

Musicking across Hemispheres: A Transatlantic Approach to Western Music History and Curricular Reform at a Hispanic Serving Institution

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Recent calls for music curriculum reform increase as scholars in the fields of music education, music theory, musicology, and ethnomusicology continue to denounce the inadequacies of current curricular frameworks and seek solutions to address them.¹ These calls advocate for programs of study that better attend to the concerns of professional musicians, engage the musical traditions of local communities, increase global awareness, and advance social justice. In this context, traditional music history courses that survey composers and repertoires from different periods in Western European music seem especially problematic for their epistemological shortcomings and their limited application for students wishing to pursue careers in diverse musical traditions, scenes, and industries that do not necessarily engage with the European art music canon. As the subdisciplines of historical ethnomusicology (within the field of ethnomusicology) and global music history studies (within historical musicology) continue to grow, they seem well poised to contribute to reforming and reframing music history courses at institutions of higher education.

1. Patricia Shehan Campbell, David Myers, and Ed Sarath, “Transforming Music from Its Foundations: A Manifesto for Progressive Change in the Undergraduate Preparation of Music Majors. Report of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Music Major” (The College Music Society, Santa Fe, 2016), <https://www.music.org/pdf/pubs/tfumm/TFUMM.pdf>; Timothy J Cooley, “Sustainable Curricula (Roundtable)” (Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, 2018), https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ethnomusicology.org/resource/resmgr/2018_annual_meeting/sem_program_finalfinal_11..pdf; Philip Ewell, “Music Theory’s White Racial Frame” (Society for Music Theory 42nd Annual Meeting, Columbus, 2019), <https://societymusictheory.org/sites/default/files/events/programs/2019-program.pdf>; Alejandro L. Madrid, “American Music in Times of Postnationality,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (2011): 699–703; Sara Haefeli, editor, “Special Issue: Decolonization,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy*, 10, no. 1 (2020). Robin D. Moore, *College Music Curricula for a New Century* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

Although not primarily known as music historians, many ethnomusicologists study musical traditions from around the world from a historical perspective. As David Hebert and Jonathan McCollum note, despite the reputable ethnographic approach that often characterizes ethnomusicology, “contemporary music cannot be fully understood in the absence of a rich awareness of its historical context and the outstanding success of ethnographic approaches does not offer a compelling case for the neglect of history.”² Concomitantly, many musicologists surpass the predominant Eurocentric focus of historical musicology and participate in “global music history” or “global musicology,” which Daniel Chua characterizes as an all-inclusive, methodologically indiscriminate, and collaborative endeavor.³

From these and other vantage points, the chorus for curricular reform continues to grow as innovative changes develop at institutions all over the world. In the United States, Texas State University has included a mariachi minor in a program focused mostly on Latin American music, and The University of Texas at Austin and Harvard University have rethought their respective undergraduate music history sequences in significant ways.⁴ Teaching materials addressing music histories in diverse settings have also emerged, such as the volume *Listening Across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom* edited by James Davis and Christopher Lynch, which gathers experiences and resources from instructors in different parts of the world and includes perspectives on internationalism, transnationalism, and global citizenship.⁵

Professional societies regularly contribute to these developments by programming panels in which instructors and scholars share their experiences, ideas, and concerns. To name but three examples, in 2015 the American Musicological Society Ibero-American Music Study Group hosted a panel that later resulted in the roundtable “Ibero-American Music and the Music

2. Jonathan McCollum, and David Hebert, eds., *Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology* (Guilford, CT: Lexington Books, 2014), 17.

3. Daniel K. L. Chua, “Global Musicology,” *New Sound: International Journal of Music* 50, no. 2 (2017): 13.

4. Ludim Rebeca Pedroza, “Latin Music Studies at Texas State University: The Undergraduate Minor in Mariachi and Its Implications for Expansive Curricula in Mainstream Institutions of the United States,” in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, ed. Robin D. Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 135–54; William Robin, “What Controversial Changes at Harvard Mean for Music in the University,” *National Sawdust Log* (blog), April 25, 2017, <https://www.nationalsawdust.org/thelog/2017-04-25-what-controversial-changes-at-harvard-means-for-music-in-the-university>; Sonia Tamar Seeman, “Embodied Pedagogy: Techniques for Exploring Why and How Music Matters,” in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, ed. Robin D. Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 191–203. All links in this article were last accessed by the date of this article’s publication unless otherwise specified.

5. James A. Davis and Christopher Lynch, *Listening across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom*, *Modern Musicology and the College Classroom* (New York: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group, 2022).

History Curriculum,” which Susan Thomas coordinated and then published in this journal.⁶ Similarly, the pre-conference symposium of the Society for Ethnomusicology in 2018 featured a panel in which instructors at U.S. institutions near the border with Mexico discussed their experiences with decolonial pedagogies.⁷ More recently, the American Musicological Society programmed a panel and workshop entitled “How to Integrate Global Music History in Our Teaching” that included discussions with Gavin Lee, Amanda Hsieh, Andrew Dell’Antonio, Luisa Nardini, Kunio Hara, Gabriel Solis, Chris Stover, Jon Silpayamanant, and myself.⁸

As conversations in the aforementioned AMS workshop illustrated, despite the increased desire to incorporate diverse narratives and repertoires in music history courses, instructors continue to face obstacles. The list of theoretical and practical challenges raised there surpasses what I can address in this article, so I focus on two points. First, as ethnomusicologists who teach “world music” courses may attest, the task of designing a truly global survey of music history is not only daunting, it is also impractical. Instructors, especially those with little discretion over their course assignments, course design, and course content, must then carefully consider to what extent their music history courses can adapt. Can they include international perspectives to adequately respond to calls for reform and inclusivity, while also fulfilling the expectations of the curricula they have inherited?⁹ Second, even while instructors benefit from the growing scholarship and new instructional materials on diverse musical traditions, we could also benefit from specific models and examples on how to approach our teaching differently. In this article, I address these points by

6. Susan Thomas, “Ibero-American Music and the Music History Curriculum: Reform, Revolution and the Pragmatics of Change,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 94–129. Note that while the citation refers to Thomas’ introductory essay, the roundtable includes essays by Drew Edward Davies, Ana Alonso Minutti, Jacqueline Avila, and Alejandro Madrid. Although his remarks do not appear in this publication, Walter Clark also participated in the AMS panel.

7. Andrés R. Amado, León García Corona, Lauryn Salazar, and Amanda Soto, “Decolonizing Pedagogies in Ethnomusicology: Challenges from the Borderlands” (Society for Ethnomusicology Pre-Conference Symposium, Albuquerque, 2018). https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ethnomusicology.org/resource/resmgr/sem_2018_program_book_final.pdf.

8. Gavin Lee, et al., “How to Integrate Global Music History in Our Teaching” (American Musicological Society, Society for Ethnomusicology, Society for Music Theory Joint Meeting, New Orleans, November 12, 2022), https://www.conftool.pro/nola2022-ams-sem-smt/index.php?page=browseSessions&form_session=577.

9. Most institutions limit music history instruction between 6 and 12 credit-hours in 120-hour degree plans, so adding new courses on global music history to already saturated degree plans is seldom an option. Matthew Baumer, “A Snapshot of Music History Teaching to Undergraduate Music Majors, 2011–2012: Curricula, Methods, Assessment, and Objectives,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 5, no. 2 (March 18, 2015): 31.

sharing my experience teaching at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, a large Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in the United States.

To the question of how much global musicology or historical ethnomusicology should be included in standard music history courses, I answer that engaging the cultures of the communities the institution serves should take priority. Drawing from my own expertise as a Latin Americanist, I approach graduate and undergraduate music history courses at UTRGV from a transatlantic perspective. In this sense, I depart from the terminology of “global” music history,¹⁰ to instead foreground narratives of transnational flows that more directly resonate with the cultural background of most UTRGV students. These flows often involve exchanges across the Atlantic between Europe and the Americas, between Africa and the Americas, and between Africa and Europe. This approach does not preclude the inclusion of other perspectives from around the world. Instead, following notions of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, it attempts to make relevant connections between the contents of traditional music history courses and student positionalities. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy builds upon the cultural heritage of students as legitimate and as a worthy content of study in the formal curriculum. It promotes the exploration of students’ own and each other’s cultural heritages. Focusing on an individual’s connection to shared practices and traditions within a community, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy focuses as much on the individual as on the communal aspects of identity.¹¹

10. As the reader may have inferred by now, I share many of the goals and strategies of historical ethnomusicology and global musicology. However, I do not fully subscribe to some of the terminology used in global musicology due to the complicated and contradictory connotations the word “global” can suggest. For example, Christopher Lynch prefers the term “internationalization” due to the hegemonic connotations of “globalization.” For his part, Thomas Turino has challenged the totalizing and essentializing dimensions of the “global” construct. Similarly, many scholars in anthropology and cultural studies have debated at length the merits of the local/global dichotomy (and even the ensuing “glocal” designation that merges both) to extents I cannot revisit here at length. James A. Davis and Christopher Lynch, *Listening across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom*, Modern Musicology and the College Classroom (New York: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group, 2022), 3; Thomas Turino, “Are We Global Yet? Globalist Discourse, Cultural Formations and the Study of Zimbabwean Popular Music,” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 12, no. 2 (December 31, 2003): 51–79.

11. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy informs the content of the courses discussed here inasmuch as they seek a better integration of music relevant to the histories of Hispanic/Latinx populations in the Western Hemisphere. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy also includes other forms of student engagement I also attempt in my courses but do not directly address in this article. Sarah M. Ray, “Teaching Case—Applications of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in a Community College Classroom,” *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development* 31, no. 4 (2019): 65–66; Lisa Scherff and Karen Spector, eds., *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Clashes and Confrontations* (Lanham, MD: R&L Education, 2010), 12–13; Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, 2nd ed. (Somerset: Jossey-Bass,

To address the second concern regarding teaching practices and models, this article discusses two examples of a transatlantic approach to teaching Western music history. I draw the first one from Music History and Literature 2, an undergraduate course at UTRGV that surveys Western music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Using a *villancico de negros* from the cathedral of Santiago de Guatemala, I highlight historical and stylistic issues relating to late eighteenth-century music in the Spanish colonies, including notions of race and colonialism. This example illustrates how the study of colonial repertoires can contribute meaningful insights to the narratives already present in traditional surveys of Western music history, including the development of the galant style and the expansion and limitations of the Enlightenment. This example also challenges the nationalistic assumptions that often underpin music history surveys. In my second example, I describe an intersectional approach to the study of nineteenth-century music in a graduate survey of the Western music of that era. In the most recent iteration of the course, I attempted to teach various topics employing perspectives from gender studies.

I selected these two examples for several reasons. First, although I study musical traditions from these centuries in Latin America, they are not my primary area of research.¹² Likewise, many instructors find themselves in the position of teaching beyond their immediate areas of specialization, so I wish to show how we can expand the scope of our teaching in situations where we are expected to teach the canon.¹³ Second, although some examples of music in the Americas now appear in mainstream music history textbooks, I do not think it a coincidence that they are mostly relegated to earlier and later periods of music history. Indeed, the European pieces and composers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries constitute the core of the Western music canon

2013); Ruth Gurgel, *Taught by the Students: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Deep Engagement in Music* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015).

12. I recently published an article on nineteenth-century sacred music in Guatemala, but most of my research is on music in the twentieth century. Andrés Amado Pineda, “Benedicto Sáenz ‘Libera Me’: Occidentalisms in Latin America Nineteenth-Century Sacred Music,” *Diagonal: An Ibero-American Music Review* 7, no. 2 (2022): 100–130, <https://doi.org/10.5070/D87259378>.

13. I recognize that specialists on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musics have much more to contribute to these conversations as well, as they already approach their teaching with a deeper knowledge of the literature and ongoing research on these topics. Guido Olivieri, for example, teaches a graduate course at The University of Texas at Austin entitled “18th-Century Music: Global Perspectives” that includes discussions on Western music in Asia and Latin America, covering topics such as the music of Ignacio de Jerusalem in Mexico, the Irmandades negras in Brazil, and more (Guido Olivieri, personal communications). Drew Edward Davies has also meaningfully contributed to teaching eighteenth-century music and has shared helpful digital resources that non-specialists may use. Drew Edward Davies, “The Digital Humanities and Teaching Iberian and Latin American Music History,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 99–105.

and surveys courses at many institutions. This makes it all the more difficult and necessary to integrate other perspectives and repertoires into these eras of music history. Finally, I hope these examples also invite conversations on interdisciplinarity and intersectionality in music history curricula. Indeed, calls for curricular reform in music resonate with broader discussions of the crisis of the humanities at institutions of higher education. As universities increasingly focus on training a labor force, many humanistic and artistic disciplines find themselves in the defensive position of having to justify their practical utility in the face of draconian austerity measures and the “overproduction” of PhD graduates. Rather than seeking to address this crisis in silos, I concur with Robin Moore and Alejandro Madrid, who argue that finding points of intersection and collaboration with other disciplines may yield better results.¹⁴ Before engaging with these examples, I share the institutional context that informs my present approach to music history pedagogy.

Music History at UTRGV

Founded in 2013 through the merger of the University of Texas Pan American (UTPA) and the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB), The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) functions as a distributed institution with programs on various campuses with no “main” campus.¹⁵ Federally recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI),¹⁶ the university far surpasses the minimum 25% of Hispanic enrollment required for this designation. In Fall 2021, over 90% of the nearly 32,000 students enrolled identified as Hispanic or Latinx, while white students comprised slightly over 3% of the student body.¹⁷ Given its demographics and geographical location, UTRGV aspires to become a national leader in bilingual education and to produce research that highly engages the

14. Alejandro L. Madrid, “American Music in Times of Postnationality,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (2011): 699–703; Robin Moore et al., “Ethnomusicology and Higher Education: Challenges, Trends, and Lessons from the Humanities,” *Ethnomusicology* 65, no. 3 (January 1, 2021): 413–43.

15. UTRGV achieved the category of “High Research Activity” (R2) in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education in 2019. The University currently enrolls around 31,000 students in the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses, the Harlingen campus (School of Medicine), and other satellite campuses through the region. News and Internal Communications, “UTRGV Moves Up in Carnegie Classification,” The Newsroom, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, May 8, 2019, <https://www.utrgv.edu/newsroom/2019/05/08-utrgv-moves-up-in-carnegie-classification.htm>.

16. “20 U.S. Code § 1101a – Definitions; Eligibility,” Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, accessed August 3, 2023, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1101a>.

17. The Office of Strategic Analysis and Institutional Reporting, “Fall 2021: Fast Facts” (The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, 2023), <https://www.utrgv.edu/sair/fact-book/2021-stats-at-a-glance.pdf>.

needs of the region.¹⁸ The school of music currently enrolls 425 students on the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses, most of them undergraduates majoring in music education or performance.¹⁹ As of the writing of this article, 17 graduate students pursue degrees in music performance, education, composition, conducting, and ethnomusicology. While some of them are full-time students, many teach full-time as instructors in public schools or privately. Like undergraduates, the majority are Hispanic/Latina/o/x, either from the Rio Grande Valley or from neighboring Mexico.²⁰

Given the location of the university near the U.S.-Mexico border, its student demographics, and the university’s goals to become a leading HSI and “bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural institution,”²¹ I approach music history instruction from a transatlantic perspective allowing students to explore developments in Europe and the Americas side by side along with their engagement with African traditions in all subjects of music history.

Despite being the only musicologist/ethnomusicologist at UTPA, I did not have sole discretion over the music history curriculum.²² My department tasked me with co-designing a new undergraduate music history sequence with colleagues at UTB in anticipation of our merger. After much discussion and compromising among instructors of music history and culture on both campuses and with other units in the department, we envisioned the new sequence structured in four semesters: 1) a first-year level World Music Cultures course that would lay broad theoretical foundations of which Western music would be but one part, 2) Music History & Literature 1, a sophomore-level course covering developments in Western music from the Middle Ages through 1750s, and

18. “Strategic Plan: Mission, Vision, and Core Values,” 2022–2023 Strategic Plan, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, accessed July 16, 2022, <https://www.utrgv.edu/strategic-plan/mvv/index.htm>.

19. While these degree plans predominantly maintain the traditions of Western art music (opera, orchestra, band, choir, chamber ensembles), UTRGV boasts a renowned mariachi tradition. Mariachi Aztlán was founded in 1989 at the University of Texas Panamerican. Despite its numerous accolades, mariachi formally entered the music curriculum only recently, with the creation of a mariachi concentration in the music education degree and a mariachi performance certificate, both approved alongside new certificates in jazz and popular music in 2019.

20. Occasionally we have international students from other places including, Iran, China, The Philippines, and Scotland.

21. B3 Institute, “B3 Institute,” Division of Academic Affairs, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, accessed August 3, 2023, <https://www.utrgv.edu/b3-institute/>.

22. When I first joined the faculty of UTPA, I inherited a fairly standard undergraduate music history curriculum, structured in three courses: a first year or sophomore music literature course aimed at familiarizing students with all stylistic periods of Western music history (Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Modernist) and two upper division courses, one surveying music from the Middle Ages to 1750, and one from 1750 to the present. At the graduate level, I was expected to offer ethnomusicology courses as well as Western music history courses for students pursuing master’s degrees in music education, performance, and ethnomusicology.

3) two upper division courses, Music History & Literature 2 and 3, that focus on music from the mid eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century and from the late nineteenth century to the present, respectively. To avoid adding new required courses to degree plans already full to their limits, we placed the first two courses in the university's General Education Core curriculum.²³

I admit that this structure may not sound progressive, de/anti-colonial, or global, and risks reinforcing the evolutionist and teleological narratives we seek to overcome. However, the chronological approach to Western repertoires offered us a few advantages. Among them, 1) it helped ease the curricular transition as institutions merged,²⁴ 2) it helped ensure we could offer enough courses on both campuses with instructors of different backgrounds and training in Western and non-Western music traditions, 3) it fit well with the repertoires studied in applied lessons, ensembles, and music theory, and 4) it offered a convenient framework for students to approach the often unfamiliar repertoires they encounter in lessons, ensembles, and music theory courses. For my part, I seek to use this sequence to address the colonialism and Eurocentrism inherent in it, most notably, by highlighting transnational flows in Western music history, especially focusing on exchanges between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. In graduate-level courses, I have more flexibility over course contents but must still respond to the departmental need of offering courses that fulfill degree requirements for diverse concentrations including ethnomusicology, performance, conducting, composition, and music education. Furthermore, I seek opportunities to connect graduate courses with interdisciplinary programs.

An Example of a Transatlantic Approach in an Undergraduate Music History Course

Among the theoretical and practical considerations for developing a transatlantic approach to teaching music history, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy inspired me to prioritize the inclusion of the cultural heritage of the student population at UTRGV. As mentioned above, most come from Hispanic/Latinx backgrounds and are natives to the borderlands or Mexico. Even though efforts to “decolonize” music history courses in the United States and Canada tend to

23. World Music Cultures meets the Texas General Education Core requirements for “language, philosophy, and culture,” and Music History 1 meets requirements for “creative arts.”

24. At one point we had students on four different curricula simultaneously: the different degree plans of each legacy institution (students close to graduation who started on such degree plans), the curriculum transitioning from the old legacy curricula into the new university curriculum (students half-way through their degree plans), and the curriculum of the new university for entering students. Our transitional curricula needed to ensure everything we covered in music history would roughly correspond with what students were doing in each of these degree plans.

highlight musical practices among Indigenous and African American populations, the music of Hispanics/Latinx, now the largest ethnic minority in the United States, barely appears in the curriculum.²⁵ Note, however, that framing curriculum from a nationalist perspective (i.e. music relevant to “minorities” in nation-states) masks and distorts the historical influences of diverse populations throughout the hemisphere, the transnational trajectories of musical practices, and cross-cultural connections among people across shifting borders.

Let us consider for a moment the theoretical exercise I propose to World Music Cultures students when we begin discussions on Latin American music. Asked to delimit “Latin America” in their own terms, students define the region in various ways including 1) a region sharing similar colonial histories, and 2) a region sharing a common language, or related languages. As they contemplate these definitions, I ask them whether they would be willing to consider including the United States in Latin America. After sharing puzzled looks for a moment, students begin to reason that given that Spain and France colonized many places now part of the United States, and thus the first definition could apply. With respect to the linguistic definition, the United States currently has almost as large a Spanish-speaking population as Spain, and exceeds Spanish-speaking populations in many Latin American countries.²⁶

These definitions overlook significant cultural and historical differences between the United States and Latin America and obfuscate power dynamics in the hemisphere, but they invite a critical view on nationalist narratives about music. As I recently discussed elsewhere,²⁷ music textbooks in the United States curiously do not engage with the rich traditions in the Spanish colonies during the eighteenth century that include elaborate polyphonic masses, symphonies, and villancicos, all of which point to complex social networks in a world of colonial imperialism, religious hegemony, expanding capitalism, and shifting

25. Alejandro L. Madrid, “American Music in Times of Postnationality,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (2011): 699–703; Walker, “Towards a Decolonized Music History Curriculum,” 4–5.

26. Journalistic sources have reported that the U.S. surpasses Spain's Spanish-Speaking population, citing a study from Instituto Cervantes from 2015. The validity of this assertion depends on what criteria defines Spanish speakers. Conservatively, I refer to the 2021 report by the Instituto Cervantes, which designates all people who speak Spanish at home either as their native language or bilingually as “Grupo Dominio Nativo” (GDN). The GDN does not include people who speak Spanish as a second language outside the home. By this definition, Instituto Cervantes reports the GDN in Spain comprised of 43,636,756 people and in the USA of 41,757,391 people. Instituto Cervantes, “El Español: Una Lengua Viva. Informe 2021” (Madrid: Instituto Cervantes, 2021), 9–12.

27. Andrés R. Amado, “Más Allá Del Nacionalismo: Fronteras Disciplinarias de Los Estudios Musicales Centroamericanos,” *TRANS: Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 24 (2020): 7–8.

notions of race, modernity, and Enlightenment.²⁸ By contrast, such texts make it a point to highlight eighteenth-century protestant hymnody in New England, an arguably simpler and far more geographically contained musical phenomenon that nevertheless implicitly serves as a starting point for nationalist narratives of “American” (meaning “Anglo-American”) music.²⁹ Including Hispanic eighteenth-century music in the curriculum shows Hispanic populations in that period not merely as a national minority in need of greater representation and inclusion, but as a transnational majority population, part of a global colonial empire, and enmeshed in complex relationships with other peoples and cultures.

In Music History & Literature 2, I make this point by discussing the eighteenth-century Christmas villancico “Negros de Guaranganá” (1788) by Rafael Antonio Castellanos (1725–1791), chapel master of the cathedral of Santiago de Guatemala. I begin the class session by discussing eighteenth-century maps depicting the Americas, calling students’ attention to drawings they often include, which exoticize the continent. Following a brief class discussion of exoticism (a notion introduced earlier in the semester), I share a brief overview of the colonial history of New Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We then explore the social hierarchies imposed by the colonial caste system by examining together the famous caste paintings (*pinturas de castas*) of the eighteenth century. In said caste system, Europeans born in Europe (mostly from the Iberian Peninsula, or *peninsulares*) occupied the top echelon of the hierarchy. Children of Europeans born in the New World (*criollos*), enjoyed many privileges but not as many as *peninsulares*. Indigenous peoples and Africans occupied the lower castes. Different levels of racial mixture (*mestizaje*) between European-descendants, indigenous people, and afro-descendants, and all possible mixtures between their already-mixed descendants, yielded a plethora of other castes occupying intermediary levels in the hierarchy—theoretically, at least. In practice, the system was hardly followed except to reinforce the hegemony of the top social echelons.³⁰ Ironically perhaps, the taxonomical endeavor

28. As a case study, see for example Jesús A. Ramos-Kittrell, *Playing in the Cathedral: Music, Race, and Status in New Spain, Currents in Latin American and Iberian Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

29. In a recent article, I discussed textbooks by Grout/Burkholder, Wright and Simms, and Bonds and their coverage of music in the Western Hemisphere. Citing from the 2019 edition of the Burkholder textbook as a representative example, I argue that nationalism remains a bias in these texts and historical narratives more generally. This bias explains why music in eighteenth-century New England (which would function as a type of proto-nationalist music for the United States), is favored over the more widely spread musical practices of New Spain. Amado, “Más Allá del Nacionalismo,” 7–9.

30. There were practical reasons for this. Upper class *peninsulares* and *criollos* could better keep genealogical records to show their place in colonial society, whereas the accuracy of genealogical records for lower castes or intermediary castes varied widely.

of the *pinturas de casta* very much aligns with the rationalistic ethos of the Enlightenment, in this case used to “rationally” rank colonial racial constructs. With the backdrop of colonialism, racialization, and Enlightenment, I then ask students to consider how music fits into these colonial narratives, by studying Castellanos’ villancico.

In “Negros de Guaranganá,” Black people celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with songs. As other pieces in the *villancicos de negros* subgenre, it problematically represents people of African descent. The lyrics caricature their appearance with “long fingernails” (“*largas uñas*”) characterize their language as “half a tongue” (“*con su media lengua*”), and their speech as “grumbling” (“*refunfuñar*”). When portraying the words of Black people, lyrics imitate Afro-Caribbean pronunciation of Spanish by, among other things, omitting consonants at the end of words and “s” sounds in general, and replacing “d” with soft “r.” The villancico also depicts Black people musically. Rhythmically, it follows the conventions of the genre, transcribable as compound duple meter with occasional 3:4 hemiolas. Known as *sesquialtera*, this rhythm likely derived from the Arabic saraband that found its way to Spain through North Africa; by extension, it may obliquely stand in for African rhythms at large.³¹ Castellanos antiphonally sets a dialogue section between Tío Antón (Uncle Antonio) and Tata Gaspá (Daddy Gaspar), two Black characters that lead the adoration of baby Jesus in this song. The antiphonal style appears to evoke the call-and-response African idiom as the villancico progresses. In the following section representing the song of Black people from Guaranganá, the lines sung by the narrator (imitating Black speech) alternate with instrumental phrases played by pizzicato strings.³² Then, in later iterations of this section, the call/response becomes more explicit with a chorus joining the pizzicato strings to echo, word for word, the narrator’s song.³³ Stylistically, the villancico features galant elements. The predominantly homophonic texture supports melodies of

31. David Hiley, E. Thomas Stanford, and Paul R. Laird, “Sesquialtera,” in *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40114>.

32. Dieter Lehnhoff interprets the annotation “punteado” that denotes the desired percussive articulation of the pizzicato as a reference to the characteristic sound of the marimba, an African-derived instrument widely used in Guatemala since colonial times. Dieter Lehnhoff, *Rafael Antonio Castellanos: vida y obra de un músico guatemalteco* (Universidad Rafael Landívar, Instituto de Musicología, 1994), 110–15. The performance in the recent Naxos recording replaces the first response by the strings with harpsichord, so the articulation is less obvious. Ryland Angel, Richard Savino et al., *Archivo de Guatemala: Music from the Guatemala City Cathedral Archive (El Mundo, Savino)*, album (Germany: Naxos, 2021). Before the publication of the Naxos recording, I used Lehnhoff’s version in the CD *Capilla Musical: Musica Histórica de Guatemala* vol. 3, (Guatemala: Fundación para la Cultura y el Desarrollo, 1992).

33. The recent Naxos recording of the piece further accents the African character of the music by slightly bending melodic notes (portamento) to imitate vernacular styles of singing. This arrangement also features added percussion such as shakers and woodblock to further Africanize the music. Savino, et al., *Music from the Guatemala City Cathedral Archive*.

regular length, delineated by clear cadences and unfolding over a relatively slow harmonic rhythm.

After analyzing the lyrical and musical features of the villancico, as well as its style in relation to the time period, I ask students whether they would program and perform this piece for a live audience. Most students admit to enjoying Castellanos' charming musical setting, but express conflicting feelings. Excited to discover a historic repertoire, some argue for its performance based on its potential historical value. Others admit (with ambivalence) to feeling intrigued for having experienced music from this time period that includes representations of Blackness, because even as demeaning as these representations appear, most music-historical narratives of this period overlook Black cultures completely. This view echoes the opening lines of the Castellanos's villancico: "Black people from Guaranganá / known by so few [people]."³⁴ Other students argue that listening to this music only feels appropriate in the context of academic discussions, but they themselves would never choose to perform it for general audiences to avoid perpetuating racist and offensive stereotypes. Finally, some students seek a compromise, agreeing with the importance of performing this repertoire to preserve an important aspect of music history, but would only do so providing abundant context and making significant disclaimers to audiences.³⁵

Our class discussions on this villancico raise important points. First, study of this villancico invites more student engagement and participation than most topics in Music History & Literature 2, suggesting that it is more relevant to them. Second, one cannot escape issues of colonization and the racial dynamics of the empire-building projects from that period when studying music in the Spanish colonies. Once addressed in the context of the Spanish repertoire, colonialism remains in sight as an important backdrop for discussing other music, even the Western canon. The study of this villancico thus prepares students for discussions of other forms of musical (mis)representations such as exoticism in opera and blackface minstrelsy, which we also address in Music History and Literature 2.

34. In Music History & Literature 2 we also study music by Joseph Boulogne Chevalier de Saint George, so students do encounter other examples of Black representation in music history. However, while Boulogne himself is a Black composer of mixed-race, he does not attempt to represent Black music in his works.

35. Musicologist Geoffrey Baker and conductor Tyron Clinton Jr. have also offered perspectives on the performance of problematic repertoires from the colonial New World. Geoffrey Baker, "Latin American Baroque: Performance as a Post-Colonial Act?," *Early Music* 36, no. 3 (August 1, 2008): 441–48, <https://doi.org/10.1093/em/can082>; Tyrone A. Clinton Jr., "Historically Informed Performance of the Baroque Villancico de Negro Subgenre in a Contemporary Setting" (DMA dissertation, Evanston, IL, Northwestern University, 2019).

Third, in this lesson students relate both the galant style of the villancico and the taxonomical goals of the *pinturas de casta* to the rationality of the Enlightenment; thus, they can begin to explore how the Enlightenment also intersects with colonization and racialization projects.³⁶ In this sense, I incorporate this colonial villancico not as a token to American musical production, or an interesting piece of trivia one may cover in a music history class if one has the time, but as an important contribution to the musical study of the Enlightenment.

Fourth, while standard curricular materials may neglect this music, it is not at all subaltern or the music of "minorities," rather it reveals hegemonic eighteenth-century European views on race. Thus, musical examples from the Spanish colonies invite a deconstruction of the racial binary implied in nationalist narratives (e.g., "white" music vs. music by "people of color"). Indeed, while "Hispanics" may constitute a "minority of color" in some racial constructs in the present-day United States,³⁷ Spanish people and their descendants occupied different places and racial designations according to the colonial hierarchies of the eighteenth century. This example thus underscores the fluidity and social contingencies of racial constructs.

Lastly, by asking students to contemplate the suitability of this repertoire for performance, they begin to think intersectionally about how the histories of Spanish-speaking peoples may relate to their own experiences and the experiences of their audiences today. The exercise empowers them; it challenges them to see themselves as college-educated artists and educators who, given their specialized knowledge, have the agency and responsibility to influence artistic and curricular decisions on problematic repertoires that advance Eurocentric worldviews. Thus, the study of this repertoire offers students an opportunity to build citizenship skills and to consider ethical issues they may encounter as they perform music from past eras.

36. See, for example, Roger Mathew Grant, "Colonial Galant: Three Analytical Perspectives from the Chiquitano Missions," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 75, no. 1 (April 1, 2022): 129–62, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jams.2022.75.1.129>.

37. Depending on how nuanced the data collection is, sometimes Latinx or Hispanics are designated as a minority that includes people of different racial backgrounds, "white Hispanics," and "black Hispanics" being the more common designations. For instance, the U.S. 2020 census excludes "Hispanic" from racial categories. U.S. Census Bureau: Population Estimates Program, "Race," Quick Facts, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed August 3, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/note/US/RHI625221#:~:text=OMB%20requires%20that%20race%20data,report%20more%20than%20one%20race>.

Musicking and Transatlantic Narratives in a Graduate Music History Course

In Fall 2021, the director of the Gender and Women's Studies program asked if I was planning to teach a course that she could include in the list of GWS graduate course offerings the following semester. Her inquiry prompted me to reconceive the course on nineteenth-century music history I was scheduled to teach. I reasoned that if women comprised half of the people in the nineteenth century, why shouldn't content on women and gender amount to half of course materials?³⁸

Skeptics might wonder whether including women so prominently might misrepresent music history. The late Richard Taruskin articulated the point thus:

I have been critical nevertheless of some of the mainstreaming efforts that have been mounted on behalf of women composers, since representing them disproportionately can distort the historical picture in a fashion that actually weakens the main political point of feminist scholarship: namely, that women have been not merely excluded from the historical account but denied the access and opportunities that would have enabled them to earn their place within it.³⁹

I do not find this concern compelling for three reasons. First, we have not begun to approach the point where women are overrepresented in music historiography or music history curricula; no such distortion can occur at present. Second, more scholarship on any given topic does not necessarily lead to its overrepresentation. Often times the scholarly goal is to attain, not more, but *better* representation. Scholars, teachers, and students can more accurately historicize and contextualize composers and their influence by considering more diverse contexts, analyses, interpretations, and sources. Third, concerns of overrepresentation of women composers also assume that music history primarily revolves around composers and their works, which excludes women's musical contributions as performers, patrons, and listeners. Thus, despite Taruskin's well-intentioned desire to highlight historical silences in composition, his decision to ultimately approach music history as the study of musical *monuments*—the “textual remains” of history—in his own *Oxford History of Western Music* perpetuates exclusion.⁴⁰

38. The UTRGV Center for Gender and Women's Studies requires that a course include around 50% content on gender and women's studies to meet requirements for their programs.

39. Richard Taruskin, “Non-Nationalists and Other Nationalists,” *Nineteenth Century Music* 35, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 133.

40. Taruskin understood the issue and expressed sympathy for approaches to music history that decenter monuments (musical texts), but chose to maintain the traditional focus:

To decenter composers and their works, music history instructors have proposed a range of alternatives that include focusing on performance, centering contexts, addressing problems and answering questions, and foregrounding themes (the environment, gender/sexuality, etc.), among others.⁴¹ And yet the primacy of the musical text remains central to many textbooks and curricula, which seem to work under a tacit tripartite hierarchical division of music. In this paradigm, composition occupies the top echelon in the hierarchy as “music.” Performance then follows below not as “music” but as the “interpretation” of music. Lastly, reception occupies the bottom echelon as perhaps listening as an act of consumption,⁴² or listening as a form of Kantian disinterested contemplation.⁴³ At any rate, as the most undertheorized part of this model, given its low hierarchical position, listening is defined by its passivity.⁴⁴

“another way of restoring women to music history is to change the nature of the story, giving less emphasis to composition and more to performance, patronage, and other areas in which the contributions of women have been more commensurate with those of men (...). And yet to the extent that it remains the aim and obligation of a text like this not only to narrate the story of past musical activities and deeds but also to provide an introduction to the material products—the textual remains—of those activities, the literate repertory must, despite all caveats, retain its privilege and remain the primary focus of the story.” Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: The Oxford History of Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82.

41. Daniel Barolsky et al., “Roundtable: Performance as a Master Narrative in Music History,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 3, no. 1 (2012): 77–102; Sara Haefeli, *Teaching Music History with Cases: A Teacher's Guide* (Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2022); Natalie R. Sarrazin, *Problem-Based Learning in the College Music Classroom* (Boca Raton, FL: Routledge, 2018); American Musicological Society, “Teaching Music History Conference 2022,” *Teaching Music History* (blog), January 19, 2023, <https://www.teachingmusichistory.com/events/tmhc2022/schedule/>.

42. Beyond considering listening as consumption in the capitalist sense, Nicholas Cook alerts listeners of Western classical music to the fact that concert-hall listening closely resembles consuming food at a restaurant, where the music created by the composer/chef is served by a performer, not coincidentally dressed as a member of the waiting staff at formal restaurants. Nicholas Cook, *Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 25–26.

43. Gary Tomlinson views opera as voicing expressions of subjectivity theorized by various philosophers such as Kant in the context of their respective sociohistorical moments. Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

44. While most musicologists would agree that this tripartite model is inadequate, I've experienced it in teaching contexts as recently as last year, when I was invited to speak in a graduate seminar on music and queerness. In that context someone asked me why so much literature on music and queerness seems to focus on reception rather than composition. The question insinuated a lacuna and undervalued the creative listening that often characterizes the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, especially while “in the closet.” Just as Small transforms the word music into a verb, “musicking,” Queer theorists describe creative acts of appropriation and repurposing as “queering.”

Instead of thinking in those terms, I follow Christopher Small's definition of music, or rather "musicking," as an action that may encompass any and every activity related to the musical experience: "There is no such thing as music. Music is not a thing at all but an activity, something that people do. The apparent thing 'music' is a figment, an abstraction of the action, whose reality vanishes as soon as we examine it at all closely."⁴⁵ In this view, a musical composition cannot exist apart from its performance and reception. The hierarchical relationship between composition, performance, and reception vanishes with the recognition that all aspects of the musical experience are creative actions. This perspective opens many possibilities for music history instruction. It allows us to approach issues of gender and sexuality in music history and helps us examine transnational flows of music within economic and political systems. Furthermore, it encourages us to analyze musical traditions that the "music as text" or "music as monument" paradigm excludes.

In concrete terms, aligning my graduate nineteenth-century music history class with the Gender and Women's Studies program at UTRGV through "musicking" meant exploring different ways in which women participated in musical activities. In addition to studying the life and works of female composers such as Clara Weick Schuman and Fanny Mendelssohn Hansel, we discussed depictions of women in parlor songs by Stephen Foster, the careers and influence of the performers Guiditta Pasta, Adelina Patti, and Anna Caroline de Belleville,⁴⁶ and piano playing by amateur women in bourgeois households.

Musicking also supports an exploration of the construction and contingencies of gender categories and norms in different times and places.⁴⁷ Beyond the inclusion of women's musical activities, it allows us to consider discursive, performative, and musical constructions of femininity, masculinity, and sexual orientations in nineteenth-century Europe and beyond, all in relation to musical practices. For instance, our exploration of the debates on Schubert's sexuality published in the 1990s raised many important questions regarding gender constructs in nineteenth-century Vienna where Schubert lived, in nineteenth-century Victorian England where his first English-language biographies were published, in the 1990s when the debates about his sexuality emerged,

45. Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998), 2.

46. Peng Liu gave a guest lecture to my class on the subject of his forthcoming article on Belleville. Peng Liu, "Constructing a Versatile Virtuoso Persona: Anna Caroline de Belleville and Mediating the Competing Tastes of Critics and Audiences." *The Journal of Musicology*, forthcoming.

47. In *Music History and Literature 1*, I illustrate this point by discussing the portrait of Louis XIV by Hyacinthe Rigaud and contrasting current constructions of masculinity with those of the seventeenth century represented there. Andres R. Amado, "In Defense of Performativity: How 'Performativity' Helps Us Understand the World Around Us," *Conceptions Review* (blog), June 12, 2021, <https://conceptionsreview.com/in-defense-of-performativity/>.

and even today when we explore them with the benefit of hindsight and more recent scholarly developments.⁴⁸ Studying music via gender can also productively engage ostensibly disembodied subjects, such as absolute music, a genre that developed over the nineteenth century, and which, as Daniel Chua shows, also resulted from specific gender ideologies.⁴⁹

Furthermore, since the concept of musicking decenters composition, it not only supports a richer discussion of gender and music; it also supports an argument for non-Western musics in global and transatlantic music histories. If the goal of my course were to present a canon of composers from the Americas equivalent to the European canon, the task would not only be daunting but most likely impossible; it assumes that people in both hemispheres musicked in the same ways and for the same reasons, producing similar musical corpuses. If people musicked differently in the Americas, however, the value of their musicking need not reside in its parity with European musicking, in which case different methods for analyzing music and assessing the historical value of musical practices would apply.

For example, while Latin American audiences wholeheartedly embraced Italian opera throughout the nineteenth century, Latin American composers rarely picked up the genre themselves. To Latin Americans, opera needed to be "authentically" European. As José Manuel Izquierdo König explains:

48. For example, Rita Steblin and Maynard Solomon discussed Schubert's eligibility to marry under the Viennese marriage laws to debate his motivations on the subject. This debate reveals many conceptions on gender roles for men and women in 19th-century Vienna. David Gramit discussed stereotypes of female and male genders in Victorian England and how they were applied to contrast Schubert's work from Beethoven's. Of course, Solomon's article which sparked the controversy referenced peacocks as a euphemism of homosexuality in the times of Benvenuto Cellini, which led other scholars to explore the cultural significance of peacocks and sexuality, not only for Schubert and Cellini, but also in Victorian England as well. Our class discussion also addressed why such a topic would surface in the 1990s, and what the discourse on gender and sexuality entailed at the time. Students drew direct connection between Schubert dying of syphilis, and the AIDS epidemic spreading in the 1990s, and the direct links between these diseases and sexuality. Rita Steblin, "The Peacock's Tale: Schubert's Sexuality Reconsidered," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 5–33; Maynard Solomon, "Schubert: Some Consequences of Nostalgia," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 34–46; David Gramit, "Constructing a Victorian Schubert: Music, Biography, and Cultural Values," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 65–78; Maynard Solomon, "Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini," *19th-Century Music* 12, no. 3 (1989): 193–206; Kristina Muxfeldt, "Political Crimes and Liberty, or Why Would Schubert Eat a Peacock?," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 47–64.

49. Chua demonstrates that notions of femininity and masculinity were closely related to concepts of genius and creativity. Daniel Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning*, vol. 4, *New Perspectives in Music History and Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Opera, inside opera houses [in the emerging Latin American republics], was an extension and a projection of 'Europe,' and thus it not only had to be felt as, but also be 'European.' Opera was accepted by many as a sign of Europeanness and its associated values: modernity, progress, cosmopolitanism, a certain sense of Occidentalism, and the commodification of a model of the imagined West.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, without creating works in that genre, composers in the Americas engaged with opera in other ways. Most notably, Italian opera literally became sacred music as chapel masters increasingly programmed arias and opera choruses during church services, replacing secular lyrics with sacred contrafacta.⁵¹ In other cases, local composers incorporated fashionable operatic styles in newly composed liturgical pieces.⁵²

Early in our graduate course, Izquierdo's article on the Rossinian style featured in sacred works by the Chilean chapel master José Bernardo Alzedo (1788–1878) opened our exploration of these issues. Commenting on Alzedo's works, students were fascinated by this repertoire that they found significant and yet had never encountered in previous music history courses. They also found an appreciation for this music, not as mere imitation of European music, but as a local adaptation that manifested the values and culture of the individuals and communities that produced it. Studying this music enriched our study of Rossini as well. Students began to appreciate the Italian composer as a major influence throughout the Western Hemisphere, even though his transatlantic fame remains understated in undergraduate music history surveys.

Acknowledging how people from different cultural backgrounds engage with specific musical traditions may not only lead to a better appreciation of musicking in previous centuries, but also has practical ramifications for students today. Many graduate music students at UTRGV make a living as performers and teachers of the Western classical tradition and find themselves in difficult professional environments where financial resources shrink and audiences dwindle. Advocates for curricular reform have denounced how most curricula fail to address such commonplace circumstances.⁵³ In this nineteenth-century music course, one of our liveliest discussions concerned this issue. It followed our exploration of the rise of symphonic music in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century and of the simultaneous struggles of advocates working

50. José Manuel Izquierdo König, "Rossinian Opera in Translation: José Bernardo Alzedo's Church Music in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Chile," *The Opera Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (December 15, 2019): 251–75. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oq/kbaa008>. Original emphasis.

51. Dieter Lehnhoff, "El 'Plan de reformas piasos' y el 'Apéndice histórico' (1843) de José Eulalio Samayoa: Primera Historia de la Música en Guatemala," *Cultura de Guatemala*, (September–December 1996): 55–89.

52. Amado, "Benedicto Sáenz 'Libera Me.'"

53. Moore, *College Music Curricula*, 3–6.

to make the genre take root in the United States. The sources we studied in our transatlantic exploration of the symphony reveal that, to a great extent, concerns for growing audiences and securing funds for European classical music have existed in this country for a very long time.⁵⁴ The current disconnect between "highbrow" music and most local audiences is therefore more than a current trend needing correction, but has deep cultural and historical roots that merit careful consideration.

Besides helping us consider the reception and production of Western music outside of Europe on deeper levels, the focus on musicking also allows for the inclusion of music otherwise cast aside as "unremarkable."⁵⁵ Significant nineteenth-century vernacular musicking practices in my classes included ghost dancing among Native Americans, various approaches to religious musicking among Protestants in the United States, and zarzuelas in Spain and Mexico. The transatlantic orientation of the course also highlighted the multidirectional circulation of musical trends and the transmission of musical ideas across genres and national borders. We investigated the reception of African American spirituals in Europe,⁵⁶ the transnational origins of the *danzón*,⁵⁷ and the rise of blackface minstrelsy as a phenomenon of international proportions through case studies in the United States and Latin America.⁵⁸

As a crucial period in the construction of nation-states in Europe and the Americas, the course on nineteenth-century music also offered us opportunities to investigate musical nationalism as a transnational cosmopolitan phenomenon.⁵⁹ Besides approaching the topic through music in the Western classical tradition in both hemispheres—studying works by composers such

54. Our primary reference was Levine's overview of the development of symphonic music in the U.S.A. Lawrence W Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 104–146.

55. Bohlman examines nineteenth-century views that dismissed so-called "functional" music for serving specific social functions, as opposed to serving only an artistic goal. This article was a required reading in the 19th-century graduate course discussed here. Philip V. Bohlman, "On the Unremarkable in Music," *19th-Century Music* 16, no. 2 (1992): 203–16. <https://doi.org/10.2307/746266>.

56. Kira Thurman, "Singing the Civilizing Mission in the Land of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms: The Fisk Jubilee Singers in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Journal of World History* 27, no. 3 (2016): 443–71. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jwh.2016.0116>.

57. Alejandro L. Madrid and Robin D Moore, "Danzón as a Performance Complex," in *Danzón: Circum-Caribbean Dialogues in Music and Dance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 22–74.

58. D. Domingo Gómez, "Los Cantores Africanos. Llegada y recepción del blackface minstrelsy en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX en Chile (1860)," *Revista Musical Chilena* 75, no. 235 (June 2021): 152–76.

59. Thomas Turino, "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations," *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 24, no. 2 (Autumn–Winter 2003): 169–209. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3598738>.

as Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Dvořák, Beach, and MacDowell—we also explored the geographical changes of national boundaries and their impact on local populations through the study of border music. On this topic, we studied the foundational work of Americo Paredes on the *corridos* of the Rio Grande Valley in the nineteenth-century.⁶⁰ As an eminence on the folklore of the region where we live, and a native from Brownsville, Texas, Paredes's work had special significance for us.

Challenges and Outcomes of a Transnational Approach

Covering such a diverse array of musicking practices on two continents in the aforementioned graduate survey presented challenges. As each one of the topics discussed above could constitute the subject of an entire seminar, students understandably found the amount of content overwhelming. Interestingly, when I solicited student feedback informally, almost all students uttered a variation of “there's too much reading, but please don't assign any less reading!” One student articulated the sentiment formally in a self-evaluation assignment: “At first, I was overwhelmed by both the volume and coverage of the topics ... [But] I found several topics extremely interesting. ... I have discovered composers and musicians that I have never encountered prior to this course and my knowledge now extends beyond the classical music canon.”⁶¹ Another student suggested as an improvement to the course to add content on music for wind bands, accurately noting that as expansive as the survey was, it did not adequately include this important type of musicking.

In addition to the problem of allotting time to each topic appropriately within the limitations of what students could reasonably manage in one semester, I struggled with keeping the course coherent. Furthermore, I worried about potentially tokenizing underrepresented topics, peoples, and repertoires. Organizing the course mostly chronologically—rather than topically or geographically—minimized these problems. Instead of segregating female composers from male composers in units of their own, or European music from music in the Americas, or concert music from vernacular music, introducing topics somewhat chronologically allowed us to explore a rich world of transatlantic encounters where different musical practices coexisted and traveled multidirectionally across geographies, genres, and social groups at specific moments

60. Paredes discusses a rich tradition of *corridos* that developed in the Rio Grande Valley in the nineteenth century, debunking the idea that the *corrido* originated during the Mexican Revolution in the early twentieth century. Américo Paredes, “The Corrido on the Border,” in *With a Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and Its Hero* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958), 129–50.

61. Student quotes edited for conciseness and clarity, quoted with permission.

in history. We pondered how musical and historical developments influenced each other. We also reflected on the presentism inherent to historical narratives and our own agency as researchers and artists in influencing which stories and musics from the past will endure in the twenty-first century. The chronological approach, not without its problems, served our purposes well.

Judging from the student projects produced and the feedback students offered,⁶² the course succeeded at advancing the aforementioned goals of curricular reform, perhaps best summarized as offering courses relevant to the needs and circumstances of music students today.

Student 1: I'm happy to have found a course that helped me learn and understand this era on a deeper level, [by studying] topics that touched on politics, nationalism, and gender.

Student 2: It took me a while to realize the connections and deeper meanings of the articles we were assigned. It wasn't until we talked about Schubert and “peacocks” that I noticed that his class wasn't merely covering the “facts” of history.⁶³ It didn't occur to me that a class could look at history with a critical eye and dig deeper into the social, political, and cultural aspects of history. These contexts were fascinating to look at with a modern perspective and to identify how other writers and researchers have looked into these issues with their own biases and perspectives.

Student 3: One of my greatest challenges, which became one of the most important [lessons] from the course, was learning to think outside the box. From a young age I was programmed to study music from Eurocentric, misogynist, and intolerant perspectives, which I internalized. This course has opened my eyes.

Student 4: I feel this course has allowed me to grow not only intellectually but also as a performer. Through some of the readings and discussions ... I have become aware of different ways of considering the music I perform. There are concepts that I would like to challenge and explore further. These assignments helped me reconsider and analyze my music.

62. Students produced projects that explored topics related to the Western canon (like projects on Schubert Lieder and Bruckner symphonies), gender in the nineteenth-century (such as the rise of the mixed choirs or letters and journal entries by Clara Wieck Schumann), and also music in the Western hemisphere (like connections between Manuel Ponce's *Balada Mexicana* for piano and the Chopin ballades, or music by Costa Rican composer Rafael Chávez Torres). Projects also varied in nature and included pedagogical projects, compositions and arrangements, analytical papers, and research papers.

63. Solomon, “Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini”; Muxfeldt, “Political Crimes and Liberty, or Why Would Schubert Eat a Peacock.”

Conclusions

Music history courses constitute but a fraction of large and complex curricula whose reform requires concerted efforts among specialists in various fields of music study. Consequently, seldom do music history instructors work in situations where they can singlehandedly implement major reforms. In my case, I was fortunate to join the faculty of UTRGV as a brand new institution and thus have some influence in shaping the music history sequence. Since then, faculty at UTRGV have continued to diversify the music curriculum in various ways, adding new concentrations in mariachi, jazz, and popular music. Even now, proposals for new major and minor concentrations exist in various stages of development. The current state of the music curriculum at UTRGV could perhaps be described as including elements of Moore's "enhanced core model" where content of courses can be changed without significantly altering course names, and the "pluralist model" that seeks to diversify music specializations.⁶⁴ Even so, the traditional conservatory paradigm still predominates.

Like in Moore's "enhanced core model," I seek to share with students global and local views of music in all music history and culture courses, even if their titles and catalog descriptions suggest a narrower focus. In courses specifically designated for the study of Western music history, a transatlantic approach helps address the Eurocentric and nationalist narratives often implied in them, while also offering students a broader view of music history and better representations of their own musical heritage. Given that I also invite students to consider the broader social implications of the musical traditions we study as well as their relevance to them as twenty-first-century musicians, the transatlantic focus addresses all four guiding principles for curriculum reform proposed by Moore and his collaborators, namely: 1) commitment to community, 2) commitment to the practical concerns of professional musicians, 3) commitment to global awareness, and 4) commitment to social justice.⁶⁵

Concerned with the epistemological inadequacies of a musicology that primarily serves the curricular goals of conservatory-like intuitions, Madrid has suggested that instructors take note of developments in other fields to find more relevant approaches to music studies at institutions of higher education.⁶⁶ Based on my experience designing graduate music courses aligned with programs of Mexican American Studies and Gender and Women's Studies, I concur. Thinking beyond the immediate needs of the department, as pressing as they may be, allows for richer and more relevant courses that make connections

across the university.⁶⁷ Building on the success of interdisciplinary graduate courses, I now seek to bring greater interdisciplinarity to my undergraduate teaching as well. Starting in Spring 2023, my sections of World Music Cultures will also count towards the minor in Religious Studies.⁶⁸

Recognizing the transatlantic approach as but one possibility in a specific cultural and institutional context, and not wishing to literally equate curricular development with scientific advancements, I cannot help but see parallels between curricular changes and Thomas Khun's process of shifting paradigms.⁶⁹ It seems that music education finds itself near a moment of "crisis" in which the old curricula do not serve us well, so we must explore alternatives. Whether a new dominant curricular paradigm will emerge and substitute the older conservatory model, or whether different paradigms will continue to emerge and co-exist, increasingly de-standardizing music curricula, is unclear. Clearer, however, is the exciting potential new relevance of music studies at institutions serving broader and more diverse student bodies. The Western European canon need not disappear from such curricula altogether, but must be better contextualized and historicized. A transatlantic approach to Western music history that foregrounds musicking as encompassing a broad range of creative endeavors can contribute to this goal.

64. Moore, ed., *College Music Curricula for a New Century*.

65. Moore, "Introduction," in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, 10–22.

66. Madrid, "American Music in Times of Postnationality," 702–3.

67. Although not discussed in this article, I have also taught graduate ethnomusicology courses that also meet requirements in anthropology programs, and currently team-teach a course on healing and music in the school of social work, where I introduce students to concepts and literature in medical ethnomusicology.

68. In World Music Cultures courses, I already cover many musical practices in various religious contexts around the world, from the bira ceremony among the Shona in Zimbabwe, to Afro-Cuban santería, to the sema ceremony among sects of Sufis, to gospel music in the United States, and more.

69. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).