialism in Hollywood film. June Bundy discusses the pressure on composers to write hit singles for radio, while Eddie Kalish reflects on how Mancini revolutionized soundtrack LPs, enhancing their quality by re-recording music. In her introduction to Part 5, titled “The Postmodern Soundtrack: Film Music in the Video and Digital Age,” Hubbert writes about how American film recovered from its recession, thanks to a new “revolution” in American film distribution and exhibition involving a lucrative system of “saturation release” and “saturation advertising” and the invention of the multiplex theater, home video, and cable television. In this section, Susan Peterson divulges the optimal “saturation formula” schedule for the release of film soundtracks, while Marianne Meyer discusses the marketing power of the MTV music video, which facilitated “new synergy between film production and cable television” (389). A document including a fascinating interview with film directors Cameron Crowe and Quentin Tarantino discusses the importance of finances on the scoring of a film and pressures on directors to “videoize” soundtracks with MTV-marketable music “moments” (or “modules”).

Conclusion

Hubbert’s *Celluloid Symphonies* and Cooke’s *Hollywood Film Music Reader* gather together invaluable documents that are accessibly written, informative, and entertaining. The two sourcebooks use the Hollywood film canon as a reference point, thus reinforcing the film music narrative recounted in most undergraduate classrooms, making them suitable to use in combination with general film music textbooks. Furthermore, both sourcebooks feature articles that link trends in film music to those encountered in the concert hall, thus encouraging music students to consider the links between film music and twentieth-century symphonic music.

Hubbert’s sourcebook is so thorough that it might even serve as a stand-alone text. Most remarkable is how she masterfully connects the dots between source readings so that consecutive documents interconnect, thus offering a cohesive historical narrative for each period. Still, the detail and contextual approach may not be appropriate for all courses. With its linear historical trajectory, *Celluloid Symphonies* lends itself best to a chronologically conceived course. Alternatively, one might imagine cherry picking articles or assigning individual sections for certain courses. Parts 1 and 2, for example, would be ideal for courses about early film. For courses that examine particular directors,

Hubbert's book provides some stimulating documents about "sonic auteurs" who have employed "compilation scoring."

Much can be said in favor of a chronological perspective of music history, but survey courses are turning increasingly to new issue-based pedagogical models.⁵ Though Cooke's sectional introductions are somewhat limited, he does provide excellent background information for each individual article, resulting in a structure that is less overwhelming than Hubbert's. With the right guidance and appropriate questions, this format avoids spoon-feeding and encourages students to make their own connections between articles and promotes critical thinking. Given the technical and stylistic issues in Cooke's source readings, his text might be better geared for music majors.

Silent until now, the film-music "voices" of the past are finally collected, heard, and interpreted. Both Hubbert's *Celluloid Symphonies* and Cooke's *Hollywood Film Music Reader* are welcome contributions to Hollywood film music literature and will be invaluable resources to instructors. With more than eighty documents between them, these masterfully devised sourcebooks provide a wealth of material for students, educators, and scholars. These are readings that will provide new depth and dimension to classroom discussion. At last, film music is no longer the "neglected art."

5. See Colin Roust, Douglass Seaton, J. Peter Burkholder, Melanie Lowe, and Don Gibson, "Roundtable: The End of the Undergraduate Music History Sequence?," this *Journal* 5, no. 2 (2015): 49–76.