The Myth of Musicology: Part 2

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> *Something wonderful happened to musicology in the last fifteen years or so. The field opened up both thematically and methodologically to such an extent that no one knows what musicology is any more.*[1]

The present article's origins stem from an article I wrote for *CAML Review* in August 2001 entitled "Pirates, Humpty Dumpty and a Brazilian Bishop: The Myth of Musicology." It examined the methodologies of musicology from the late eighteenth century to the early 1990s, concluding with the rise of "new" and feminist musicology.[2] The latter has continued to change and define itself in the period since, but there have also been a number of other trends as well, such as gender studies, gay and lesbian studies, postmodernism, and deconstruction. Unlike my previous survey, which outlined weekly readings with brief commentaries for a "Methodologies in Musicology" course, this article is going to critique the major trends from the early 1990s to the present. It will also suggest further readings one could use for teaching purposes.[3]

Of course, adding this more recent material creates the problem of deciding what to omit from the previous list since there is now too much to be incorporated into a one-semester course. This is why I have decided to present various possibilities for the readings to allow flexibility in adding or subtracting material. Another solution would be to create a new course which would then be the follow-up to my earlier article's program

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[1] Karol Berger, "Contemplating Music Archaeology," *Journal of Musicology* 13 (1995): 404; quoted in Julian Horton, "Postmodernism and the Critique of Musical Analysis," *Musical Quarterly* 85, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 342-66.

[2] I would like to take this opportunity to thank the editor of this *Review*, Desmond Maley, for his support and encouragement which has made both of these articles possible.

[3] It should be noted that the suggestions given are only about ten percent of what is available in the field and the material was limited to only English texts. Further readings can be found in the bibliographies of the suggested material.

of study, only this one would focus on musicological issues since 1990. As the following references illustrate, there is more than enough to fill a one-semester course devoted to just the past fifteen years of musicology.

Probably the most challenging aspect of dealing with recent methodologies is the interdisciplinary nature of each and every one of them. Academic disciplines such as literature, philosophy, psychology, history, semiotics, art history, and feminism have all contributed in major ways to formulating new modes of discussion in the musicological world. This is complicated by the fact that some of these disciplines are further subdivided. For instance, feminism has a wide variety of schools including liberal feminism, cultural feminism, lesbian feminism, and feminism based on the ideas of poststructuralism, psychoanalysis and Marxism. Schools may also exist in various combinations.[4] Obviously, there is much to consider and, if class discussion time permits, readings from disciplines besides music should be included to allow for a broad-based approach. From a pedagogical perspective, the challenge of teaching all of this material to senior undergraduates and graduate students cannot be underestimated.

Let me begin by examining feminism. My previous article listed surveys by Bowers and Cook which outlined the main ideas of feminist musicology as well as Susan McClary's *Feminine Ending: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).[5] With the passage of time, *Feminine Endings* has proven itself to be a seminal monograph; almost every writing on feminist scholarship refers to it.

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[4] Stanley Sadie, ed. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* 2nd ed. (New York: Groves Dictionaries, 2001), s.v. "Feminism" by Ruth Solie.

[5] Articles included: J.M. Bowers, "Feminist Scholarship and the Field of Musicology: I," *College Music Symposium* 29 (1989): 81-92; Susan Cook, "Women, Women's Studies, Music and Musicology: Issues of Pedagogy and Scholarship," *College Music Symposium* 29 (1989): 93-100; J.M. Bowers, "Feminist Scholarship and the Field of Musicology II," *College Music Symposium* 30, no. 1 (1990): 1-13.

Currently *RILM* lists seventy-two book reviews, a phenomenally high number for a music monograph. Moreover, a number of the reviews are in mainstream cultural sources such as the *New York Review of Books, American Quarterly*, and *The Journal of Modern History*, a testament of the ability of this book to engage a far wider readership.[6] With so much written about *Feminine Endings,* it is possible to do a class assignment assessing these reviews alone, since one would be hard-pressed to find a greater range of praise and criticism. I previously had suggested additional readings by Jann Pasler, Elaine Barkin, and Paula Higgins that essentially were a reaction to McClary's work, as well as responses by McClary and Ruth Solie.[7]

What has happened in the past ten years? In many respects, McClary and Solie have continued to produce the most important work in the field. McClary's article, "Reshaping a Discipline: Musicology and Feminism in the 1990s," is one of the best summaries of the aims, accomplishments, and criticisms of feminist musicology up to 1993.[8] Throughout, McClary addresses some of the stumbling blocks in the field, particularly in the section entitled "The Problem of Criticism and Musicology," as well as future goals in "Where Do We Go From Here?" From a pedagogical standpoint, if there was just a single source to read on feminist musicology, McClary's would be the one: it is a concise, clear, and comprehensive overview. But if a second reading is needed, a

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[6] Reviews by Charles Rosen in *The New York Review of Books* 41, no. 12 (23 June 1994): 55-62; Susan C. Cook in *American Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (March 1992): 155-62; and, Ruth Solie in *The Journal of Modern History* 65, no. 3 (1993): 575-77.

[7] Articles included: Jann Pasler, "Some Thoughts on Susan McClary's *Feminine Endings," Perspectives of New Music* 30, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 202-5; Elaine Barkin, "either/other," *Perspectives of New Music* 30, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 206-33; Paula Higgins, "Women in Music, Feminist Criticism and Guerilla Musicology: Reflections on Recent Polemics," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 174-92; Susan McClary, "A Response to Elaine Barkin," *Perspectives of New Music* 30, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 234-39; Ruth Solie, "What do Feminists Want? A Reply to Pieter van den Toorn," *Journal of Musicology* 9 (Fall 1991): 399-410.

[8] Susan McClary, "Reshaping a Discipline: Musicology and Feminism in the 1990s," *Feminist Studies* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 399-423.

complementary article would be Solie's entry on "Feminism" in the *New Grove Dictionary* (2nd ed., 2001).[9] She briefly describes the development of the discipline, its three fundamental tenets, the various types of feminism, and the connection and problems of postmodern thought in relation to feminism as well as intellectual movements such as gender studies. As a corollary to these two articles, the entry, "Women in Music" (*New Grove,* 2nd ed.), deals with the more practical side of the issue and presents "the collective experience of women within Western and non-Western musical traditions."[10]

A more recent book by McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Music Form,* illustrates many of her (and, for that matter, other feminists') theories using a variety of musical examples from diverse cultures and eras, including Stradella, African-American gospel music, the blues, A. Scarlatti, Vivaldi, Beethoven, Zorn, Kiss and k.d. lang.[11] Originally written for the Bloch Lectures at the University of California at Berkeley in 1993, McClary's overall aim is "to explore the social premises of musical repertories."[12] I would highly recommend that one or more chapters be included in the course since they illustrate McClary's style of constantly questioning commonly accepted notions about the interpretation of specific pieces of music, i.e., "their conventional wisdoms." In chapter 1, she laments:

> Yet despite the growing number of scholars committed to cultural interpretation and regardless of which project I happen to be pursuing, I continue to meet resistance from those who claim that most aspects of music—indeed, the ones that really matter—operate according to "purely musical" procedures....No gender, no

[9] *New Grove,* 2nd ed., s.v. "Feminism" by Ruth Solie.
[10] *New Grove,* 2nd ed., s.v. "Women in Music" by Judith Tick and Ellen Koskoff.
[11] Susan McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Music Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
[12] Ibid., 1.

> narratives, no politics: just chords, forms, and pitch-class sets. And the discussion stops there.[13]

If class time permitted, another interesting course exercise would be to contrast *Conventional Wisdom* with McClary's earlier tome, *Feminine Endings*. Overall the comparison would show a less confrontational tone, since feminist music literature is now an accepted methodology. Daniel Chua, in his review of the later work, also remarks on this change:

> In these lectures, McClary assumes the role of a diplomat, in conciliatory mood, pushing all the politically correct buttons—gender, race, popular music—while offering an olive branch to those who had accused her of bashing Western music. Indeed, as an act of penance, she even makes two concessions: first, that she can say nice things about Beethoven (p. 119), and second, that she can affirm Schenker (p. 128)....But despite these diplomatic negotiations, the good news is that McClary has lost nothing of her former role as an *agent provocateur*...making the book more of a goad than a guide to an alternative history of music.[14]

Closely connected to feminist musicology, and believed by some to have arisen out of feminist thought, is gender studies as applied to music. Like other critical (music) theories, the study of music and gender originated from gender studies in the humanities and social sciences in the 1980s. One of the earliest articles is Marcia Citron's "Gender and the Field of Musicology."[15] Citron considers how gender studies has influenced musicology:

> Even more important, gender has raised and responded to new questions in the history of music and broadened the sweep and complexity of the discipline. It has helped to redefine categories and methodologies and opened up new possibilities for understanding musical works.[16]

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[13] Ibid., 10.
[14] Daniel Chua, review of *Conventional Wisdom*, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 413.
[15] Marcia Citron, "Gender and the Field of Musicology," *Current Musicology* 53 (1992): 66-75.
[16] Ibid., 66.

Gender studies, while leading into innovative avenues for musicology, is itself in a state of flux concerning its parameters, as shown by Citron's definition of the field:

> Generally described as the social constructedness of the cultural meanings of male and female, gender encompasses many issues, including sexuality. There is a fair amount of controversy, however, over the relationships among internal categories. For example, are male and female dualistic concepts? Oppositional? If there is a continuum within gender, then what are the end points? Are they male and female? How would sexual orientation figure into such a scale? Approaches run the gamut from constructivism to essentialism, with most practitioners somewhere in between.[17]

On the whole, I would recommend Citron's article as an introduction to gender in a musicology course, since it explains how the gendered approach will enhance biographical research, and historiography (especially canon formation); and contemplates how music itself is gendered. If time is allotted to do further work in this area, I would suggest three other books: 1) Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); 2) Ruth Solie, ed. *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); and 3) Susan Cook and Judy Tsou, *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994). Citron's book focuses on women composers and why they have been excluded from the "canon" in Western art music. Based on the concept of canon as creating "a narrative of the past and a template for the future," she focuses on the period from 1800 to the present, initially defining and exploring the meaning of canon, followed by chapters on creativity (composing music), professionalism, music as gendered discourse and reception theory.[18] The other two books are essay collections written by a who's who of

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[17] Ibid., 67.
[18] Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1.

authors on the leading edge of feminist, gender, and, gay and lesbian critical theories. For example, *Musicology and Difference* includes papers by Leo Treitler, John Shepherd, Nancy Reich, Judith Tick, Ellen Koskoff, Elizabeth Wood, Carolyn Abbate, Philip Brett, Suzanne Cusick, Susan McClary, and Lawrence Kramer. The diverse topics cover Western European and popular traditions, and ethnomusicology. From a pedagogical perspective, all of these essays are valuable and the class could be allowed to decide which one(s) best suited its interests.

The last two books also incorporate another branch of the new musicology, namely " 'queer theory', the intellectual phenomenon based on the recuperation of the pejorative term 'queer', and the inflecting of gay and lesbian knowledge with postmodern knowledge and ways of thinking."[19] While there are a few examples of writing in this area from the late 1980s, most of the published work occurred after 1990. The social impetus dates from the gay and lesbian liberation movements of the 1970s, which influenced all aspects (composition, performance, recordings) of both classical and popular music. Similar to the other movements in musicology, queer music theory has been influenced by, and has borrowed methodological procedures from, feminist and poststructuralist writings (both music and non-music sources) as well as the disciplines of gay studies, gender studies, and the history of sexuality. The groundbreaking book, *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology,* contains fourteen essays on a number of composers from different musical eras (e.g., Henry Lawes, G.F. Handel, Ned Rorem, Schubert, Britten, and k.d. lang), as well as exploring more general issues of

[19] *New Grove,* 2nd ed., s.v. "Gay and Lesbian Music" by Philip Brett and Elizabeth Wood. The bibliography for this entry should be noted for further readings in this field.

queer theory.[20] Like the other collections cited above, a cursory glance at this book does not do it justice since each of the essays is, as one reviewer put it, "strikingly diverse in subject matter, tone, and method."[21] In fact, this eclecticism reflects the multiplicity of ideas and goals in gay and lesbian musicology.

As a final set of readings for this section, I would suggest four articles on Schubert's possible homosexual orientation. Together they show the myriad of reactions in the field, both pro and con, as well as some of the methodological issues and interpretations involved:

1) Maynard Solomon, "Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini," *19th-Century Music* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1989): 193-206.

2) Rita Steblin, "The Peacock's Tale: Schubert's Sexuality Reconsidered," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (Summer 1993): 5-33.

3) Maynard Solomon, "Schubert: Some Consequences of Nostalgia," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (Summer 1993): 34-46.

4) Susan McClary, "Music and Sexuality: On the Steblin/Solomon Debate," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (Summer 1993): 83-88.

The articles need to be read in order since they comprise a series of exchanges beginning with Solomon's biographical account of the facts leading to his decision that Schubert was gay (through Schubert's letters, contemporary biographies, etc.). Steblin contends that Schubert was not and disagrees with Solomon's interpretation of the documents and sources. Solomon responds "that all the strands of my argument remain intact" followed by a detailed discussion of Steblin's criticisms.[22] The first three articles

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[20] Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds., *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
[21] Ruth Solie, review of *Queering the Pitch*, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 312.
[22] Maynard Solomon, "Schubert: Some Consequences of Nostalgia," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (Summer 1993): 35.

provide the background for the fourth article by McClary who does not take sides in the debate, but broadens out the issue into a general argument on "why, how, and even if musicology should address topics connected with homosexuality."[23] By looking at these articles in relationship to one another, an additional benefit is created: students will see firsthand the dynamics of scholarship and controversy.

Another *ism* of the late twentieth century is "postmodernism," a term difficult to define because of its pluralism as evidenced by the beginning of the *New Grove* entry: "A term, American in origin, widely used from the later 1970s onwards, with a broad range of meanings. Some come from multiple associations with 'modern' and 'modernist', others from disagreement over what the prefix 'post' implies about the 'modern'—contestation or extension, difference or dependence—and whether postmodernism is a regressive or progressive force."[24] The entry is worth consulting for an overview of this field of study since the author, Jann Pasler, breaks it down into three approaches, plus the bibliography is excellent for its inclusion of non-music as well as musical sources.[25] Having said that, I fear that a student who knows nothing about postmodernism may not be enlightened; hence, here are some further suggestions to introduce the topic. Chapter 6, "Positions," in Alastair Williams' *Constructing Musicology,* presents a very good overview of the epistemological and methodological issues, while Leo Treitler's "Postmodern Signs in Musical Studies" challenges the reader to compare and contrast the postmodern world with some of the characteristics of

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[23] Susan McClary, "Music and Sexuality: On the Steblin/Solomon Debate," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (Summer 1993): 83-88.

[24] *New Grove*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Postmodernism," by Jann Pasler.

[25] The three approaches include: 1) "the reaction to the internationalism of Modernism, to the centrality of Europe in that tradition and to abstraction as a universal language;" 2) " 'postmodernism of resistance' or radical postmodernism, question rather than exploit cultural codes and explore rather than conceal any associated social or political affiliations;" and, 3) "one of connection or interpenetration, results when a work's juxtapositions involve an eclectic inclusion of material from disparate discourses."

postmodernist musicology.[26] Treitler's article from the onset forces the reader to explore ideas in various ways: "This essay comprises four sections, of which the third is focal. It is left to the reader to consider relations among them."[27] The first section is Treitler's analysis of two adjacent newspaper articles (dating from 1991) that discuss the possibility of a Persian Gulf war: one by a sociologist/philosopher of the French Poststructuralist school and the other by a German political analyst. Treitler remarks on how their views "represent current alternative styles of perceiving, interpreting, and responding to the world around us, ..."[28] While the second and fourth sections are also not directly related to a discussion of postmodern musicology, section three addresses how, why and what postmodern musicology is, or should (or for that matter, should not) become: "Primary among the postmodern traits of some recent musicology is its self-proclaimed mission to wrench the discipline free of the habits and beliefs, no, the constraints—the "discipline" (Foucault)—of modernism."[29]

A more current article is Jonathan Kramer's "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," which begins with a set of questions that reflect on the lack of defining characteristics of postmodernism: "Postmodernism is a maddeningly imprecise musical concept. Does the term refer to a period or an aesthetic, a listening attitude or a compositional practice? Is postmodern music still seeking to define itself, or has its time already passed?" [30] But it should be noted this article focuses more on musical composition than criticism. On the other hand, Lawrence Kramer (not to be confused

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[26] Alastair Williams, *Constructing Musicology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 115-40; and, Leo Treitler, "Postmodern Signs in Musical Studies," *The Journal of Musicology* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1995): 3-17.
[27] Treitler, "Postmodern Signs," 3.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., 10.
[30] Jonathan D. Kramer, "The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism," *Current Musicology* 66 (Spring 1999): 7-20.

with Jonathan) in *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge*, presents a definition based on the theories of Jean-François Lyotard:

> ...the term designates a conceptual order in which grand, synthesizing schemes of explanation have lost their place and in which the traditional bases of rational understanding—unity, coherence, generality, totality, structure—have lost their authority if not their pertinence. An order so hostile to grand syntheses cannot, of course, willingly admit of one itself. Post-modernist strategies of understanding are incorrigibly interdisciplinary and irreducibly plural. Like the theories that ground them, they make up not a system but an ethos.[31]

There is also a series of articles, again in response to each other, which has become the most famous (infamous?) in postmodern circles. The initial author, Lawrence Kramer, is probably the most prolific and well-known postmodern musicologist.[32] Again, the articles should be read in the order presented:

1) Lawrence Kramer, "The Musicology of the Future," *repercussions* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 5-18.
2) Gary Tomlinson, "Musical Pasts and Postmodern Musicologies: A Response to Lawrence Kramer," *Current Musicology* 53 (Fall 1992): 18-24.
3) Lawrence Kramer, "Music Criticism and the Postmodernist Turn: In Contrary Motion with Gary Tomlinson," *Current Musicology* 53 (Fall 1992): 25-35.
4) Gary Tomlinson, "Gary Tomlinson Responds," *Current Musicology* 53 (Fall 1992): 36-40.

Kramer best summarizes the argument:

> Gary Tomlinson's reaction to the author's [Kramer's] ideas on a postmodernist music criticism argues that all criticism as such is an exercise in illegitimate authority or mastery. Where the author proposes a gradual erasure of the boundaries between musical work and its social, political, and critical contexts, Tomlinson finds internalist close reading based only on the critic's subjectivity; what the author proposes as inquiry, Tomlinson characterizes as domination. Tomlinson's argument misconstrues both criticism and subjectivity, and renders his own goal of metasubjective knowledge unattainable. Criticism may, indeed,

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[31] Lawrence Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 5.
[32] See: Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* ; and, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

go wrong in the way Tomlinson described, but it can also go right in ways he does not recognize.[33]

As a final class reading for this debate, Joel Galand's "The Turn from the Aesthetic" re-examines Kramer's and Tomlinson's criteria and suggests that Enlightenment aesthetic ideas, especially those of Kant, could play a role in postmodern criticism.[34]

In some writings about postmodernism, two other methodologies or strategies are mentioned: poststructuralism and deconstructionism; both originate from philosophical and literary criticism of the 1960s. Deconstruction is considered to be a branch of poststructuralism, and while musicologists and theorists have used the former's theories and strategies to analyse musical scores, one needs to go back to literary criticism to understand its basic tenets.[35] In discussions of deconstruction, one repeatedly comes across the pioneering work of the most prolific writer in this field, Jacques Derrida. *Structure, Sign and Play* (1966) was his first critique of structuralism, leading into the poststructuralist techniques of particularly close reading.[36] He did not think of deconstruction as a method nor could it be transformed into one.[37] The term 'method' "is misleading because deconstruction has to do with what cannot be formalized or anticipated. Deconstruction has to do with the unforeseeable, the incalculable, indeed the impossible."[38] Derrida wrote that the " 'least bad definition' " of deconstruction is: "the

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[33] Kramer's RILM Abstract to "Music Criticism and the Postmodernist Turn." RILM Accession Number: 1993-01841. Hardcopy: Volume 27, Entry 1779.
[34] Joel Galand, "The Turn from the Aesthetic," *Current Musicology* 58 (Summer 1995): 79-97.
[35] Poststructuralism tends to reveal that the meaning of any text is, of its nature, unstable.
[36] Derrida died recently on 8 October 2004. For a brief obituary and other articles see: http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/politicsphilosophyandsociety/story/0,6000,1324454,00.html
[37] Nicholas Royle, ed. *Deconstructions: A User's Guide* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 4.
[38] Ibid., 6.

experience of the impossible."[39] In general, most writers on the subject refer to the fact that every text has multiple meanings and interpretations, that even the author cannot be aware of all the various layers of meanings, and the fixed meaning of a text dissolves when the hidden ambiguities and contradictions are revealed.

In his opening essay "What is Deconstruction?" Nicholas Royle cleverly ponders the various meanings and definitions of the term deconstruction by pretending to be an irate reader who has just recently bought the latest edition (1998) of the *Chambers Dictionary.*[40] In the form of a letter to the editor, the "reader" complains about the definition and then goes on to explain why the terminology used is misleading and incorrect. Further dictionary definitions (1989 ed. of the *Oxford English Dictionary* and 1993 ed. of *The New Shorter OED)* are pondered, and Royle then concludes with his own definition (which also borrows from Derrida):

> **deconstruction** n. not what you think: the experience of the impossible: what remains to be thought: a logic of destabilization always already on the move in 'things themselves': what makes every identity at once itself and different from itself: a logic of spectrality: a theoretical and practical parasitism or virology: what is happening today in what is called society, politics, diplomacy, economics, historical reality, and so on: the opening of the future itself.[41]

Perhaps the best summary is by Adam Krims:

> The topic of this article obliges us to come to terms with the ambiguous and multiple identities of that vaguest of objects, "deconstruction." Nobody quite seems to know what deconstruction is—or, rather, everybody knows well, including that everybody else is wrong about it. Some identify "deconstruction" with a certain body of work produced by Derrida in the mid-to-late 1960s; others include figures such as Paul DeMan, Geoffrey Hartmann, J. Hillis Miller, Barbara Johnson in some notion of a generalized practice; others would divide

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[39] Jacques Derrida, "Afterw.rds: or, at least, less than a letter about a letter less", trans. Geoffrey Bennington, in *Afterwords*, ed. Nicholas Royle (Tampere, Finland: Outside Books, 1992); quoted in Royle, *Deconstructions*, 6.
[40] Royle, *Deconstructions*, 1-13.
[41] Ibid., 11.

> deconstruction into several different tendencies, sometimes validating only certain strains above other work regarded as somehow degraded; and yet others recognize differentiations in deconstructive practices, while still finding some common tendencies....In other words, there are quite a few different Derridas and quite a few different "deconstructions."[42]

One of the most important scholars on Derrida and deconstruction is Christopher Norris. While I would hesitate recommending his *New Grove* (2nd ed.) article on deconstruction as an introduction to the field for students (it is too densely written), his book, *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice,* could work well .[43] He examines the roots of deconstruction from Kant and structuralism, writings of Derrida, connections to Nietzsche, Hegel and Marx, as well as some of the current American deconstructionists, such as Paul de Man and Harold Bloom. For class readings, I would firstly suggest the Royle essay and then various chapters from Norris's book, again depending on the time limits of the course.

From a musicological standpoint, the articles on deconstruction generally fall into one of two categories: those which apply deconstruction theory to musical analysis, and specific pieces of music; and, those which give an overview of deconstruction: how it can be applied to music and/or an analysis of previously published articles. Examples of the former category would include Lawrence Kramer's chapter, "'As If a Voice Were in Them': Music, Narrative, and Deconstruction," in which he briefly discusses various aspects of Derrida's and Nietzsche's ideas, followed by a section on the narrative in music and concluding with a deconstructive analysis of Beethoven's String Quartet in B-flat, op. 18, no. 6 and Schumann's *Carnaval.*[44] Rose Subotnik's book, *Deconstructive*

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[42] Adam Krims, "Disciplining Deconstruction (For Music Analysis)," *19th-Century Music* 21, no. 3 (Spring 1998): 297-98.
[43] Christopher Norris, *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002).
[44] Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800-1900*, 176-213.

Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society is devoted to using deconstruction as a means of analysis over four chapters: 1) "Whose *Magic Flute*? Intimations of Reality at the Gates of the Enlightenment," 2) "How Could Chopin's A-Major Prelude Be Deconstructed?," 3) "Towards a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky," and 4) "The Closing of the American Dream? A Musical Perspective on Allan Bloom, Spike Lee, and Doing the Right Thing."[45]

In the second category belongs the comprehensive article by Adam Krims' "Disciplining Deconstruction (For Music Analysis):"

> I shall argue that the representations of deconstruction in music scholarship are themselves symptomatic; the interest here lies less in seeing who gets deconstruction "right"—since, by this point, it does not seem particularly useful to affirm yet another "true Derrida"—than in seeing which particular "deconstructions" tend to appear in music scholarship....For the kind of object that we create and call "deconstruction" will be a reflection just as surely of our own interests as of any objectively definable practice....[46]

After presenting a summary of deconstruction's reception theory, Krims examines four articles on deconstruction by Snarrenberg, Scherzinger, Kramer, and Littlefield, followed by a concluding section in which he addresses "the social and political implications of deconstruction in music scholarship, and the particular forms of its musical appropriations."[47] For a combination of both of my categories, one could assign Kramer's article, "'As If a Voice Were in Them'..." followed by Krims' discussion of it.

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[45] Rose Subotnik, *Deconstructive Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
[46] Krims, "Disciplining Deconstruction," 298.
[47] The four articles include: Robert Snarrenberg's "The Play of *Différance*: Brahms's Intermezzo, Op. 118, No. 2"; Martin Scherzinger's "The Finale of Mahler's Seventh Symphony: A Deconstructive Reading"; Lawrence Kramer's " 'As If a Voice Were in Them': Music, Narrative, and Deconstruction" in *Music as Cultural Practice: 1800-1900*; and Richard Littlefield's "The Silence of the Frames."
Ibid., 322.

A second example of this kind of critique is Craig Ayrey's "Universe of Particulars: Subotnik, Deconstruction, and Chopin," which examines in detail various claims and interpretations made by Subotnik about deconstruction (with many references to Adorno and Derrida) as well as discussing her two readings of a Chopin Prelude (Chapter 2) from *Deconstructive Variations*.[48] Since this is a long, detailed and complex argument, a significant amount of time would have to be given for class discussion, so the Kramer-Krims combination would probably be a better choice if time is limited.

The final suggested reading is in many ways the best since it combines an overview of Derrida's thinking with some examples in musicology and it is probably the most accessible for students to understand. Jonathan Walker, at the beginning of "The Deconstruction of Musicology: Poison or Cure?" summarizes his intentions:

> What I shall attempt here is a critique first of Derrida himself, secondly of textuality and interdisciplinarity, which simplify and distort Derrida's writings, and thirdly the use that certain musicologists have made of these arguments during the last decade, in writings that may today be generally dubbed the New Musicology (a label bound to disappear before long).[49]

The musical examples to which he refers are drawn from McClary's articles that analyse Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5*, Brahms' Third Symphony, and James Hepokoski's analysis of the "Anvil Chorus" from *Il Trovatore*.

Overall, the concept of deconstruction is very complicated and difficult to address within the context of a course such as this; if one decides to assign readings on the subject, I would suggest that ample time be given in class for further explanation and for discussion.

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[48] Craig Ayrey, "Universe of Particulars: Subotnik, Deconstruction, and Chopin," *Music Analysis* 17, no. 3 (1998): 339-81.

[49] Jonathan Walker, "The Deconstruction of Musicology: Poison or Cure?" *Music Theory Online* 2, no. 4 (1996): available from <http://www.societymusictheory.org/mto/issues/mto.96.2.4/

And now, for something different—a slight *divertissement*. It appears that the concept of "interdisciplinarity" in music knows no bounds nor borders. When I began this project, my *RILM/Academic Search Premier* search of "musicology" as a subject term from 1990 to the present produced 2,358 entries. As I worked my way through them, I came across some interesting contributions from other disciplines. Please be aware that I would add these three readings to the course list only if there was sufficient time to cover the previous material since they are tangential and are not representative of the mainstream. The first is an article by Dario Martinelli, "Methodologies and Problems in Zoomusicology," in which he outlines zoomusicology as a discipline and its connections to zoosemiotics, the limitations and potentials for research, problems, methodologies, and its possible relation to ethnomusicology.[50] Martinelli defines zoomusicology as the study of "the aesthetic use of sounds among animals."[51]

The second area is "music geography" as defined and discussed in Peter Nash's article, "The Seven Themes of Music Geography."[52] When this discipline emerged around 1970, it was considered a subfield of cultural geography and a number of articles have been published over the years dealing with various aspects. Nash's article discusses music geography's themes with respect to origins, world distribution and types, analysis of location, source areas of musical activities, trends based on electricity, impact

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[50] Dario Martinelli, "Methodologies and Problems in Zoomusicology," *Sign Systems Studies* 29, no. 1 (March 2001): 341-52.
[51] Ibid., 343.
[52] Peter H. Nash, "The Seven Themes of Music Geography," *The Canadian Geographer* 40, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 69-74.

of music on landscapes, and global music, as well as a possible eighth theme on technological innovations.

The final example, "theomusicology" or "theologically informed musicology," employs ideas and methodologies from anthropology, sociology, psychology and philosophy to examine ethical, religious, and mythological influences on music. In *Theological Music: Introduction to Theomusicology* Jon Michael Spencer covers a wide variety of music from the sacred, secular and profane traditions of African-American culture in folk, popular, and traditional styles.[53]

Having examined the *isms* in detail, one still needs to consider at this point in the course the more general surveys of methodologies in musicology in the 1990s. There is a strong argument to be made for reading this material first and then looking at the various subdisciplines as discussed above. But in most cases the authors assume a working knowledge of these fields, so students would be at a disadvantage if they had not done any prior reading. In any event, these articles present various interpretations of the subdisciplines and also show the blurring of boundaries both between and in them. The articles date from 1992 to 2004 and chronicle changes and developments in the field as well as giving some examples of negative criticism. The first article, Philip Bohlman's "Viewpoint: On the Unremarkable in Music," is a reflection on the theme of "music in its social contexts" and presents arguments in favour of borrowing methodologies from both ethnomusicology and cultural studies.[54] A wide range of approaches to the study of

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[53] Jon Michael Spencer, *Theological Music: Introduction to Theomusicology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991).
[54] Philip Bohlman, "Viewpoint: On the Unremarkable in Music," *19th- Century Music* 16, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 203-16.

music in its social contexts is examined under subheadings such as cultural frame, cultural web, social text, social commodity, the commonwealth of culture, the body as context, and social space. From a pedagogical standpoint, Bohlman's analysis of social contexts could lead to some interesting class discussions, especially when combined with the subfields.

William Weber's review article, "Beyond Zeitgeist: Recent Work in Music History," discusses "the problem of music's relations with society and the other arts and then survey[s] some of the recent work in musicology from which historians could benefit." [55] Since this article was written for non-specialists, the summary of musical writings from approximately 1980 (to 1994) has an "outside the box" flavour which students might find appealing (and easier to comprehend). A second article, which also recapitulates some of the ideas of the new musicology, is Jonathan Stock's "New Musicologies, Old Musicologies: Ethnomusicology and the Study of Western Music," but the main focus is a discussion of the avoidance by musicologists of ethnomusicological approaches and how and why this has happened. [56] Stock proposes that musicologists could benefit from these methodologies. As a reading, this article is valuable because of its broader perspective especially if students are concerned with historical musicology. The last article is Jann Pasler's "Directions in Musicology," a Round Table Report from the International Musicological Society's Congress in 1997.[57] Pasler reflects on the philosophical and sociological issues that underlie:

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[55] William Weber, "Beyond Zeitgeist: Recent Work in Music History," *Journal of Modern History* 66 (June 1994): 321-45.
[56] Jonathan Stock, "New Musicologies, Old Musicologies: Ethnomusicology and the Study of Western Music," *Current Musicology* 62 (Spring 1997): 40-68.
[57] Jann Pasler, "Directions in Musicology," *Acta Musicologica* 69, no. 1 (1997): 16-21.

> the question of whether music has its own meaning, independent of the context in which it is created, performed, and heard, or whether it is inevitably socially embedded and cannot be fully understood outside of these contexts, whether its meaning results from a certain kind of intentionality mutually understood by the creator and perceiver, whether it is principally an attribute of the mind, a product of cognitive responses to sound and/or bodily ones. Underlying the manner in which these questions are explored are three other, perhaps even more fundamental issues: our different assumptions about the nature of knowledge itself, about what we perceive as the source of that knowledge, and about how we as scholars relate to the inquiry.[58]

And finally...the critics. While there is much controversy within each area of the new musicology, there also exists another faction which more or less dismisses it entirely. There are two examples which would work well as course readings, the first being Charles Rosen's mainly negative assessment in his essay, "Music à la Mode."[59] This should be coupled with "Critics of Disenchantment," a response by Stephen Miles in which he devotes approximately eight pages to some of the issues critiqued by Rosen.[60] The rest of Miles' article excellently summarizes how the new musicology analyzes the social meanings of music: "How to develop analytical methods for an art form that by definition is removed from verbal meaning? How to learn to hear social and political implications in musical sound?"[61] In particular he discusses the writings of Theodor Adorno and the latter's influence on McClary, Subotnik, and poststructuralist critics like Lawrence Kramer and Carolyn Abbate. Apart from its value as a rejoinder, the article is noteworthy for its coherent and thoughtful discussion of recent trends.[62]

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[58] Ibid., 16.
[59] Charles Rosen, "Music à la Mode," *New York Review of Books* 41 (23 June 1994):55-62.
[60] Stephen Miles, "Critics of Disenchantment," *Notes* 52, no. 1 (Sept. 1995): 11-38.
[61] Ibid., 15.
[62] A later article by Stephen Miles continues to explore the methodologies of these authors (and others) and the possible problems inherent in these strategies: Stephen Miles, "Critical Musicology and the Problem of Mediation," *Notes* 53, no. 3 (March 1997): 722-50.

A second example of "anti" new musicology would be Peter Williams' "Peripheral Visions?"[63] Taking as a departure point Lawrence Kramer's article, "Musicology and Meaning," Williams questions a number of Kramer's (and the new musicology's) ideas.[64] From the outset, the tone of Williams' invective is unmistakable: "I should add that is it [*sic*] not my wish to demolish anybody's ideas, nor of course do I have a mandate to do so: rather, it is a question of asking what is useful in a particular set of ideas when art is long and life short....One looks for real enlightenment not red herrings, birds not nests; one wants to know if the emperor has any clothes or is hiding behind a smoke-screen."[65] Or, later on: "'Situating' music in something outside it, challenging its 'autonomy' or our right to consider music as its own language, illustrates the tendency theory has to build castles in the air."[66] And in the final paragraph: "In the USA, socially-aware studies attract funding...that once went to the actual learning of music."[67] This will undoubtedly lead to spirited class discussions.

What conclusions can be drawn from these voluminous ideas about the new musicology? Frankly, I'm not sure. At times in my readings, I was reminded of Anaïs Nin's aphorism: "We don't see things as they are, we see them as *we* are." Undoubtedly, the "new" musicology embraces some of the problems of the "old" musicology, namely, that we can bring only ourselves to our work as musical seers—nothing more and nothing less. In many ways, the questions and reflections I raised in my first *CAML Review* article still apply to these more recent writings. No matter what methodology one uses it

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[63] Peter Williams, "Peripheral Visions?" *The Musical Times* 145, issue 1886 (Spring 2004): 51-67.
[64] Lawrence Kramer, "Musicology and Meaning," *The Musical Times* 144, issue 1883 (Summer 2003): 6-12.
[65] Williams, "Peripheral Visions?," 51.
[66] Ibid., 54.
[67] Ibid., 67.

still represents an *interpretation* of the musical score. Miles writes that "the rules no longer allow a scholar to declare music value free, to remain ignorant of the social and political connotations of language, to take political refuge behind the autonomy of music," but there still remains the issue of subjectivity and personal aesthetics.[68] At times, I also wondered whether the new musicology of the "1990s and beyond" is a reflection of pop psychology's belief that there is no reality, only perception. Was Humpty Dumpty right after all?[69] It will be interesting to see how the musicology of the twenty-first century addresses these questions and continues its search for musical meaning. The final word belongs to Joseph Kerman, the godfather of the new musicology: "Interrogate and reinterrogate are just what the critic does: What is it about this piece or passage or repertory or performance that moves, informs, renews, mystifies, or provokes me? To interpret one's responses to music—to "explain" them, as deplorably we tend to say—is to begin mastering one's thoughts and feelings...part of a bigger project than criticism."[70]

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[68] Miles, "Critics of Disenchantment," 37.

[69] My previous CAML article included this quotation from *Alice in Wonderland*: "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

[70] Joseph Kerman, "Close Readings of the Heard Kind," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 3 (Spring 1994): 219.