Patrick McCreless, “Rethinking Contemporary Music Theory,” in *Keeping Score: Music, Disciplinarity, Culture*, edit. David Schwarz, Anahid Kassabian and Lawrence Siegel (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 13–53.

There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.
Michel Foucault

A well-known cartoon from the *New Yorker* shows two overweight and presumably retired executives sipping martinis and relaxing in bathing suits on the deck of a not insubstantial yacht. “I used to think I was intelligent, ambitious, and hard-working,” remarks one to the other. ‘‘By the time I discovered I was merely obsessive-compulsive, I’d already made my pile.”

This retired executive might well stand for contemporary American music theory in the mid-1990s, thirty-five to forty years after its advent in our universities and conservatories—time enough for a full career, from underling to executive, from assistant professor to professor emeritus. Unlike the character in the cartoon, music theory is presumably not resigning itself to the depressing prospect of watching its own sunset. Yet the time is ripe for a reevaluation of music theory as a discipline. Theory is now firmly established in academic music in the United States and is remarkably successful as an export to Canada, the British Isles, Germany France, and Australia. At home, however, it is under attack as never before: it is held to be guilty of analytical formalism of detaching musical works from their historical and social context and pretending that they are transparent to ‘purely musical’ interpretations, and of thus purveying an outmoded and unexamined “aesthetic ideology.”‘ Its analysis-based research program is seen as self-reflexive and self-serving, spurning insights from and addresses to other fields.

Why is the academic discipline of music theory under siege? What historical perspective could explain the intellectual position that music theory now occupies? What is the best course of action for those of ‘US who are committed to the discipline? To answer such questions, we must first situate music theory as an academic discipline in the 1990s.

Since the Greek *theoria*, the etymological root of the word theory, is the

noun form of a verb meaning to inspect, observe or consider one might suggest that *all* rational contemplation of music-whether practical, historical or analytical-could in a broad sense be regarded as theory.1 But the modern distribution of the intellectual disciplines of music classifies theory as only one member of a trio that also includes musicology and ethnomusicology. Of the three musicology focuses on the music of the Western tradition from antiquity to the present from a historical documentary and critical point of view. Ethnomusicology has been variously defined as the study of non-Western, folk, traditional, and popular musics; or a theory of music in its social role; or imply as the study of the music of the Other. Music theory more than musicology and ethnomusicology is both a research program and a pedagogy.

As a research program it include the development and analytical application of theories, often empirically based of the structure of tonal and atonal music (and occasionally pretonal music); the history of music theory; the pedagogy of musical kills from fundamental to advanced; and music perception and cognition.

Distinctive of music theory among the three academic musical discipline , at least a practiced in English-speaking North America, is the centrality of pedagogy, which has a role in music-theoretical life that far exceeds its rather modest role as an object of music-theoretical research. It is the formidable task of music theory to teach fundamental and traditional musical skills such a harmony, sightsinging and ear training, and counterpoint. This pedagogical obligation of music theory distinguishes it sharply from its sister discipline musicology and ethnomusicology in that, although these disciplines are similarly committed to both research and teaching (musicologist teach music history and literature and ethnomusicologists teach courses in folk and non-Western

musics) they are by no means responsible for carrying out, on a massive scale, the perpetuation of a nonacademic skills-oriented pedagogical discipline that is more the professional discipline of an art than the intellectual one of the sciences or humanities. Today's music theorists thus occupy a position precariously situated between those of scholar and of skilled artisan. A member of the academy theory must define and pursue areas of research just as their colleagues in the science and humanities do. At the same time they must possess sufficient musical competence training and pedagogical skills to teach the fundamentals of music theory usually in a manner that has more in common with musical pedagogy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than it does with late twentieth-century scholarly research.

The configuration of the three academic musical disciplines in modern American musical education must be unpacked if we are to understand the current intellectual position of music theory. In one sense music theory is by far the oldest of the three, in as much as it can trace an uninterrupted lineage back to Aristoxenos in the second century B. C.. Musicology and ethnomu-

sicology are much younger. Even if there were sporadic attempts to narrate a history of music in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries—Calvisius in the sixteenth century, Printz in the seventeenth, and de La Borde, Burney, Hawkins, and Forkel in the eighteenth—the historiography of music and the notion of musical history as an academic discipline are unquestionably products of the nineteenth century. *Musikwissenschaft*, the "science of music" an all-inclusive discipline of Western music including historical, stylistic critical, and theoretical studies—was the creation of German scholars in the latter half of the nineteenth century and was the first of our three fields to be established as a modern intellectual discipline. American musicology descended directly from German *Musikwissenschaft*, inheriting its positivist historiography and its concern with stylistic evolution while downplaying its concern with criticism and theory, to the extent that the American version of the discipline was until quite recently almost exclusively a historical discipline, not a critical or theoretical one.2 Ethnomusicology, or *vergleichende Musikwissenschaft* ("comparative musicology"), also German in origin, was a late nineteenth and early twentieth-century offshoot of *Musikwissenschaft*. But paradoxically, music theory, the oldest of the disciplines historically is easily the youngest of the three as a modern academic discipline. Furthermore, it is of American, not German, provenance. Even though *Musiktheorie* was (and still is) included in the German *Musikwissenschaft*, the modern, academic incarnation of music theory is peculiarly American and may be dated to about 1960, when the "professional music theorist" came onto the scene—that is when "music theory" in American universities began to define itself as a discipline distinct from musicology, on the one hand, and composition, on the other, and when a few music schools began to employ "music theorists" rather than composers, musicologists, or performers who also taught theory, to administer their music theory curricula. The birth of the new academic discipline was also marked by the establishment of the *Journal of Music Theory*, the first journal devoted to the new field, at Yale in 1957, and of *Perspectives of New Music* at Princeton in 1962; and, within the next decade, numerous graduate programs at both university music departments and conservatories.

The present essay attempts to rethink this contemporary music theory to address the questions of where it is, how it got there, and where it is going—by viewing it through the lens of the interpretations of the history of knowledge, of power, and of disciplinarily developed by the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault between the late 1950s and his death in 1984 (a historical period, we might note in passing, that is coterminous with the establishment and growth of modern music theory). Despite the complexity of his analyses, the fundamental import of what Foucault has to say is clear enough, and his critique of ''human sciences' such as psychiatry medicine, and criminology has been enormously influential in the humanities and

cial sciences for the past two decades. What I shall attempt here is by no mean a wholesale mapping of Foucault's ideas onto music theory—a task of dubious value for which I am in any

case unqualified—but rather a reading of its history and current situation in the light of his work which can, I think illuminate the discipline in a fresh and original way.

Foucault among others, has encouraged us to see the history of thought not as a continuous transparent unfolding of truth that ineluctably evolves toward the present but as a succession of discourses that generally do not proceed gradually or linearly but are marked by disjunction gaps and sudden reconfigurations. In the 1960s Foucault's historico-philosophical project focused on discourse itself. Although he categorically denied being a structuralist he nevertheless is in harmony with the structuralist rage that had engulfed intellectual life in France and elsewhere at that time attempted to map out for the human sciences the principles by which discourses in different disciplines constituted and regulated themselves.) Such principles were according to Foucault not only not consciously known by the practitioners of the disciplines but were also structurally independent of the actual social practice of these disciplines so that the language of discourse would control the practice of the discipline rather than the discipline controlling the discursive language or the two interacting to condition each other. Realizing the implausibility of such a claim Foucault in the 1970s turned his attention to the social practice of the disciplines and began to concern himself with the interaction of such practices and disciplinary knowledge. In this later work, which he referred to as the "genealogy" of, rather than the earlier quasitructuralist "archaeology" of knowledge, his intent is to show that knowledge is not pure but is conditioned by and found to be in collusion with "power" so that what is known should be seen less as abstract truth and more as a product of a discourse that shapes itself so as to manufacture types of knowledge that empower particular individuals or groups. Central to his work on knowledge and power are what he calls the "disciplines of man," which for him are social institutions that all trace their origins at least in France, to the period just after the French Revolution and that epitomize the repressive use of the knowledge/power axis: the psychiatric asylum, the hospital the prison, the military barracks, and the primary school. Each institution claims its power over the individual on the basis of a newly found empirical knowledge and each uses that knowledge to rank, classify distribute and regulate the "docile bodies" that the discipline controls. Throughout his work, both archaeological and genealogical, he tends to focus on discourse as an abstract site of knowledge and to remove from this arena the motivation and action of the individual subject. Although it goes without saying that this strategy prohibits him from writing history modeled on biography and human action, it enables him to articulate in a novel and original way how disciplines operate and how their discourses function.4

The central features of Foucault's thought upon which the present essay

depends are (1) the collusion of knowledge and power; (2) the tendency in the evolution of thought and of individual disciplines to proceed in starts and stops, in periods of stability followed by severe disjunction; (3) the focus on discourse rather than human subjects; and (4) the interdependency of disciplinary history and the knowledge/power configuration. I shall begin by examining music theory as a conventional body of knowledge and a set of shared practices—first as it exists now, in its modern form, in the 1990s then as it began to assume this form, in the late 1950s, and then more broadly as a historical discipline many centuries old. Only historical understanding of continuities and discontinuities in the evolution of the discipline can offer a nuanced reading of why music theory has taken the form that it has in the past thirty-five years. This reading will open into the second large part of the essay, which will be concerned with a Foucauldian interpretation of music theory as knowledge and power: first, in the positive sense of how theory has used its distinctive knowledge and practice to establish for itself and its practitioners a secure position in the academic world, in the form of jobs, publications, places in undergraduate and graduate curricula, and so forth; and second, in the negative sense of how theory has rendered itself a "docile body" by submitting willingly to a larger and more powerful disciplinary institution than itself—the university. Finally, in the light of this interpretation, I shall pursue in greater detail the criticisms to which music theory has recently been subjected by postmodernist musicology, examine its stresses and fractures, both self-induced and imposed

from the outside, and offer some suggestions for its continued vitality and intellectual and artistic health.

MUSIC THEORY AS KNOWLEDGE

The most reliable indicator of what knowledge the discipline of music theory now claims as its own is what it has produced: in conference papers articles books, and courses in undergraduate and graduate curricula. Naturally, the topics and questions that have generated activity in the discipline have varied and currently seem to be expanding in a number of directions. But a number of broad trends in research have been obvious enough, trends that clearly define music theory as an academic discipline. Whatever objections can be lodged against it music theory cannot be accused of not knowing what it is about. It turns on five distinct areas that may be viewed both as bodies of knowledge and as programs of research: (1) theoretical systems, (2)musical analysis, (3) the history of music theory, (4) the pedagogy of music theory and (5) music perception and cognition.

The first two categories are difficult to separate in practice because most music-theoretical systems are constructed to be used as analytical tools. Whatever the balance of theory proper and its analytical application the central thrust of the discipline is in fact powerfully directed toward analytical theory

and its use. For what music theorists do at least in terms of original intellectual work is first and foremost, the analysis of music in the Western tradition using both existing theories such as those of Heinrich Schenker the early twentieth-century Viennese theorist of tonal music, and newer theories. Until very recently, music theory graduate programs have centered almost wholly on theory-based analysis and still provide extensive training in Schenkerian analysis of tonal music and in some version of pitch-class set theory and twelve-tone theory for atonal and twelve-tone music respectively.

The third area of music theory as a contemporary knowledge is that of its own history as a discipline. The impulse to develop a historical narrative of music theory and theoretical systems, like the impulse to establish an academic discipline around the history of music itself, dates to the mid- to late nineteenth century. The two most prolific music historians of the nineteenth century, François-Joseph Fetis and Hugo Riemann, both founders of the discipline of musicology, wrote histories of harmonic theory, classic nineteenth-century progressivist histories in that their authors treated the history of harmonic theory as an evolution through stages of imperfection to a triumphant arrival at their own harmonic systems.5 In the twentieth century, although no scholar has undertaken a work on the scale of Riemann's monumental *Geschichte der Musiktheorie*, the quantity and quality of research has been impressive. The British theorist Matthew Shirlaw published a history of harmonic theory, the first in English, in 1917, and in the first half of the twentieth century numerous musicologists researched various aspects of the history of theory, often not so much to trace the history of the discipline itself as to use theory to elucidate the practice of music in a particular historical period. ince the founding of American music theory around 1960 American (as well as for example, German) scholars have, in the space of just over thirty years filled in enormous lacunae and exploded many misconceptions of earlier scholarship while at the same time expanding our understanding of the history of the discipline in new and unexpected ways.

Fourth, music theorists are charged with teaching a substantial body of knowledge and practical skills regarding the art—the rudiments of music (intervals, scales, keys chords, rhythm, sightsinging, ear training), harmony, rhythm, counterpoint, and so forth. These practical areas of theoretical activity tend mostly to entail the passing on of traditional musical skills. For example musicians in the Western tradition, which is heavily dependent upon musical notation, need to be able to represent in their minds the sound of music that they see in score—to hear how it will sound while composing it or while preparing to sing, play or conduct it. Traditional music theory

pedagogy develops this skill through posing graduated tasks such as dictation exercises—having students write down melodies or harmonic progressions that they hear—and singing melodies at sight. Anyone who has taught such skills knows that the ability to acquire them differs radically among individ-

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uals: musically gifted students (those with a "good ear") can often easily perform such tasks on the first try; others require patient guidance, and their progress is painstakingly slow. Since musical skills of this sort clearly involve raw perception and intellectual concepts, both highly gifted and less gifted students develop them insofar as theory moderates their direct perceptions by giving a set of names to musical elements, so that they develop a theory-based working knowledge and set of expectations about how music behaves. It is here that theory, whether as a historically based received knowledge or a contemporary research program, intersects with pedagogy. A musically sensitive and intellectually coherent theory can vastly improve the efficiency of the learning of both fundamental and sophisticated musical skills. Research in the area of music theory pedagogy—that is music-theoretical knowledge that involves not just the passing on of a tradition but the ongoing development of new knowledge—focuses on both perception and theory as well as the interaction of the two.

The final and most recent enterprise adopted by music theory is that of music perception and cognition. Like music theory itself, research into the perception and cognition of music has both an ancient and a modern history. The former dates back to the seventeenth century, when musicians of an empirical tum of mind (for example, Vincenzo Galilei father of Galileo) as well as leading intellectual and scientific figures of the time (Descartes, Mersenne, Kepler, Galileo Huygens), theorized and conducted experiments regarding sound and human sound perception. Certain aspects of the work of Helmholtz, the founder of the modern science of acoustics in the later nineteenth century, and a substantial body of empirical work in the generations that succeeded him—that of Carl Stumpf William Wundt, James Mursell, and Carl Seashore, for example—legitimately addresses aspects of music perception. The contemporary discipline focusing on music perception and cognition had its origins only in the 1960s and 1970s in cognitive psychology and in fields such as music education or music theory pedagogy, where researchers investigated aspects of musical learning. Whatever the modalities of their interactions it is clear that a growing number of music theorists are showing an interest, and even doing research in, these areas, and cognitive psychologists with an interest in music are reaching out to music theory as a discipline that can be used to direct and validate their work. The field of music perception and cognition has arguably separated itself from both psychology and music and established itself as an independent discipline. There are now a number of journals in the area (e.g., *Music Perception*, which began publication in 1984), as well as major conferences every year. At the same time music perception and cognition are critical to both the theoretical/analytical and the pedagogical side of music theory, which now accepts these areas as a viable subdiscipline.

In 1987 the Society for Music Theory devoted the plenary session of its

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tenth annual conference to papers addressing the accomplishments of what we are here calling modern music theory—which, in 1987, was for all practical purposes the work done by members of the society and their predecessors since about 1957. The papers at the session were each devoted to a major research area of modern theory and were published in 1990 in the society's journal *Music Theory Spectrum*.6 Both the topic of the papers and their relative weighting substantiate my account of how music theory constitutes itself as an academic discipline. Three papers address analytical theory and analysis—one Schenkerian analysis, one the analysis of nineteenth-century music and one atonal and twelve-tone music. Two papers are devoted to the history of music theory-one to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century, the other to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theory.7 One paper each involves pedagogy and music perception. A final

paper," New Research Paradigms" is less a tabulation of accomplishments than a transdisciplinary speculation on possible new directions in which the field might move.

That such a paper should be presented at this conference of the society was strangely appropriate. By 1987 music theory had come under increasing fire both within the discipline and from without, for what seemed increasing intellectual rigidity. Although, as we have noted, the term *theory* suggests no necessary limitation to the way music could be considered rationally, in practice music theory had come to mean—at least so far as research was concerned and despite the discipline's duties to teach basic musical literacy—a "normal science" of Schenkerian theory and pitch-class set theory, plus a modest amount of research in the history of theory, pedagogy, and music perception and cognition.

Since the 1987 meeting, the discipline has become more self-reflective and self-critical connecting tentatively with disciplines such as literary and critical theory and the history and philosophy of science and becoming more seriously involved in research in music perception and cognition. But even as early as 1980, the preeminent musicologist Joseph Kerman had already blasted the music-theoretical enterprise in the journal *Critical Inquiry* for limiting itself to the theory-based analysis of musical works—usually works in the mainstream Germanic tradition since the eighteenth century or else modern works that in many ways perpetuate that tradition—to the virtual exclusion of any consideration of the historical context, social function, or expressive resonance of that music. Kennan's title, "How We Got into Analysis, and How to Get Out," hints at the tenor of his polemic: music theory's concentration on analysis constitutes a hyperrationalistic formalism that views works fart as "black boxes," the meaning of which is internal to the works themselves in their "purely musical" relationships, denying their richer meaning to composers, performer and listeners. What is needed, in Kerman's view is not *analysis* but *criticism*, a broadly based interpretive strategy that, while not eschewing analysis altogether, appropriates it only in association with

historically and culturally "thick" description of the work in question—a description that does take into account the life and possible intent of the composer, the intended audience, the cultural and aesthetic norms and semiotic traditions for the communication of meaning at a given time and place. Since Kerman's initial salvo, and his further critique in the widely read *Contemplating Music* of 1985, the attacks on music theory have grown progressively more strident, particularly from the various proponents of a "new musicology" dedicated not to the stylistic and documentary researches of the past but to a culturally, intellectually, and critically aware interpretation of works in their social, historical, and semiotic contexts. Musicologists of a wide variety of critical persuasions have seconded Kerman's objections to formalist theory and added their own: Leo Treitler, Susan McClary, Lawrence Kramer, Ruth Solie Rose Rosengard Subotnik, Carolyn Abbate, and Richard Taruskin.9

What has made the discipline of music theory vulnerable? To answer this question, we must go back to 1957 and examine its origins more closely. There is no better point of entry to the early history of modern music theory than a reminiscence by Milton Babbitt—twelve-tone composer, theorist, and by any account one of principal founders of the discipline: "We have produced now at least two generations of professional theorists. I really think of our professional theorists beginning with the generation of Allen Forte [that is, in the 1950s]. The notion of professional theory is almost totally new. There were virtually no professional theorists in this country.... There was no such thing as a professional theorist at any university that I can think of when I began becoming involved with universities." 10

Babbitt attributes the rise of the professional theorist in the United States to two factors. First was the immigration of a number of Schenker's students—notably Hans Weisse, Felix Salzer, Oswald Jonas, and Ernst Oster to this country in the 1930s and 1940s,. Either as private teachers or from positions at conservatories or universities (Weisse, for example, taught at the Mannes School of Music in New York, Jonas at Roosevelt University in Chicago), these students of Schenker began to introduce the notion that the masterpieces of the tonal repertoire should not be

merely described but should be explained. To explain works of art by uncovering a deep structure, as Schenker's system made possible, was to move beyond theory in its pedagogical sense, which is what most teachers of theory were employed to teach at the time, into theory in the sense of an intellectually coherent. empirically validated system. The creation of a music theory that was not only new but also rigorous-real theory—goes hand in hand with what Babbitt invokes as the second impetus to the development of a new discipline: the simple fact that teachers of music theory taught in universities. For Schenkerian theory, and indeed any rigorous theory, was precisely what such teachers needed to attain intellectual respectability, which in turn was what they needed in order

to survive in the university environment. Out of the theory teacher was thus born the music theorist.

The term *music theorist* was a neologism coined as far as I can determine around 1957 the year of the first issue of the *Journal of Music Theory*. (German has long had a compound word for music theory *Musiktheorie*, as in Riemann *Geschichte der Musiktheorie*; but German scholars do not tend to refer to those who practice the discipline of music theory as *Musiktheoretiker*. Indeed, the term *Theoretiker*, or theorist, often carries the pejorative connotation of a dry, stuffy pedant, as does the English *theorist*, or especially *theoretician*, a locution whose additional syllables seem to capture for performers and critics the distance they perceive between the theoretical thinker and their own musical worlds.) Even *music theory*, certainly not a new term in 1957 was somehow reified by the new journal and the research program on which the new discipline embarked. We shall see later that what in fact made this reification possible was precisely the reconstitution and expansion of a received knowledge and the hitching of this knowledge for the first time to the trappings of academic power—an ambitious and intellectually respectable research agenda, a journal, expanding curricula and new graduate programs.

Again Babbitt's reminiscence articulate in a personal way how music theory was new in the 1950s and how it has grown since that time: "The idea of serious theoretical thinking about music, analytical thinking worthy of the name of theory (as theory would be worthy of it name in almost every other field except our benighted one), is something new and for which I am grateful. There are probably six magazines now devoted almost entirely to serious theoretical-analytical issues; there were none whatsoever when I began this racket."11 The novelty and desirability, even the necessity of theory, in the intellectually ambitious sense conveyed by Babbitt, shines forth on virtually every page of the early issues of the *Journal of Music Theory*, flush with the energy and excitement of the founding of a new discipline. The foreword to the first issue casts a longing glance at ancient days of music-theoretical glory and call for a return of the discipline to real theoretical discourse rather than unexamined mindless pedagogy:

> In centuries past the formulation of law regarding the practice of music wad regarded as the highest aim for a musician; and, in many instances musical law were the inspiration or the source for more general laws regarding material or spiritual experience. Music was the image of the universe, hence, a source of truth; and it was the music theorist [*sic*: this modern term is projected upon the past here] who sought, discovered, and expressed both natural and divine law. But in our own time it is the rare musician who knows how his art offers a key to universal understanding. Music theory has become a discipline in stylistic definition or, still less, a

> system. of nomenclature and classification that offers no valid laws even regarding music. It is to the restoration of music theory as more than a didactic convenience, more than a necessary discipline, as, in fact, a mode of creative thought that this journal is dedicated. 12

These words, and many more like them in succeeding issues, were written by the first editor of the journal, David Kraehenbuehl, a Yale theorist whose scholarship has not remained influential

but whose ability to galvanize the energies of the new discipline and to articulate its goals clearly was indispensable in establishing it on secure footing and making a place for it in the university and the conservatory. The central theme in Kraehenbuehl's polemics is the notion that music theory is a venerable discipline "that has fallen into a state of almost universal academic disgrace" and that its mandate in the late 1950s was to restore it as a vital intellectual discipline.
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The intellectual program that Kraehenbuehl outlines in the foreword is almost precisely the program that has been carried out by music theory since 1957: namely, to focus both on analytical technique and "pure" theory as well as on pedagogy and the history of music theory. Only the discipline's later venture into music perception and cognition was not foreseen. What was seen as important in the late 1950s was to theorize about and to analyze music, to research the history of the discipline, and to develop a theoretically based (rather than an unthinking and traditional) pedagogy. What was emphatically, almost violently, rejected was the notion of music theory as *just* pedagogy. All the early volumes of the journal, while devoting enormous space to reviews of pedagogical books and to the occasional pedagogical article, betray a uniform scorn for the "theory pedagogue." Kraehenbuehl identifies the real theorist rather donnishly as a "rare bird' who is often not "distinguished from his domesticated and more common distant relative the theory pedagogue who ... seldom possesses the identifying features of a true professional theorist."14 For Kraehenbuehl, the true professional theorist is (1) a first-rate practicing musician, as a composer or performer, (2) a skilled and logical thinker. (3) a professional who spends most of his time learning thinking, and theorizing about music, and (4) a musician and thinker interested in and knowledgeable about earlier music-theoretical systems.

Kraehenbuehl's polemical essays in the early issues of the *Journal* pinpoint with remarkable accuracy what modern music theory is, what it does, to what intellectual standard it holds itself and the kind of multi·talented person that the theorist must be. Both these essays and the comments of Babbitt also juxtapose theory and pedagogy, making it clear that it is the task of the new discipline, at least as a mode of knowledge, to found itself on the former, not the latter.

How does such a discipline compare with the centuries-old tradition of music theory that the new theory inherited in 1957? Certainly it betrays a

continuation of the tension that has existed between speculative and practical theory throughout the history of the Western musical tradition. It was Aristotle who divided human mental activity into three spheres: the theoretical, the practical, and the poetic or creative. Through the Renaissance, the first two categories—the speculative, or theoretical, and the practical-ordered music theory. Conceptually, Renaissance theory strictly divided *musica theorica* from *musica practica*. *Musica theorica* was a scholarly activity, inherited directly from the Middle Ages and ultimately from the Greeks involving a traditional body of knowledge concerning tuning systems and their mathematical bases. As such, *musica theorica* was a part of the medieval quadrivium (with the other mathematical arts of arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy), and was far removed from actual musical practice. *Musica practica*, on the other hand was not for the scholar but for practical musicians—usually singers in chapel choirs—who did not need to know the pure numerical ratios of musical intervals or how such ratios reflect the harmony of the spheres and the mind of God but did need to know how to sing chant melodies at sight and to realize correctly the mensural notation in their choirbooks.

Despite its conceptual separation of *musica theorica* and *musica practica*, the Renaissance also gradually evolved an ideal whereby the best musician would be one who had mastered *both* theoretical and practical musical knowledge. The Renaissance theorist Gaffurius in his *Theorica musice* of 1492, after describing the theoretical and the practical musician separately, designates the "true musician" as one "lacking neither theory nor practice."15 And Zarlino's *Le istitutioni harmoniche* (1558), the music-theoretical summa of Renaissance polyphonic practice, achieved the status that it did in part because it consciously and masterfully combined the theoretical (books 1 and 2) and the practical (books 3 and 4).

At the turn of the seventeenth century, the great tradition of *musica theorica* gradually died out in most European countries, leaving theory for the time being to deal primarily with the practical questions of figured bass realization, ornamentation, and counterpoint. In German theory, however, the tradition of *musica* theorica—the notion of music as Zarlino's *numerus sonorus*, or 'sounding number," with all the associated trappings of a neo-Pythagorean, theological cosmogony—survived for another century. Echoing Gaffurius and Zarlino, the German theorists preached an ideal of combining the theoretical and the practical. Thus the late seventeenth century Lutheran organist, composer and theorist Andreas Werckmeister wrote in 1686 that "it is nevertheless ever so much better if one can be a theoretical and practical musician at the same time; but not everyone can do everything."16

It is precisely this ideal espoused by both Zarlino and Werckmeister, that drives modern music theory and that has in important respects also driven the historical discipline of theory since the Renaissance. But the simple divi-

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sion of music-theoretical activity into *musica theorica* and *musica practica* is no longer supportable—indeed, it was supportable through the Renaissance only because *musica theorica* represented a closed body of received knowledge that had its basis in a wider intellectual tradition. From the time of Zarlino until the present, it still makes sense to divide the discipline into the theoretical and the practical, but the situation is more complex. Traditional *musica theorica* carried the connotation of being generally divorced from musical practice. But in modern theory, and in fact in theory since the time of Zarlino the activity of theory-making is not only not divorced from the actual practice of music, but it is also not divorced from the pedagogy of music. The best theorists—Zarlino, Rameau, and Schenker for example—are able to articulate original formulations of the principles that govern certain aspects of existing practice. If those principles are conceptually right and useful, they are ultimately incorporated into pedagogical theory as well.

Since the Renaissance systematic theory-making in music does not necessarily entail recourse to ideas outside music. Many of the lasting original contributions to music theory have been "speculative," not in the sense that they are connected to a system of ideas external to music, but in the sense that they uncover principles hitherto undiscovered or used haphazardly with no awareness of their real significance: Lippius's articulation of the notions of the triad, inversion, and octave equivalence; Rameau's fundamental bass and his use of the concepts tonic, dominant, and subdominant; Kirnberger's essential and unessential dissonance; Schenker's *Ursatz* and structural levels. To be sure, often those theorists who in their theories develop the concepts and models most useful in purely musical terms—Zarlino, Lippius, Rameau, and Schenker, for example—also explicitly base their theories on concepts external to musical practice (the relation of harmonic consonance to a Christian, neo-Pythagorean cosmogony in the cases of Zarlino and Lippius or the relation of the triad to 'Nature" and to the overtone series in the cases of Rameau and Schenker). But our understanding of the theories need not necessarily take their extramusical components into account; we can, and theorists generally do, simply incorporate these useful new musical conceptualizations into our musical practice, discourse, and pedagogy, leaving the broader intellectual ramifications of the theories to historians or ignoring them altogether. (Postmodernist critics would argue, of course, that this continual untying of the "purely musical" aspects of music theories from their sociocultural moorings betrays a deep cultural bias in modern Western thought toward seeing music as a self-enclosed referential system rather than a contingent cultural product and that all music theory since the Renaissance even the most nonspeculative practical theory, masks sexist or authoritarian ideologies.17 Foucault himself might well adopt such a position, and it is one that we will consider in detail when we bring music theory into contact with postmodern musicology.)

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It should thus be clear how theoretical musical thinking is gradually transformed into practical musical activity and teaching. Lippius's identification of the triad and octave equivalence, and

Rameau's fundamental bass, for example, constituted by any account theoretical advances in the history of Western music. Yet their notions were soon incorporated into musical pedagogy, simply because the conceptual leaps of the theorists clearly articulated something already functioning in musical practice and intuitively understood by musicians, and they thus established cognitive categories—teachable categories, in the sense of the *musica practica* of music theory—for phenomena that had previously had no name and participated in no describable relational function. The fact that the notions of triad, octave equivalence, and harmonic function now seem to be entirely the province of practical, rather than speculative theory, only demonstrates how successful they have been as theoretical constructs.

To suggest that speculative theory generates pedagogical theory is, of course, not to deny the existence of theory that is primarily pedagogical. Guido's system of solmization Fux's of contrapuntal pedagogy (derived and codified to be sure out of the work of generations of Italian contrapuntal theorists) countless figured bass manuals in the eighteenth century, and countless harmony texts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to cite just a few examples—all were developed for pedagogical purposes, not speculative ones. It has been the goal of contemporary music theory to teach musical skills in a way that preserves the best of these pedagogical methods (those of Guido and Fux for example) while at the same time attempting to incorporate concepts from the best recent speculative theory in teaching as well.

So in the activity of music theory for the past few centuries, Aristotle's categories of the theoretical and practical turn out to describe the discipline, although perhaps not purely: the theoretical may or may not invoke concepts outside music, and it may merge with the practical or even serve as a model for it. But what about his third category, that of the creative, or poetic? Medieval and Renaissance theorists for the most part ignored this category and concerned themselves only with *musica theorica* and *musica practica*. In association however, with Luther's program of humanistic education and his emphasis on music, German theorists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries introduced *musica poetica* into music theory. What was significant about *musica poetica* was not only that it explicitly claimed to teach the creation of music, or musical composition, but that it adopted the classical art of rhetoric as its conceptual and pedagogical model. In so doing it introduced a way of thinking about music and musical composition that although it did not bear the fruit of a wholesale conceptual shift in music theory until the beginning of the nineteenth century, added a new and significant component to musical thinking.

To understand what was new about *musica* poetica we must understand

the compositional pedagogy of the time. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries most music theory—even theory with a strong speculative component, like that of the seventeenth-century German theorists who preserved *musica theorica*, or Rameau—was directed toward practical musical ends: how to compose a sacred choral piece, how to realize a figured bass, how to ornament a melodic line, how to use figured bass as the basis of composition, how to compose in the conservative church style according to the teaching of Fux and his predecessors, how to make harmonies follow one another coherently—in sum, those traditional compositional skills that Carl Dahlhaus has called *Satzlehre*.18 *Musica poetica* added to these conventional skills the notion that music *says* something, in the same manner that a rhetorical oration does. The original impetus behind the idea concerned vocal music. The locus classicus of this sort of thinking is Joachim Burmeister's famous analysis, in his *Musica poetica* of 1606, of a motet by Orlando di Lasso—an analysis that shows, albeit in a primitive way, how rhetorically derived musical figures can intensify the musical setting of a text and how a musical setting as a whole can be organized like an oration.19 Although the history of the *musica* poetica tradition is far too complex to detail here, what ultimately evolved out of it was that eighteenth-century writers, beginning especially with Johann Mattheson in the 1720s and 1730s, not only continued the tradition of musical figures with respect to vocal music but, more importantly, began to conceive of instrumental composition in terms of rhetoric, so that a completely new branch of theory arose

that dealt with what eighteenth-century writers called the theory of melody (as in Mattheson's *Kern melodischer Wissenschaft* of 1737), but that we would call musical form. After Mattheson, writers of composition treatises, at least those dealing with melody, phrase structure, and "form" (the term is an anachronism: it was rarely used in the eighteenth century) frequently distinguished musical "grammar," the traditional skills of harmony, figured bass, and counterpoint (*Satzlehre*), from musical "rhetoric," which involved the rhetorically based organization of the melody of an entire piece.20 Central to this tradition of compositional theory and pedagogy (a tradition that was simultaneously speculative and practical) are: (1) the first explicit development of the notions of motive and theme in the context of instrumental music (the eighteenth-century terms are widely variable and include *motivo*, *Thema*, *Idee*, and many others); (2) a growing sense of how to deal conceptually with an entire piece, rather than with the details of counterpoint and harmony that comprise the object of *Satzlehre*; and (3) an evolving aesthetic that valued instrumental music as much as or more than vocal music and that fostered the development of theoretical means to validate, in musical or music-theoretical terms, this aesthetic ideal.21

The conceptual shift that *musica poetica*, as introduced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and reconstituted for the sake of instrumental music in the eighteenth ultimately made possible in music theory-a shift that

took place in the first decade or two of the nineteenth century—was the turn from compositional pedagogy to analysis. The *musica poetica* treatises of the seventeenth century and the *Melodielehre* treatises in the tradition of Mattheson, Riepel Koch and Galeazzi in the eighteenth century were directed at the composer. The nineteenth century, of course, also produced numerous composition treatises. But near the beginning of the century there began to coalesce from a daunting complex of influences—the shift from a mimetic to an expressive aesthetic,22 the associated growth of the concept of the creative genius the further development of the eighteenth-century notion of the detached contemplation of art, the idea of the autonomous work of art and the development of what we now call romantic subjectivity, to name a few—a new point of view, one directed not to prospective composers but to an educated musical audience that could learn to appreciate musical masterworks without necessarily being able to produce them. This shift is clearly articulated by the change in music-theoretical writing about melody and "form" from a guiding metaphor of rhetoric to describe musical works to a metaphor of structure. Carl Dahlhaus has noted that E. T. A. Hoffmann, in his famous reviews of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and other works, was the first critic emphatically to use the word *structure* with respect to music.23 And a survey of the music-theoretical literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries shows that over the course of this period the elements of musical composition that in the eighteenth century were described in terms of rhetoric (phrase structure, melodic succession, theme and thematic development disposition and repetition of materials, tonal plan) gradually begin to be described in terms of the metaphor of the organism, and in terms of structure and form.24

The roots of modern music theory—our music theory—lie in this aesthetic ideology that developed around the turn of the nineteenth century.

Our concern for the structural autonomy of the masterpiece, for structure and form, for teleological motivic development, for musical logic: all have their roots in the conceptual shift that took place at that time. We can begin to understand our current situation in music theory by observing the tensions this shift produced in nineteenth-century composition and theory. For musical composition the new ideology introduced a tension between a traditional, eighteenth-century compositional aesthetic, which turned on the conventional *Satzlehre* of harmony and counterpoint and the rhetorically based *Melodielehre*, and the more recent aesthetic of genius and originality, which encouraged composers to transcend these traditional practices and to learn their craft by studying the works of the greatest masters, against whose standard their own originality would be measured.25 In music theory the new ideology reconfigured the entire

discipline.. We have seen that most seventeenth and eighteenth-century theory was ultimately directed toward practicing

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musicians—composers and performers—who would learn from theory the practice of a relatively stable musical style. But in an era that valued originality, and thus change over stability, the question necessarily arose as to whether theory should take as its task the *preservation* of the traditional stability (by teaching the traditional music-theoretical virtues), the *explanation* of that stability (the development of theories to explain how musical practice works), the *pedagogy* of originality (the teaching of original composition, to the extent that such a thing is possible), or the *explanation* of that originality once it is brought into existence (analysis).

What nineteenth-century theory did, of course, was all of the above. Much of nineteenth-century theory simply recycles or adds new pedagogical twists to eighteenth-century methods or else takes some aspect of more recent theory as the basis for a hardened pedagogical system: the conservative Viennese figured-bass manuals of the first half of the century, the pedagogy of harmony and counterpoint in the Paris Conservatory, the *Grundsätze* of Simon Sechter, the practical treatises of North German theorists such as Richter and Jadassohn, and the standard *Formenlehre* treatises of the second half of the century all exemplify this tendency. Some nineteenth-century theory is more speculative and attempts to formulate new principles to explain standard musical practice: the harmonic theories of Vogler (developed in the eighteenth century but more influential in the nineteenth), Fetis and the North German harmonic theorists of the second half of the century—Hauptmann, Oettingen, and Riemann. Nineteenth-century compositional theory generally attempts to resolve the tension between received musical skills (such as harmony and counterpoint) and originality by means of the comprehensive composition treatise, which rolls into a single theoretical work the musical grammar (harmony and counterpoint, or *Satzlehre*) and rhetoric (or melodic and formal theory) that the eighteenth century tended to separate, plus, in some cases, the use of actual masterworks as models for composition: the composition treatises of Momigny, Reicha, Czerny (including his compilation of Reicha's works in a simultaneous French and German edition), and the *Kompositionslehren* of Marx, Lobe, and Riemann. In most of these treatises there exists a fine line between invoking actual musical compositions as models for composition and as objects for analysis. The passages in such composition treatises that deal with real musical works, as well as essays by such writers as Hoffmann, Berlioz, and Schumann and the more explicitly analytical-explanatory endeavors of Marx, Westphal, Riemann, and numerous others in the later nineteenth century most clearly exemplify the conceptual shift from compositional pedagogy to analysis and the ideological impulse to classify certain works as masterworks, worthy and even demanding of analytical scrutiny and explanation.

It would be pointless to continue this survey of how the tensions inherent in

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nineteenth-century theory were played out in early twentieth-century theory. For it was really only in German theory that they were played out. German language theory tends to address head on such stresses between speculative and pedagogical theory, between compositional and analytical theory or between competing harmonic systems and analytical approaches in the rich and vital theoretical discourse typical of the early years of the twentieth century—discourse that included the continuing work of Riemann, the radically new and intellectually powerful voices of Schenker and Schoenberg, the original analytical approaches of Ernst Kurth and Alfred Lorenz and many others. French theory, the only national tradition even remotely competitive in the nineteenth century with German theory for speculative activity and in originality, was after the tum of the century, essentially confined to the ossified pedagogical practice of the Paris Conservatory. British theory offered the brilliantly original Donald Francis Tovey, whose impressive analytical output however insightful, lacked explicit theoretical content.

As for the United States, in the late nineteenth century, and even in the first half of the twentieth, there was in effect no original speculative American theory. As we have seen in the

polemical statements of Babbitt and Kraehenbuehl, American theory was for all practical purposes coterminous with pedagogy: in the terms of our survey above, it was a combination of eighteenth-century *Satzlehre*, pedagogically oriented nineteenth-century harmony, often presented in garbled textbooks that combined conflicting harmonic traditions in a single undigested mix, and conventional nineteenth-century *Formenlehre*, as interpreted for English-speaking music students by the British pedagogue Ebenezer Prout and the German-trained Americans George Wedge and Percy Goetschius.

With this enriched historical context we can now return to Babbitt's reading of the state of American theory (or "theory") in the 1950s and understand more clearly what he means when he claims that the modern theory arose from the confluence of the immigration of Schenkerian theorists and the location of theory teaching at the site of the university. What the ideas of Schenker brought, in a way that the ideas of no other theorist could do, to a theory in a "state of universal academic disgrace" was not only the rigor that Babbitt cherishes but an engagement with all the vital tensions and issues of nineteenth and early twentieth-century theory: the tension between speculative and practical theory—indeed, the very notions that there exists a speculative theory of value, and that it is intimately bound up with pedagogy; the tension between *Satzlehre* and original composition, expressed by Schenker as the tension between strict composition and free composition; the aesthetic ideology of genius and of organic and autonomous musical structure; and the notion of analysis as the explanation of the masterwork. It was precisely these tensions and issues that formed the horizons of Schenker's own work, so that the importation and dissemination of his ideas by his immigrant students in

the 1940s and 1950s not only brought a weak and derivative American music theory into contact with a formidable theoretical mind but also brought it into contact for the first time with an intellectually and, musically vital theoretical tradition. From this point of view—that is, from a point of view that sees Schenker not only as an original theoretical thinker but also as the bearer and upholder of a richer tradition—Schenker seems almost predestined for life in the American university. William Rothstein has shown in insightful and, entertaining detail the thorough, if improbable, Americanization of his system and his ideas.26 And William Benjamin, in a well-known review of the English translation of Schenker's summa, *Free Composition*, has argued that the value of Schenkerian theory in modern musical life is that it makes possible a kind of active engagement with the tonal repertoire that is impossible with any other analytical system.27 To this I would add that Schenker makes such engagement possible not only with the repertoire but with both the speculative and practical sides of the Western European, tradition. For in coming to grips with Schenker we not only learn a creative and relatively rigorous system for dealing with tonal music; we also are forced to test Schenker's ideas—and our own—on *Satzlehre*, *Formenlehre*, motivic relations, and many other aspects of theory that were never examined in this country before the advent of Schenkerian theory in the 1950s.

Schenkerian thought is central in the establishment of modern music theory's research program of theory-based analysis of tonal masterworks—a program that brings to its task not only Schenker's intellectual and artistic force but also, unwittingly, his aesthetic ideology as well (no matter how much theorists have tried to repress that ideology). His thought has also clearly served as a stimulus to contemporary theory's interest in the history of music theory—not only of the texts that Schenker himself so valued such as those of Fux and C. P. E. Bach, but also of those that prefigured his work in important ways (Bernhard and Heinichen, for example) and even those against whom he so strongly reacted (Marx, Riemann Kurth).

Schenkerian thought is even central, in a paradoxical way to the other side of modern theory's theoretical-analytical program: that of atonal and twelve-tone music—a music that was summarily rejected as a nonmusic by Schenker himself. If the inspiration for such theory was Schoenberg, especially Schoenberg as interpreted and formalized by Babbitt, still it was Schenker who established a model of a systematic explanatory theory for a music. Babbitt's admiration of Schenker is apparent throughout his theoretical work, and a dogma that is found

frequently in the writings of Princeton composers and theorists, especially in the 1960s, is the notion that there are two musics for which there are adequate explanatory theories: tonal music, as modeled by Schenker, and twelve-tone music, as formalized by Babbitt and his students. Similarly, Allen Forte, at Yale, structured the graduate program in music theory around the two central poles of Schenkerian analysis for tonal music

and his own pitch-class set theory, for atonal music. In a 1981 article, Benjamin describes this "marriage of convenience"—the hitching together of Schenkerian theory and twelve-tone and set theory as the driving intellectual forces of the discipline.28 If this marriage of convenience is both improbable and ostensibly illogical, it does, when viewed from a greater distance than Benjamin was able to achieve, make a certain amount of sense. Schenkerian theory and the current theories of atonal and twelve-tone music, however mutually exclusive in terms of the repertoires that constitute their objects, both share a value system that explicitly privileges rigor, system, and theory-based analysis and implicitly share an aesthetic ideology whereby analysis validates masterworks that exhibit an unquestioned structural autonomy.

The twelve-tone theories of Babbitt, to which should be added the pitch-class-set theoretical work of Allen Forte, John Rahn, John Clough, David Lewin, Robert Morris, and many others, do revitalize an aspect of the Western theoretical tradition that had been more or less moribund since the neo-Pythagoreans of the seventeenth century: the relation of music and mathematics. The connection between the two systems, of course, no longer concerns the arithmetic ratios of tuning systems but rather those branches of mathematics, such as set theory and group theory, that are particularly capable of describing various kinds of relations within the twelve-pitch-class system. Mathematically based theory and analysis of this sort is utterly foreign to historical musicology and constitutes one of the most distinct and original contributions of contemporary American theory.

We have seen how modern music theory exists as an academic field of study as a body of knowledge and a research program now in the 1990s, how it constituted itself as an independent discipline in the late 1950s and how it relates to the broader historical tradition out of which it came. The next section of the paper will show how modern music theory, with its newfound disciplinary knowledge, has negotiated a place for itself in the economy of power of the modern university and conservatory and how it has also unwittingly left its intellectual program vulnerable to attack.

MUSIC THEORY AS POWER

Can we not read the birth of modern music theory in the 1950s in terms of the Foucauldian dyad of knowledge and power? Foucault has shown that knowledge is in collusion with power and that new forms of knowledge create power where it had not been before. Similarly, he has shown that, although the disciplines, as bodies and practices of knowledge that make possible the exercise of power, can be repressive in that knowledge can be used to control individuals and groups still a function of the disciplines is *production*—not only the production of discourses and practices that constitute

knowledge and make it possible but even the production of individuals ("Out of the music theory teacher was thus born the 'music theorist'"): "the individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an 'ideological' representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline'. We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes' it 'represses' it 'censors' it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth."29 That is, internalized structures of disciplinary power serve as a force to motivate individuals to define themselves within the discipline by

‘‘producing,” so that by thus strengthening their connection to the discipline, they strengthen the discipline itself both by expanding its knowledge and by validating its hold upon them.

To read modern music theory into this configuration merely requires that we examine the space in which music theory constituted itself, that we identify its knowledge, and that we show how it appropriated power in a way that made its existence possible. We have already seen in detail how music theory staked out, or indeed created, a knowledge that it could call its own a knowledge with some boundaries to be shared with its sister discipline of musicology, but a distinct and relatively self-contained knowledge nonetheless. That it has wielded this knowledge effectively in the academic economy of power is a simple matter of history. Since the 1950s music theory has changed itself from a pedagogical service with no intellectual respectability to a full-fledged discipline of the academy—one that retains its pedagogical mandate but one that has also made of itself a viable field of research. Whereas Babbitt could look back and see no serious music theory journals in the early 1950s but at least six in the 1980s, we can now, in the 1990s, see at least ten. Whereas virtually no university or conservatory in the 1950s employed anyone who called him or herself a music theorist, now most schools have at least one or two, and some as many as eight or ten. Whereas in 1950 no American university offered a Ph.D. in music theory, now at least fifteen do. American music theory occupies a central place in undergraduate and graduate music curricula, provides jobs for its practitioners, supports a vital academic society, produces countless volumes of research and pedagogical materials, exports its ideas, and serves as a model for fledgling disciplines of music theory in Europe and elsewhere. Surely modern music theory, if it is anything, is an industry—one that defines and controls individuals, provides employment, manufactures products.30

How did modern music theory become a growth industry? It did so by creating its own knowledge and asserting its power in terms of the disciplinary configuration it saw as already existing and against which it would create itself and establish its boundaries. We have already seen that in the late 1950s music theory defined itself against a rejected form of itself: that is, the new

music theory was *not* a pedagogy, didactic convenience, a discipline in a state of “academic disgrace.” It would be instead a site of “serious theoretical thinking about music,” a “creative mode of thought” —possibly even a new *musica theorica*. Twenty years later, when the discipline experienced another beginning—this time the beginning of a new academic society, the Society for Music Theory in 1978—it defined itself against, not only its old self, but its sister disciplines of musicology and composition., since many of the new society’s members came from either the American Musicological Society or the American Society for University Composers.31 In contradistinction to musicology, music theory would deal with the music itself, and deal with it systematically and with rigor, rather than as categories of style and historical evolution or as positivistic historical facts allegedly irrelevant to true musical understanding. In contradistinction to composition, it would be a scholarly field rather than a purely artistic one. By thus defining itself—against the unsophisticated pedagogical theory of its own American past and against musicology—it pulled itself up by the bootstraps to constitute itself as a disciplinary knowledge with a clear focus and boundaries. In so doing it also made its play for entering the academic economy of power in that it claimed now not just to provide a pedagogical service but to be a bona fide intellectual discipline. Musicology had long been recognized as a scholarly field in good standing in the humanities. Music theory was not, and it saw its mission as laying out a field of knowledge and practice whereby it could insert itself into the academic arena by filling a gap that it perceived in musical studies.

That it has done so, and done it well is a matter of record. But music theory’s very success masks strains that have made it difficult to reconcile the disciplinary knowledge that theory claims and the power structure of the modern university. We shall examine three such strains, two here and one in the final section of this essay: (1) the tension between a power structure that tends to enforce a separation between the sciences, the humanities and the arts, and a disciplinary

knowledge that shares aspects of all three; (2) the tension between the disciplinary expectations of the research university, for which modern theory groomed itself and those of the university music schools, conservatories, or liberal arts colleges where most music theorists are employed, and (3) the tension between modern theory and musicology.

Foucault's concept of the disciplines can clarify our understanding of these tensions. His work employs the notion of " discipline" in two different ways—ways that he does not in fact distinguish himself but are crucial to our rethinking of contemporary music theory. In his quasi-structuralist works, *The Order of Things* and *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* discipline generally refers to the various sciences social sciences or humanities: to discrete bodies of knowledge and practices with well-defined objects of study and intellectual traditions. These works assume a distant and detached point of view in order to focus exclusively on disciplinary discourse as language detached

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from social context. But in later works, especially *Discipline and Punish*, discipline takes on both a broader and a narrower meaning: broader, in the sense that discourse and social practice interact, precisely as the interaction of knowledge and power; and narrower, in the sense that disciplines are now institutions (in particular, the hospital, the factory, the prison, the military barracks, and the primary school) that take on an altogether more ominous and repressive aura, because they are not disciplines of the mind but disciplines of the body developed in close association with the rise of capitalism. If we view contemporary music theory in the light of these two senses of "discipline," an intriguing play of knowledge and power emerges between music theory as an intellectual discipline and the university as the controlling institution to which it is subject. Music theory is in fact, like all academic disciplines, a "docile body"—an object of control—with respect to the university, just as, in another sense, most music theorists, as individuals and employees of universities, are "docile bodies."32 We have seen what music theory gained by voluntarily becoming a docile body: its submission to the institutional discipline of the university made possible its very existence; it created the "music theorist" as an individual and stimulated his or her production. But music theory also paid a price in this interaction. Although it unquestionably profited enormously from the requirements of focus and productivity that it imposed upon itself in testing its wings as an academic discipline it also took on the difficult problem of defining itself within the university in terms of the sciences, humanities, or arts. The very terms of music theory's entrance into the university place it in the difficult (if not impossible) position as a discipline that is in its essence simultaneously science, humanistic discipline, and art, of having to fill all three roles in the institutional setting. I can think of no other discipline that shares this problem. In the field of music as a whole, musicology and ethnomusicology are humanistic disciplines, while composition and performance are arts. In academic art departments there is a clear demarcation between the art historians, who are humanistic scholars, and the practicing painters and sculptors, who are artists. 33

But music theorists share traits of all three. Under the powerful influence of Babbitt in the 1950s and 1960s, music theory in its formative years adopted explicitly (in the case of Babbitt and his students) or implicitly (in the case of many other theorists), the philosophical foundation of logical positivism for music theory. Babbitt's program, as expressed in his famous dictum "There is but one kind of language, one kind of method for the verbal formulation of 'concepts' and the verbal analysis of such formulations: 'scientific' language and 'scientific' method,"34 and his own theoretical work encouraged modern music theorists from the very beginning to model their work on the formal methods of mathematics and the hard sciences. Although, to be sure, not all theorists followed along this path, many did, and the discipline has produced a substantial body of mathematically based work that exemplifies

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the methods and practices of the sciences much more than those of the humanities and arts. More recently, Matthew Brown and Douglas Dempster have attempted to revive the notion of a

formal music theory modeled on the empirical sciences, and this strain of thought will undoubtedly continue to occupy a central position within the discipline. In addition the growing .field of music perception and cognition adopts an empirical stance, although this work like psychology and the social sciences, stands in an uneasy relation to the hard sciences and has generally not been accepted by theorists of the Babbitt-positivist tradition.

Much of the work of the discipline has also been humanistic in its mode of thought. Certainly all work in the history of music theory is humanistic in its method. But what about theory proper and theory-based analysis? Some of this work—that of twelve-tone theory for example—follows the model of the sciences. And the vast Schenkerian literature? For all that recent theorists (especially Princeton theorists) have done to formalize Schenker and impart to Schenkerian analysis the aura of rigorous science36 and for all the harsh criticisms of his work by Joseph Kerman and Leo Treitler as being 'formalist' in the sense that structuralist literary criticism or anthropology is formalist, Schenker considered his work an aspect of musical art pure and simple and would surely find it bizarre to see his work invoked in either the name of science or that of humanism. Still, to the extent that Schenkerian theory, or any other analytical theory, for that matter attempts to explain artistic products of human culture, the theory-based analytical enterprise of contemporary theory is inevitably humanistic. (Not all theorists will subscribe to this interpretation, of course: some, such as positivists who see no difference between the sciences and humanities, will find the whole notion of the humanities irrelevant and others will consider their discipline to be art pure and simple.)

The pedagogy of traditional musical skills as inherited in many respects from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries embodies the craft of an art rather than the methodology of a scientific or humanistic discipline. Even if we insist on rigorous use of language in pedagogy, as Babbitt does, what pedagogy seeks to accomplish is the transmission of a skill, not training in the formulation of empirical theories or critical study of human culture. Furthermore, the practice of music theory depends more fundamentally on its practitioners' possessing adequate musical skills than mathematical, logical, or interpretive ones. It is these latter skills, as exercised by many theorists that have gained them and their discipline successful entry into the academy. But in a discipline in which the object of study is music and in which virtually everyone uses musical skills on a daily basis in pedagogy and analysis, musical ability is essential. As William Benjamin has rightly and authoritatively pointed out, even Schenkerian analysis, with all its sophistication, by no means requires that those who practice it have the minds of scientists or hu-
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manistic scholars: "[Schenker's method of analysis] does not demand an unusual capacity for logical thought, a prodigious grasp of abstraction, or a way with words, and it certainly does not call for interdisciplinary competence."37

The work of Howard Gardner illuminates this problem. Gardner suggests that intelligence is not a single, monolithic, unassailable category empirically demonstrable only by means of IQ tests but a descriptor of a variety of independent human mental capacities (musical ability, logical reasoning mathematical reasoning, for example) that can take a variety of forms and styles in behavior and that can be measured in different ways.38 Many music theorists do possess extraordinary musical skills (fine pitch discrimination, powerful memory, improvisatory facility, sensitivity to tonal and motivic relations, and the like), without possessing comparable skills in logical or mathematical reasoning. But others, some with exceptional musical ability and some not, also possess an extraordinary capacity for mathematics or for critical and interpretive thinking. And it goes without saying that those who possess a wide range of capacities, musical and intellectual (whether cognitively separate as claimed by Gardner or not) and who bring these skills together in what they produce as theorists, either as teachers or scholars, stand the best chance of success in the discipline.

That the tasks and modes of thought of music theory are thus distributed across the methodologies of the sciences humanities, and arts and that the cognitive capacities of individual

theorists are similarly distributed across a range of abilities appropriate to those methodologies is surely an advantage to music theory, which thereby demonstrates its intellectual and artistic breadth and vitality. Yet this situation is also disadvantageous, both for the discipline itself and for the relation of the individual music theorist to the institutionalized practice of the discipline in the university.

Herein lies the second troublesome tension within music theory. The task of the institutional discipline the university, is to enclose, partition, distribute, and rank those individuals who subscribe to a particular intellectual discipline.39 But the university is hardly the monolithic institution that my discussion thus far would suggest. The practice of modern music theory in the United States takes place not in the abstract "university" as a Platonic idea but in real-world institutions: liberal arts colleges with small music departments, state universities with prestigious music schools, state universities with less prestigious music schools or departments, major private research universities with music departments, and conservatories. These different types of institutions have different demands on music theory and different ways of valuing it. Conservatories and state university music schools require extensive conventional pedagogy for their thousands of students who are training to be performers and music educators; often they require the teaching of modern music theory in its academic, *musica theorica* sense as well, for graduate· students in composition, musicology, and music theory. Liberal arts

colleges usually have not music schools but music departments—a crucial and often overlooked distinction. They too require pedagogy, but on a smaller scale, with perhaps some scholarly music theory in addition. Large private research universities, like liberal arts colleges generally have music departments not schools; they do not train practicing musicians and they deal with music primarily as a scholarly rather than as a practical discipline.

When music theory made its move in the late 1950s and 1960s to enter the academy, it did so by reconstituting itself as a scholarly discipline modeled on either the sciences or the humanities rather than as an artistic or purely pedagogical one. In so doing it willingly submitted itself to evaluation *as a scholarly discipline* by the institutional discipline of which it sought to be a part. And as a disciplinary knowledge, modern music theory was born not at the conservatory or the small liberal arts college but at Princeton and Yale; the academy to which it originally sought admission was not the schools of music at Indiana University and the University of Michigan but the Ivy League research university.

Music theory's ambition to make a place for itself in such institutions touched off a disciplinary reaction, the dust from which has not entirely settled. In its new form music theory claimed a sophisticated scholarly knowledge, turning itself into a new *musica theorica* and repressing its *musica practica* traditions to gain entrance to the academy. Did it gain the power that it sought? Yes, if by academy we mean university conservatories and music schools and liberal arts colleges. No—or at least not convincingly—if by academy we mean the research universities to which theory sought entrance. With the exception of Yale, which created the first prestigious doctoral program in music theory, and Princeton, where there has never been a graduate program in theory but where there has been a lively practice of theory under the auspices of composition, music theory has only with great difficulty made inroads into the music departments of private research universities. For decade the faculties of such departments included only composers and musicologists, both of which have tended to view the discipline of music theory with suspicion. Most do not offer graduate programs in music theory and some (Cornell and Harvard, for example) did not hire a' professional music theorist' in the modern sense of the discipline until the late 1970s or even the 1980s. Many musicologists as humanistic scholars working in divisions or colleges of humanities, have seen the program of modern music theory, on the one hand, as too narrow and formalistic—that is, too positivistic on the model of the sciences and too unconcerned with, even ignorant of broader historical and social concerns—and on the other, too tainted by pedagogy, which they have seen as offering no possibilities for original research. And composers in thee departments have sometimes tended to oppose the encroachment of theory as

well, for their own reasons, often simply the resistance of one type of creative artist to theory of any sort, or else protection of

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disciplinary turf. Music theory has gained entrance to such institutions, but its success has been hard won, and it still tends to play a secondary role to musicology and composition.

But in other types of institutions music theory has established a more secure place for itself. Where music theory was quickest to thrive and where it has consistently done well, is in university music schools, or in conservatories with close ties to universities—and here I include not only the schools of music at institutions like the University of Michigan or Indiana University but also institutions such as the Peabody Conservatory, which functions as a unit within a private university (unlike, say, the Juilliard School of Music and the Curtis School of Music, which have no such connections), and the Eastman School of Music, which, while also functioning as a unit within a private university has tried to transcend the gap between the conservatory and the research university to offer aspects of both. The reasons for music theory's success in such institutions are not difficult to determine: these institutions need and value music theory's traditional *musica practica* while they provide a scholarly environment that encourages and rewards research. And although modern music theory has not made its way into the most traditional and prestigious conservatories, such as the Juilliard School of Music and the Curtis Institute, which still rely entirely on traditional pedagogy and reject the academic side of the discipline, it has found a secure place in the liberal arts college, where the music theorist is often valued as a versatile artist-scholar who can perform and teach practical theory as well as teaching and practicing the scholarly side of the discipline.

There thus exists a striking tension between the goals that modern music theory set for itself and its actual practice in the world. Theory envisioned itself thirty-five years ago as a new scholarly discipline capable of acceptance into the academy at the highest and most prestigious level. To the extent that it sought a base of power in music departments at private research universities, which are driven by scholarship and research and which neither valued nor imagined themselves to need conventional music-theoretical pedagogy it had to base its knowledge on an explicit research program that would be legitimated by the academy at this level and to repress its conventional ties to pedagogy. Without question, that research program has been productive and influential. But at the same time, the knowledge that most distinctively defines the program, theory-based analysis (our modern *musica theorica*) was designed for the power structure and disciplinary requirements of precisely the kind of institution where it has had the most difficulty gaining a foothold. Conversely, the knowledge that academic music theory has tended to disclaim, the practical musical knowledge of a contemporary *musica practica*, is what the power structure and disciplinary requirements of the kind of institutions that in fact provide activity and employment for most music theorists have demanded of them.

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This poor fit of disciplinary knowledge and power also has important ramifications for the individual theorist. For music theory, the usual and much-publicized tension between scholarship and teaching is exacerbated by the fact that the theorists with the best musical and pedagogical skills (whom the music schools and colleges need in order to teach heavily enrolled classes in music theory) sometimes have neither the interest nor the capacity for the kind of original scholarship by which their own discipline chose to define itself and which virtually all institutions—university music schools as well as music departments in research universities—now require for promotion and tenure. Likewise theorists with the greatest capacity for research sometimes lack the pedagogical skills that the music schools or colleges, in a practical sense, require. Indeed, in university music schools the individual music theorist is often caught between a performance faculty (usually the majority of the faculty in such schools) that operates on the model of the conservatory and is thus concerned only with his or her being a skilled and dedicated teacher for budding practical musicians, and an academic faculty that operates on the model of the research university and is concerned primarily with scholarship and research. This

schizophrenic position of the theorist contrasts markedly with that of the musicologist and ethnomusicologist, who in all types of institutions are viewed as humanistic scholars who will teach and produce research in their own fields or that of composers, who are viewed as artist who teach composition and write music. Pedagogy is thus both a blessing and a curse for modern music theory: a blessing because it provides employment and enables the discipline to offer a valuable service to thousands of musicians, a curse because it has and will forever, compromise music theory's position as a purely academic discipline.

Historically, the first institutionalization of music theory as a modern discipline (in Foucault's sense of the new kinds of disciplines that arose around the time of the French Revolution) produced precisely the opposite result: with the establishment of the Paris Conservatory in 1795, under the aegis of the Directoire government,40 French music theory opted for the conservatory not the university. The complex of political and intellectual forces and institutions may have given music theory no real opportunity to enter the university; but the institutionalization of music theory in the conservatory is nonetheless instructive because, then as now there were both speculative (generally Rameau-influenced) theorists and practical ones, and the distribution of theorists on the table of professional positions had in effect the opposite result from what has happened in contemporary American theory: namely the most powerful positions went to the practical rather than to the speculative theorists. And the regulatory function of the social institution (the government-sponsored conservatory, the modern university) controlled or controls the production of the intellectual discipline in both cases: Paris Conservatory theory has pursued a doggedly practical, anti-speculative pro-

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gram for two centuries, with no sign of change, while modern American theory, though it has produced both speculative and practical theory has tended to value the former above the latter.

Nevertheless, practical theorists in American colleges universities, and conservatories have done very well in positions, publications, financial rewards, and all the trappings of academic life, despite the nascent discipline's self-defining opposition to practical theory. What the competent practical theorist has to offer—essential training in musical skills—is likely to remain essential to the broader discipline of music as an art. And if the role of the practical theorist, the teacher of *Satzlehre*, lacks the intellectual force and prestige of that of the research scientist or humanist scholar, the role of speculative theorist offers no such prestige either, at least in the eyes of the general public, to whom the term *music theorist* is no more prestigious, and certainly less comprehensible, than *music theory teacher*.

MUSIC THEORY AND MUSICOLOGY

If the first two tensions that characterize modern music theory concern its relation to the university at large, the third involves its relation to its sister discipline of musicology. Musicology has served as a subtheme throughout this essay, and in this final section we must bring music theory face to face with it. We have seen that music theory is far older than musicology as an intellectual discipline, yet much younger as a contemporary academic discipline. We have also seen that, at the time of the formation of the Society for Music Theory in 1978, the new discipline defined itself and its practice theory-based analysis and pedagogy rather than positivistic historical studies—against musicology.

What spurred theorists to break from the musicological society at that time were the limitations of musicology's research program. Joseph Kerman finds postwar American musicology remarkably similar to the German positivist history of the late nineteenth century: the unrelenting search for new data in the discovery and publication of new documentary sources the compilation of vast riches of resource material, the detailed examination of evidence—all done in the positivist spirit of collecting knowledge, with little concern for criticism or interpretation.41 It was in fact musicology's single-minded adherence to this limited program, to the virtual exclusion of theory, analysis, or criticism, that created the intellectual gap in academic

musical studies that theory was only too happy to fill. The success of music theory since the 1950s has thus been predicated not only on its own real strengths but also on musicology's weaknesses.

Given musicology's lack of interest in theory and analysis and its obsession with manuscripts and historical documents as opposed to theory's project of

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theory-based analysis and its more direct participation in music-making with its ongoing pedagogical responsibilities it was easy enough for music theorists to crow that it was they, and only they, who really engaged music as music. Such a climate motivated music theorists to embrace a thoroughgoing formalism. Babbitt had already set forth an influential empirical-scientific program from Princeton; Allen Forte implicitly adopted the same philosophical basis for his teaching at Yale; and both Babbitt and Forte, as well as Schenkerians of various stripes glibly linked the new music theory to the 'formalism' of Schenker—a formalism that laid no claim to positivist empiricism but one that staunchly proclaimed, like Hanslick the purely musical structural autonomy of the individual musical work. Music-theoretical normal science became the project of analyzing works and extending theory, often in creative and musically sensitive ways (for example the work of Leonard Meyer, Wallace Berry, and David Epstein; new theories of tonal rhythm some based in the work of Schenker, some not; extensions of Schenker's theory of hidden motivic parallelisms) in the very best traditions of historical speculative music theory, but generally with no consideration of the troublesome aspects of social context and meaning.

Since all was ostensibly well, most music theorists did not anticipate the historico-critico-musicological broadside that would score a direct hit on their discipline in the 1980s. Yet once musicology inevitably began to realize the limitations of endless studies of archives and documents and productions of historical editions, and to value critical interpretation as it did, beginning in the early 1980s, trouble between musicology and music theory was inevitable. One way in which we might read this recent trouble is to suggest that, by the mid-1980s both theory and musicology had claimed the explication of the "work" as disciplinary turf: theory because of the very nature of its modern research program the very existence of which depended on claiming for itself the space of "explaining" the individual work· musicology because of the dissatisfaction of at least some of its practitioners with positivistic historical musicology and the sense of a need for the interpretation of music in culture and in a social context. By the time the enterprise of positivist musicology began to lose steam, theory had so highly committed itself to formalist ideologies of analysis that it had unwittingly allowed a new disciplinary space to open that of interpretation and criticism as opposed to analysis—a space that many musicologists began to explore and occupy. The "new musicology" has thus done to theory precisely what 'modern music theory" had done to musicology decades earlier: it has created a new disciplinary identity by claiming a space that was ignored or repressed by a competing discipline.

We could also read the tension between theory and the new musicology in terms of modernism and postmodernism. Modern theory as a product of the 1950s and 1960s, predictably bears a distinctive stamp of structuralism and formalism· it has been grounded philosophically in the same positivism that

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for so long guided historical musicology except that theory has leaned toward the model of the sciences, developing and extending explicit and testable theories for analysis while musicology followed a more humanistically based program and concerned itself less with theory proper than with a positivist view of what constitutes historical data and how that data may be organized into historical "facts." The new musicology, on the other hand, as a child of the 1980s exhibits the traits of postmodern ist thought: rejection of the structural autonomy and immanent meaning of the work of art questioning of the received canon of works, concern with surfaces rather than deep structures, and viewing the work less as a self-contained coherent whole than as a complex product of the signifying practices and social norms of a particular culture. In their approach to

the work, then, modern theory and the new musicology are respectively modernist and postmodernist. The difference between the two is that between explaining and interpreting: "The postmodern concern with surfaces rather than with deep explanations implies that instead of explaining postmoderns are interpreting. I mean by this that instead of taking themselves to be discovering an independently given reality governed by law-like regularities, they see themselves as doing something more like interpreting texts. Moreover instead of assuming that every text has a single unifying structure, they think that texts are almost infinitely complex. The postmodern paradigm is not profundity but complexity."42

This is not to assert that all theorists are modernists and all musicologists are postmodernists. As we have seen, theory began to expand its disciplinary horizons in various directions in the late 1980s. And on the musicological side of the ledger, many musicologists subscribe to the old paradigm of what that discipline is about and remain hostile to the postmodernist influence. Such musicologists find it easier to align themselves with modernist theory than with the new musicology, since theory and positivist musicology share a common philosophical basis and aesthetic ideology. Since both theory and musicology claim a spectrum of practitioners ranging from the most traditional (positivistic musicology) to modernist (modern theory) to postmodern (the new musicology), we might fancy an emerging configuration that distinguishes disciplinary practice not according to theory or musicology but according to traditionalist and modernist versus postmodernist paradigms. In such a world we might imagine a number of possible scenarios: the current one, in which both theory and musicology experience the tension between modernism and postmodernism; one in which modernists would gradually gravitate to one discipline (theory, for example) and postmodernists to the other; or the improbable one (which would have the same effect) of redividing the disciplines according to new paradigms—the Society for the Modernist Study of Music and the Society for the Postmodernist Study of Music.

More likely, and probably more healthy, would be a situation where both theorists and musicologists found value in, if not actually themselves being

comfortable or competent in, both the modernist and postmodernist paradigms. David Couzens Hoy, in an essay examining the issue of whether Foucault was modern or postmodern (not surprisingly he finds both tendencies in Foucault s work), articulates this problem in a way that could be illuminating for our disciplines of theory and musicology:

> Historical breaks do not occur everywhere for everyone at the same time The same person, discipline, or institution can be traditional in some respects, modern in others, and postmodern in yet others. Furthermore, since there is no necessary progress, no forward movement in history, and perhaps no such thing as history (in the absence of a convincing metanarrative) the postmodern cannot imply that there is any normative advantage that comes from being either later in time or a sign of the future. Postmodernism cannot and should not claim to be better, more advanced or more clever than whatever preceded it. That modernism does assume this superiority is what distinguishes it from postmodernism and what postmodern pastiche disruptively reveals. So a postmodern cannot argue that those who are traditional or modern must eventually follow the path to postmodernism.43

Hoy's perspective suggests for music theory and musicology that they learn to see modern and postmodern points of view—or, as they are now reified in music studies analysis and criticism—as complementary rather than necessarily hostile and mutually exclusive. An obstacle to such a rapprochement has been the polemical language of the recent debate between analysis and criticism. Lawrence Kramer in an article ostensibly intended to bridge the gap between analysis and criticism nevertheless has harsh words to say about analysis: "This hermeneutic trend [that is the postmodernist tendency to interpret musical works as. complex cultural products rather than as "transhistorical" structural wholes] has not yet had much impact on either the theory or practice of musical analysis. It has been hard enough for a discipline grounded in the ideal of

positive knowledge to come to terms even with older modes of criticism that share its assumptions about musical autonomy and unity, let alone with postmodernist critical modes that challenge those assumptions. Even at its most concessive, analysis has tended to fall back on privileging its own province of knowledge and its own version of what Michel Foucault calls the will to truth."44

Such critical views of theory-based analysis constitute in part a delayed reaction to the philosophy expounded by theorists such as Babbitt, who airily dismissed any discourse about music that he perceived as lacking rigor. For example, with respect to catchwords such as ''back to Bach" and "neoclassicism," ubiquitous in standard historical and critical writing on Stravinsky, Babbitt asserted that they should only "be talked about by those who could not and should not talk about the music."45 Whether one agrees with Bab-

bitt's positivist platform, his apparently objective, rigorous language in fact bristles with exclusionary hostility, especially in the context of what discourse about music in the late 1960s and early 1970s was like. Richard Taruskin's postmodernist reading of Babbitt's language is predictably pointed: "As always with Babbitt, for 'talk' read 'talk shop'; the reason for dismissing the language of public converse is simply and wholly its lack of pertinence to professional activity or professional discourse." To equate music, for purposes of discussion, with the techniques of manufacturing music to regard the manufacturing of music as the only legitimate professional concern of musicians, and to sanction only such locutions as may describe or analogically represent that manufacture is of course merely to practice another politic of exclusion."46

Taruskin's analysis is of Babbitt brings together a number of strands of this essay. Babbitt's words from twenty years ago simply articulate (however baldly) the research space that contemporary music theory claimed for itself in the 1950s: a rigorous research program of theory-based analysis—a program whose very existence in the university depended on its excluding other sorts of discourse about music (e.g., historical discourse and unrigorous critical discourse). And this research program in turn entailed that modern music theory would in fact be an exclusionary discipline. If nothing else the unusual combination of cognitive capacities required to practice it, as it was envisioned in the 1950s and established in the years since, requires that it be so. Modern music theory is thus, for better or worse, and by its own making, the province of what Richard Littlefield and David Neumeyer have called "professional interpreters,"47 or what Margaret Murata, in a different context has called an "expert subculture."48 The language of the expert subculture is by definition not the language of the general public, nor is it the language of the postmodernist critic.

But this is not to say that it is a language without value. Scott Burnham has responded to Lawrence Kramer's attempt to bridge the gap between analysis and criticism—an attempt that it must be admitted, has criticism, not analysis, calling the shots—with a passionate defense of theory-based analysis against the "shrill marauders" of postmodernism. 49 Burnham defends analysis by showing, contra the postmodernists who have gleefully shown what it *cannot* do, what it *can* do: that is identify ways in which music signifies, self-referentially in the "space between a tacit internalized sense of general style [a sense that it is the task of theory to describe articulate and formalize] ... and the claims of the individual work."50 For Burnham, as for most contemporary theorists, there is palpable and describable meaning in this purely musical space—a meaning that, on the one hand, neither denies nor devalues the extramusical, socially based meaning that so fascinates postmodern critics, and on the other, is vastly more rich and complex than the straw man of pure formalism' that such critics so easily dismiss. The value

of theory as he points out, is that it provides a stable and consistent music-centered standpoint in terms of which to read musical works. Without such a music-based technology, even if it rests in the hands of an expert subculture it would be difficult to control a subjectivism that in some

postmodernist and deconstructionist projects, often threaten to overstep the boundary between criticism and free association.

Taruskin's critiques also point up the dangers of postmodernism's own exclusionary tendencies: if Babbitt's language is exclusionary so is Taruskin's. Indeed postmodernist attacks—whether on theory-based analysis positivistic musicology, or anything else—that attempt to bury the adversary as a useless relic of the past (or the present) begin to take on the same aura of claiming transhistorical truth that they denounce in structuralism and formalism. Taruskin seems to relegate Babbitt, his language and the program of theory and analysis that he represents to a modernist trash heap—a sizable dump that also apparently includes positivist musicology and much of the historical performance movement as well. Taruskin's virtuosic unmasking of modernist ideology whether of "authentic performance" or of modern theory and analysis, is one of the most impressive performances of the new musicology. But he has his own peculiar blind spot. In his attacks on the historical performance movement—attacks that rightly uncover and explode that movement's characteristic modernist assumption of superiority—he virtually always defends traditionalist performers of the standard repertoire (Toscanini, for example) while he pounds away at the authentic instrument devotees. Taruskin argues, at least in part that to reject traditionalist performers is to reject real musicians who creatively engaged music in their own time and established musical significance for themselves in their own way.51 But Taruskin refuses to concede the same to adherents of either the early music movement or modern theory and analysis, most of whom are weighed in the balance of a postmodern version of truth and found wanting. Yet surely these musicians are also embodiments of the musical thought, discourse and activity of their time, for whom music is just as much a social and cultural practice as it was fifty or a hundred years before: if they are guided by an unconscious ideology, is it more false or more malignant than that of the 1890s or the 1930s?

Similarly, another postmodernist Rose Rosengard Subotnik in an essay entitled "Toward a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky," attempts to discredit the kind of listening that modern theory and analysis have encouraged and taught: listening for structural formal tonal and motivic relationships, and locating musical meaning in real-time hearing in the play between musical syntax and the individual work between expectations conditioned by style and realizations in the actual music.52 Theorists of all stripes, even those in bitter opposition on theoretical and analytical issues from proponents of strict Schenkerian

theory to those of the implication-realization theories of Leonard Meyer and Eugene Narmour, have all been in general agreement on this program of how to listen. Subotnik levels against structural listening the predictable postmodernist charges: it ignores the musical surface, it is blind to extramusical meaning, it shirks the obligation of the musical interpreter "to seek carefully reasoned ways of investigating and assessing the social and moral significance of the values discerned in music."53 She is right: structural listening does none of these things, for it is founded on the ideology of structural autonomy that has always driven modern theory. But she goes further:

> Of all methods, structural listening, even in its "replete" version, seems the least useful for entering the semiotic domain of sound and style. For carried to its logical conclusion, this method in all its versions, as an exclusive or even as the primary paradigm for listening, is not in a position to define much of a positive role for society, style or ultimately even sound in the reception of music. Discounting metaphorical and affective responses based on cultural association, personal experience and imaginative play as at best secondary not only in musical perception but also in the theoretical accounts we make of such perception, this method allows virtually no recognition to non-structural varieties of meaning or emotion in the act of listening. Since these are of course precisely the varieties favored by the overwhelming majority of people, structural listening by itself turns out to be socially divisive, not only in what it demands but also in what it excludes or suppresses.54

Music theory must concede Subotnik's eloquently argued main point: structural listening, at least in its more limited forms, is self-reflexive and hermetically sealed from social issues. But it is hardly more socially divisive than learned treatises on Adorno or virtuoso performances of deconstructive criticism that require a lifelong education in the loftiest realms of Western art, culture, and criticism to even begin to comprehend.

And for flesh-and-blood talented musicians with quick ears and long memories, it is not socially divisive at all; it is simply the way life and listening happen to be. Such musicians are perfectly capable of listening for thinking about, writing about, and proselytizing about the social meaning of music. Subotnik rightly charges that our educational system has for years insisted on structural listening at the expense of socially aware listening, and that if our system of values prizes the former excessively over the latter, young musicians will remain insensitive to extramusical meaning, or, alas, like many music theorists, simply ignore it. But structural listening does not logically or perceptually exclude other types of listening. Those with a gift for structural listening and theoretical abstraction should use such gifts. Joseph Kerman himself has noted that musicologists "look to theory and analysis for tools to help them with their own work.'55 Kerman has also written of "the very real

attractions that Schenker's theory can offer to a certain kind of mind," 56 and, in his *New Grove* essay on Beethoven, of "Beethoven's fascination for musicians of a certain turn of mind."57 That "certain kind of mind" is embodied in the modern music theorist, whose insights into music constitute a unique contribution to musical culture in the past few decades.

To return to the image of the cartoon with which I began this essay: music theory like the retired executive on the yacht has whether one likes it or not established itself in an enviable position of power: it has already "made its pile." It has learned that its claim to power, and indeed its central research agenda, at least in the view of some, was compromised from the outset by a questionable ideology. The power that it now enjoys may even have been gained in part through the dark workings of an unconscious obsession, rather than the virtuous hard work and search for truth that it always imagined to be its driving force. But what should it do? Should it flatly deny that it has been compromised and proceed with business as usual? Should it abrogate its power and begin again, trying better to match its vision and its practice the second time around? Or should it like the executive in the cartoon, wisely accept the reality that no knowledge or power is ever pure, and revel in its accomplishments anyway?

To no one's surprise, I, as a practicing music theorist, would opt for the third course: for a music theory that comes to grips with postmodernism while continuing to build on and value its own achievements of the past. A truly postmodern music theory would not practice the exclusionary politics of some postmodernists or some of its own practitioners but would form itself along the lines suggested above by David Hoy. It would recognize and accept the facts that modern music theory was from the beginning based on the ideological assumption of the structural autonomy of the musical work and that its disciplinary boundaries as well as its disciplinary production proceeded from this ideology. That the ideology has been uncovered and brought into the open not only by musicologists but from within the theory community itself can only be a sign of the vitality and health of the discipline.58 But instead of either denying the problems inherent in the ideology (and thus the discipline) and forging full speed ahead or rejecting its own history wholesale once it has discovered that history to be compromised by a problematic ideology, music theory would attempt to integrate its own history, combining traditional modern, and postmodern practices where desirable, but also letting them exist side by side as well. It would recognize that its power in the world of the university and conservatory is inevitably founded upon a knowledge that shares aspects of art, science and humanistic disciplines and of traditional, modern, and now postmodern thought. Modern music theory would see itself neither as regressing from a period of triumph to a period of hunkering down for

a siege nor as progressing from a period of benighted modernist darkness to postmodernist enlightenment but rather

as participating in an ongoing play of knowledge and power in which disciplinary spaces open up, are appropriated to amass power produce new knowledge, and create practicing disciplinary individuals, only to open up still other disciplinary spaces that establish yet newer configurations of knowledge and power.

NOTES

I am grateful l to Roger Graybill Douglass Green, Lawrence Kramer, Richard Leppert, and David Schwarz for their insightful readings of earlier versions of this paper. The epigraph is taken from Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage/Random House 1977), 27.

1. See Claude Palisca' article "Theory' in Stanley Sadie, ed., The ew Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (London: Macmi l lan 1980), 18:741-42.
2. For an insightful and far more detailed retrospective on the history and traditions of American musicology see Joseph Kerman *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press 1985), especially 11-59.
3. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1973), xiv.
4. My account here is indebted to the critical reading of Foucault's oeuvre in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralirtn and Hermeneutics 2d ed. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983). For those unfamiliar with Foucault's work his first important books were Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason (ew York: Vintage/Random House, 1973) and The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception (, ew York: Vintage/Random House, 1975), both published originally in French, in 1961 and 1963, respectively. His next two major works represent his quasi-structuralist project on discourse: The Order of Things and The Archaeology of Knowledge (ew York: Harper Colophon 1972), published in French in 1966 and 1969, respectively. His last works, which connect discourse to social practice and examine the relation between kno\\rledge and power, are Discipline and Punish, published in French in 1975, and The History o/ Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction· Volume II: The Uses of Pleasure· and Volume III: The Care of the Self (ew York; Vintage/Random House 1978, 1985, and 1986, respectively).
5. François-Joseph Feris Esquisse de l'histoi"re de tharmonie consideree comme art et comme science systhnatique (Paris: Bourgogne & Martinet 1840); Hugo Riemann, Geschichte der Musiktheorie im IX.-XIX.]ahrhundert (Leipzig: Max Hesse, 1898). For bibliographic references to English translations, see David Damschroder and David Russell Williams, Music Theory /ro1n Zarlino to Schenker: A Bibliography and Guide, Harmonologia eries no.4 (tuyvesant .Y.:PendragonPress, 1990), 86-87 and 272.
6. "The State of Research in Music Theory: Papers of the Plenary es ion, Rochester, 1987 in Music Theory Spectrum 11, no. 1 (pring 1989).
7. The absence of a paper on the history of music theory before the sixteenth century is indicative of the fact that the research on theory before 1500 ha generally remained the province of musicologists rather than theorists. 50
8. Joseph Kerman > 'How We Got into Analysjs, and How We Can Get Out " Critical Inquiry 7 (1980): 311-31.
9. See, for example, Leo Treitler, Music and the Historical Imagination (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press 1989); Su an McClary and Richard Leppert, eds. Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Per/or,nance, and Reception (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987)· Susan McClary , Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1991)· Lawrence Kramer, Music as Cultural Practice 1800-1900 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press 1990)· Ruth A. Solie, ed., Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality and Music Scholarship (Berkeley and Lo Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1993); Rose Ro engard ubotnik, Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Pres , 1991); Carolyn Abbate, Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1991); and Richard Taruskin, "She Do the Ring in Differ nt Voices," review of Abbate's Unsung Voices Cambridge Opera Journal 4 (1992): 187-97.
10. Milton Babbitt, Words about Music, ed. Stephen Dembski and Joseph Straus (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press 1987}, 121.
11. Ibid.
12. David Kraehenbuehl, Foreword, Journal of Music Theory 1, no. 1 (1957): 1.
13. David Kraehenbuehl, Introduction, "The arure and Value f Theoretical Training: A Forum," Journal of Music Theory 3, no. 1 (1959): 31.
14. David Kraehenbuehl untitled paper in "The Profe jonal Music Theorist Hi Habit and Training: A orum,,

Journal of Music Theory 4, no. 1 (1960): 62.

15. Franchino Gaffurio, The Theory of Must'c, trans. Walter Kurt Kreysig (ew Ha n and London: Yale Univ. Pr , 1993), 42.
16. "Jedoch it es umb so viel be ser wenn jemand ein Theoreticus und Practicus zugleich seyn kan; Sed non omnia po-sumus omnes.' Musicae mathematicae Hodegus curiosus (Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig: Theodor Philipp Calvisius, 1686) 10.
17. See, for example McClary Feminine Endings.
18. Carl Dahlhaus Die Musiktheorie im. 18. und 19.]ahrhundert, Brster Teil: Grundzuge einer Systematik in Geschichte der Musiktheorie, bd. 10 (Darm tadt Wi - sen chaftliche Buchge ell chaft, 1984).
19. Joachim Burmeister *Musica poetica* (Rostock 1606). For an English translation and extensive commentary on the treatise, see Burmeister, Musical Poetic, tran . and with Introduction and ores by Benito V. Rivera (ew Haven and London: Yale Univ. Pre 1993). See also the classic commentary on Burmeister analysi of the La o motet in Claude Pali ca, "Ut oratoria musica: The Rhetorical Ba is of Musical Manneri m,' in The Meaning of Manner-ism, ed. Franklin Westcott Robinson and tephen G. ichol Jr. (Hanover: Univ. Pres of ew England 1972), 37-65.
20. For an exten i e di cu sion of the eighteenth-century distinction between musical grammar and musical rhetoric, ee Mark Evan Bond Wordless Rhetoric: Musical For,n and the Metaphor of the Oration (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Pre s 1991) 68-80. A aluable historical survey of eighteenth-century music theory is Joel Le t r Cornpost'tional Theory in the Eighteenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Pre,. , 1992).
21. John Neubauer trac in detail the development of the philo ophical and aes- 51 thetic arguments legitimating instrumental music in The Ernancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Pres 1986).
22. The classic account of this shift i M. H. Abrams The Mirror and the La1np: Rornantic Theory and the Critical Tradition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Pres 1953).
23. Carl Dahlhau The Idea ofAhsolute Music tran . & ger Lu tig (Chicago: Uni . of Chicago Pre , 1989), 7. See also Klaus Kropfinger, "Der musikalische trukturbegriff bei E. T. A. Hoffmann," in Bericht uber den internationalen 1nusikwissenschaftlichen Kongress Bonn 1970 (Ka el: Barenreiter, 1973), 480.
24. Bonds, Wordless Rhetoric 140-48. A valuable anthology of nineteenth-c ntury analytical writing i available in Ian Bent, Music Analysis in the ineteenth Century 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pre , 1994). For esential critical backgr und in the ideology under discussion here, see Terry Eagleton The Ideology of the Aesthetic (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Pres , 1990) and Lydia Go hr The I1naginary Museunz of Musical \\'lork : An Essay in the Philosoph of Music (xford: xford Univ. Press, 1992).
25. Dahlhaus di cusse the tension in nineteenth-century composition b cen Satz. lehre and the aesthetic of originality in Die Musiktheorie i1n1 . und 19. Jahrhundert 29.
26. William Rothstein, "The Americanization of Heinrich chenker," in Schenker Studies, ed. Hedi iegel {Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pre 1990}, 193-203.
27. William E. Benjamin, "Schenker's Theory and the Future of Music, Journal of Music Theory 25, no. 1 (1981): 159-61. 28.
28. Ibid., 171.
29. Foucault Discipline and Punish, 194.
30. For the notion of .modern music scholar hip as indu try I am,, indebted t ar- olyn Abbate and Roger Parker Introduction On Analyzing· p ra (Berkeley and Lo Angel : Univ. of California Pre 1989), 17. Analyzing Opera
31. For an informative retro pective on the formation of the ociety ee Richmond Browne The Inception f the ociety for Music Theory Music Theory Spectru,n 1 no. 1 (1979): 2-5.
32. Foucault Disciplt'ne and Punish, 136.
33. For a related di cusion of imilar i ue ee dward T. one early e ay' Muic Theory as a Humanistic Discipline' (originally published appropriately enough, in 1957), in Music: A View fro,11 Delft, ed. Robert P. Morgan (hicago: Univ. of Chicago Press 1992) 29-38.
34. Milton Babbitt, Pa t and Present oncept of the atur and Limit of Music ' in Perspectives on Contemporary Mus£c Theory ed. Benjamin Boretz and Edward T. Cone (ew York: orton, 1972) 3. ince for Babbitt, any n1eaningful discours require rigor and in e nly the langua of " cientifi di ourse apparently meets hi standard of rigor, the conventional distincti n eparating the art , cienc and bumaniti evaporat : "Without even engaging on elf in di po ing of that ea ily dispo able, if p rsistent dichotomy of 'arts and ciences (or, r latedly, 'hun1anities and ' cience ')-that historical remnant of a coll quial di. tinction-it only need be in isted here that our concern i not wheth r m.usic ha b n, i , can b , will be. or should be, a ' cience,, whatever that may be a sumed to mean bur imply 52 that statements about music must conform to those verbal and methodological re• quirements which attend the possibility of meaningful discourse in any domain (Babbitt, "Past and Present Concepts, 3). Foucault it hould be pointed out, make a clear distinction between the "natural" scienc and the "human sciences." ee Dreyfus and Rabinow 115-17.
35. Matthew Brown and Douglas J. Dempster uThe cientinc Image of Music Theory,0 Journal of Music Theory 33,

no. 1 (1989): 65-106. ee also the critiqu of thi essay by Benjamin Boretz Nicholas Cook, John Rahn, and Richard Taruskin, in the ame volume, a well a Brown and Dempster' re pon e, "Evaluating Musical Analyse and Theories: Five Perspectives," Journal of Music Theory 34, no. 2 (1990): 247-80.

36. For example, Michael Kas ler, "A Trinity of Essay " (Ph. D. di , Princeton Univer ity 1967). A growing body of work concern itself with the language of modm American theory specially with re p t to the way in which it replace the organicist metaphor of chenker with seemingly objective neutral language. ee Rothstein, 'The Americanization of Heinrich chenker (n. 26 above)· Marion A. uck "Analytical Fiction ," Music Theory Spectrum 16, no. 2 (1994): 217-30 and "Rehabilitating the Incorrigible," in Theory, Analysis, and Meaning t"n Music ed. Anthony Pople (Cambridge; Cambridge Univ. Pre s 1994), 5776· Robert narrenberg, ' Competing Myths: The Am rican Abandonment of chenker's Organicism ' in Theory, Analysis, and Meaning in Music, 29-56.
37. Benjamin, "Schenker's Theory and the Future of Music,, 161.
38. Howard Gardner (·ew York: Basic Books, 1983). American pragmatic empirical, democratic. Gardner o ten ibly exemplifis the intellectual polar opposite of Foucault. Yct a thematic thread connects the two., a thread to which we will appeal more than once in attempting to ort out the intellectual and political position of c ntemporary music theory. Both seek to deconstruct the sort of unexamined truth that we tend to accept unquestioningly. Both re ist what Foucault calls "master discourses ' or "totalizing histories' that ob cure the detailed complexity of history as it i experienced and lived. Foucault repeatedly invokes his virtuosic knowledge of mini cule detail of say medical history or social practice, to reject Freudian or Marxist account that he ee a projecting unyielding interpretations-unjustified by historical detail, in hi view-onto event or individuals. Likewise, Gardner disallows the labeling of individual persons as intelligent or not intelligent on the basis of IQ tests. Indeed, the IQ test might be een as a classic case of the loss of individual freedom occa ioned by thee tablishment of a 'human discipline,, of knowledge with its inevitable collusion with power: the experts empowered by a knowledge and an institutionalized apparatus for its operation rank classify, distribute, and thus regulate the individuals that are ubjected to their technology.
39. See Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 141-56.
40. See Cynthia Ge sele, "The Institutionalization of Music Theory in France 1764-1802 "Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1989, and Renate Groth, Die/ranzosische Kornpos£tionslehre des 19.]ahrhunderts Beihefte zum Archiv fiir Musikwissenchaft, no. 22 (Wiesbaden: teiner, 1983).
41. Kerman, Contemplating Music, 31-32.
42. David Couzens Hoy "Foucault: Modern or Postmodern?' in After Foucault: 53 Humanistt'c Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges, ed. Jonathan Arac (ew Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1988), 28.
43. Hoy, "Foucault," 38.
44. Lawrence Kramer, "Haydn's Chaos, Schenker's Order; or, Hermeneutics and Musical Analysis: Can They Mix?" Nineteenth-Century Music 16, no. 1 (1992): 4.
45. Milton Babbitt, untitled memoir in Perspectives of New Music 9 no. 2-10, no. 1 (1971): 106.
46. Richard Taruskin, "Back to Whom? Neoclassicism as Ideology/' NineteenthCentury Music 16, no. 3 (1993): 288.
47. Richard Littlefield and David Neumeyer, "Rewriting Schenker: NarrativeHistory-Ideology," Music Theory Spectrum 14, no. 1 (1992): 52.
48. Margaret Murata, "Scylla and Charybdis, or Steering between Form and Social Context in the Seventeenth Century," in Explorations in Music, the Arts., and Ideas: Essays in Honor of Leonard B. Meyer, ed. Eugene Narmour and Ruth A. Solie (Stuyvesant, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 1988), 84. Murata's' expert subculture" is one of practicing musicians, not one of theorists.
49. Scott Burnham, aThe Criticism of Analysis and the Analysis of Criticism," Nineteenth-Century Music 16, no. 1 (1992): 70-76.
50. Ibid., 72.
51. Richard Taruskin, review of various recordings of Beethoven symphonies recorded by ensembles from the early music movement, in Opus 3, no. 6 (1987), 31. Taruskin is not opposed to the historical performance movement in principle, but only to its excessive "modernist' claims of authenticity, which often, in his opinion, simply serve as a cover for perfunctory and unimaginative performances.
52. In Explorations in Music, the Arts) and Ideas, 87-122.
53. Subotnik, 117.
54. Ibid. 115-16.
55. Kerman, 64.
56. Ibid., 82.
57. Joseph Kerman and Alan Tyson, The New Grove Beethoven (New York: orton, 1983), 108.
58. See Littlefield and Neumeyer, above, or Kevin Korsyn, "Brahms Research and Aesthetic Ideology," Music Analysis 12, no. 1 (1993): 89-102.