MUSIC 611: Seminar in Musicology  
Spring 2015, W 7:00–9:40 p.m., M-228

Instructor: Eric Smigel (esmigel@mail.sdsu.edu)  
M-235, office hours: MW 2:00–3:00 p.m.

Musicology, the study of music and music literature in historical and cultural contexts, engages a broad range of disciplines in order to examine the art of music as an integral part of the human experience. As with any branch of the humanities, specific subject matter and modes of discourse that are common to studies in the field vary widely, but scholarly dialogues form in the published literature that make it possible to distinguish important trends, to situate and evaluate the work of the profession’s foremost practitioners, and to speculate about the future of the discipline.

In this graduate seminar, students will trace the historical development of musicology from its inception to the current state of music scholarship. By examining selected writings of musicologists who have made outstanding contributions to the field, seminar participants will survey trends in the academic study of music and identify fundamental challenges to thinking, talking, and writing about music. The assigned readings and seminar discussions will feature several topics, perspectives, and modes of critical inquiry that have occupied music scholars over the last century, and a series of written projects will provide students with an opportunity to respond to key musicological issues and engage in the professional discourse in a manner that befits contemporary practice.

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to: identify fundamental challenges to thinking about, talking about, and writing about music; chart the historical development of musicology as an academic discipline; situate the published work of representative scholars within the context of advanced studies of music; identify and evaluate different modes of critical inquiry as they pertain to the study of music and musical culture; write informed reviews of scholarly articles; and assess the role of musicology in institutions of higher learning.

Required Reading:

All reading assignments, which must be completed by the dates listed below in the course outline, are available as PDFs on the Blackboard website for this course.

Evaluation:

Essays (13 @ 40 points): 520 points
Each week students will be required to submit a brief essay (ca. 1000 words) in response to the reading assignments. The essays must summarize the main points of each article and offer a critical response to the collection of works: what do the authors discuss, how effective are their analyses, and how do their conclusions shape your understanding of the subject? Essays submitted late will be penalized ten points per day.

Participation (13 @ 10 points): 130 points
Students are expected to demonstrate thorough familiarity with the assigned readings and critical engagement with the principal issues of each article by participating actively in seminar discussions.
Article Reviews: 150 points (3 reviews @ 40 points; 3 presentations @ 10 points)
At three different points in the semester, each student will select an article published in a recent issue of a professional musicology journal, submit a brief review essay (ca. 1000 words), and deliver an informal presentation to the class (ca. ten minutes) providing an overview of the article and assessing the efficacy of the author’s work. The schedule for individual review essays and presentations will be determined during the first two weeks of the semester.


Final Project: 200 points (Abstract: 25 points; Paper: 150 points; Presentation: 25 points)
Students will write a formal paper (10–15 double-spaced pages) in which they examine how a specific musical, cultural, or historical issue has been addressed differently by several scholars. After identifying an issue that is central to a given topic, students should select three to five scholarly articles or books that figure prominently in the bibliography of an original research project, discuss how the authors approach this issue, and explain how their work will inform your proposed study. Students will also deliver a 20-minute presentation of their work followed by five minutes for discussion. The due dates for the abstract and the paper are listed below in the course outline; presentations will take place during the last two weeks of the semester. Assignments submitted late will be penalized ten points per day.

Here are some questions to consider as you prepare the final project: What musical, cultural, or historical issues arise in the discussion of the given topic? From what perspective do the selected scholars address the issue? On what assumptions about music do they base their discussion? What methodologies or modes of critical inquiry do they employ? What insights do they reveal as a result of their style of analysis? How do their conclusions reposition the subject of their study? How effective were they in achieving their stated goals? How has thinking about the issue in their proposed manner affected the way you interpret the music or situate the composer, genre, or style? What aspects of other scholars’ work will you adapt for your proposed study? How do you intend to examine the topic, and what do you expect your analysis to reveal about the issue? Why do you think your work will be a valuable contribution to the published literature?

Grading Scale

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Other Notes:

Student Disability Services
Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability must register with Student Disability Services ([http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/index.html](http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/index.html)) who will issue a verification letter. SDS is located in Calpulli Center, Suite 3101, and is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon-Fri; 594-6473.
Course Outline and Assignments:

January 21: INTRODUCTION TO MUSICOLOGY

   Vincent Duckles and Jann Pasler, “The Nature of Musicology” (2001)

January 28: HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMATIC MUSICOLOGY

   Guido Adler, “The Scope, Method, and Aim of Musicology” (1885)
   Oscar Sonneck, “Music and Progress” (1908)
   Waldo Pratt, “On Behalf of Musicology” (1915)

February 4: AMERICAN MUSICOLOGY

   Glen Haydon, excerpts from Introduction to Musicology (1941)
   Charles Seeger, “Toward a Unitary Field Theory for Musicology” (1947, 1970)
   Claude Palisca, “The Scope of American Musicology” (1963)

February 11: MUSICOLOGY AND THE HUMANITIES

   Paul Henry Lang, “Musicology and Related Disciplines” (1972)
   Gilbert Chase, “American Musicology and the Social Sciences” (1972)
   William Newman, “Musicology among the Humanities” (1990)

February 18: SOCI OCY OF MUSIC

   Rose Rosengard Subotnik, “Adorno’s Diagnosis of Beethoven’s Late Style: Early Symptom of a Fatal Condition” (1976)

February 25: MUSIC HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

   Leo Treitler, “On Historical Criticism” (1967)
   Carl Dahlhaus, “The Significance of Art: Historical or Aesthetic?” and “Historicism and Tradition” (1977)

March 4: CRITICAL MUSICOLOGY

   Joseph Kerman, “A Profile for American Musicology” (1965)
   Joseph Kerman, “How We Got into Analysis, and How to Get Out” (1980)
   Joseph Kerman, “Musicology and Criticism” (1985)

March 11: AUTHENTICITY AND HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE

   Robert Donington, “Prospects for Authenticity” and “Authenticity and Personality” (1974)
March 18: POSTMODERNISM AND MUSICOLOGY; ABSTRACT DUE


March 25: THE WESTERN MUSICAL CANON

Robert Morgan, “Rethinking Musical Culture: Canonic Reformulations in a Post-Tonal Age” (1992)
Philip Bohlman, “Musics and Canons” (1992)

April 1: NO CLASS (Spring Break)

April 8: GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Philip Brett, “Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet” (1994)

April 15: MUSIC AND RACE


April 22: POPULAR MUSIC

Richard Middleton, “‘Change Gonna Come’? Popular Music and Musicology” (1990)

April 29: THE FUTURE OF MUSICOLOGY

Lawrence Kramer, “Musicology” (2011)

May 6: PAPER DUE; PRESENTATIONS

May 13: PRESENTATIONS (7:00–9:00 p.m.)