

Final Exam Questions

James M. Novak

Department of Graduate Studies, Northern State University

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Dr. Fogderud

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The 80s and 90s were especially bad in terms of public (government) support of music education. How do you think this has had an effect on current compositional and/or performance output? How can it be remedied? How does it affect your current approach to teaching music?

The early 1980s saw a philosophical change in the government regarding arts funding, and this began with the election of Ronald Reagan (Bauerlein & Grantham, 2009). Many of the members of his administration questioned the necessity of a public agency funding the arts when other social organizations were being cut, such as welfare. David Stockman, Reagan's Office of Management and Budget director, wished to completely eliminate the NEA, as the country was just coming out of a recession. Reagan was not in favor of cutting the National Endowment for the Arts, having been an actor prior to his presidency. In 1981, Reagan appointed Frank Hodsoll as chairman of the NEA, and under Hodsoll's leadership, the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities was formed, as was the National Medal of Arts. Hodsoll initiated the Jazz Masters and National Heritage fellowships, and the NEA's annual budget increased to \$169 million over his tenure, which was an all-time high for the organization.

Upon Hodsoll's resignation, the NEA and United States Government were both in the midst of a transition, as George H.W. Bush had just been elected to succeed Reagan (Bauerlein & Grantham, 2009). Despite the success and achievements of the NEA under Hodsoll, there were those who continued to argue for its dismantling and reallocation of its budget. Most notable was Reverend Donald E. Wildmon, who called for the termination of the NEA employee responsible for the approval of funds for The Tilted Arc, a large steel sculpture erected in front of

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a federal office building in Manhattan. During this time, Hugh Southern, former deputy chair under Hodsoll, was serving as acting chairman of the NEA. Despite Southern's attempts to assuage the hostility, critics of the NEA in Congress became more vocal, demanding a review of the NEA's funding procedures. For almost ten years, the conflicts continued between artists' rights and governmental power.

Among these conflicts, one of the most notable was a lawsuit against John Frohnmayer, who replaced Southern as NEA chairman, and the group who came to be known as the NEA Four (Bauerlein & Grantham, 2009). The NEA Four were four individual artists who focused on controversial topics, such as homosexuality, AIDS, racism, sexism and death. The NEA reneged on a grant given to these artists due to pressure from the government to take away funding or dissolve the program entirely. These artists, and most in the art community, felt that Frohnmayer had betrayed them and sold them out in order to stay on the good side of the US government, rather than giving the funds for which the agency was designed. In 1990, the NEA Four filed a lawsuit against the NEA and Frohnmayer, claiming that, among other things, their First Amendment Rights had been violated through the removal of the grant. Two years later, Judge Wallace Tashima ruled in favor of the NEA Four, stating that the NEA was unconstitutional in revoking the artists' grant.

The NEA Four vs. NEA case changed the relationship between the NEA and all artists at the time, with regard to public funding and support (Bauerlein & Grantham, 2009). The implications of this case are still present, as there are those that currently question the financial support of the NEA. In March 2017, President Trump requested the elimination of the NEA for the 2018 budget. While the House of Representatives did pass a budget of \$145 million for the

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NEA in 2018, this was a \$5 million reduction from the previous annual budget. Artists who do not work in the mainstream or commonly accepted realm of topics typically look for funding options outside of the US Government, more often seeking private funding.

While this situation may be remedied at a larger level, with correspondence to our local, city, and state representatives, I believe a direct, hyper-local approach is more effective. This approach takes place in our classroom, and I think of this in terms of advocacy, communication, and recruitment.

Clearly, based on recent legislation, as well as that of the not too distant past, there are many influential people who feel like the arts are secondary, non-essential, and very easy to cut when pencil is put to paper. This attitude is not exclusive to members of our government, as I am sure we have all experienced the “second place” that the arts have received when compared to core classes or athletics. We must advocate for our programs! While some of us are fortunate to have colleagues, supportive administration or even a fine arts director who can stand with us and help us advocate, many of us, particularly those who teach in smaller towns or consolidated school districts, are the only voice for music education.

We must also communicate what we are doing with everybody. It is so important that the other teachers, administration, school board and community know what the band, choir, orchestra and music appreciation classes are doing, and that they are an important part of the lives of our students. I try to make sure everybody knows when a concert is coming up so that they can come support the students and hear them perform. In the past, I’ve had students play the national anthem at home games to add some instrumental exposure to a crowd that might not otherwise experience it. When we have great news to share, such as students participating in

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honor bands or all-state band, I make it a point to get that information out in our newsletter, local school announcements, website, distribution lists, and social media.

Another mindset I have taken is one of recruitment and enrollment. It is much easier to make detrimental decisions about a band program that is shrinking. When administrators see dropping enrollment, they tend to make assumptions about the director or about the quality of the program, and either assumption places our program at a disadvantage. Recruiting incoming students is vital to keeping our programs strong, and for communicating to community members, administrators, and local government officials that the arts are valued and important to our students. To that end, I always schedule a tour toward the end of every school year, in which our jazz band and show choir perform for all of our feeder schools and one or two assisted living centers. This always gets the 5th grade students excited about band and choir, and I have found it to be pretty meaningful for both the audiences and performers.

The opening of Ch. 10 provides astounding numbers in terms of performing organizations, sales of recordings, concert-goers, and working composers. Despite the continual advances in sound technology, venues, transportation, etc. these numbers have dropped precipitously. Why do you think this has happened? Can it be reversed? If so, how?

The 1960's saw a dramatic increase in the construction of performing arts centers, the most notable being the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (Hitchcock, 2019). Despite the wild popularity of television, radio still remained popular, with a 1955 survey showing that approximately 1,000 American radio stations provided a total of 13,795 hours of concert music (not secular or jazz music), with an average of 14 hours per week of this genre being broadcast

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per station. During this period, the number of composers and performing ensembles also saw a significant increase, from roughly 600 symphony orchestras in 1939 to 1,436 symphony orchestras in 1967. Opera ensembles and wind ensembles saw a marked increase during this same period.

While classical music is still quite popular, performing ensembles and classical radio stations have seen a decline per capita since the 1960s. According to Classical Music Rising (2018), in 2018, 71 public media organizations offered exclusively classical music over 165 radio stations and 91 internet streaming services. 6.5 million Americans reported listening to classical-only radio stations, with 190,000 listeners tuned in at any given point in the day. In 2005, there were 232 public classical radio stations, broadcasting an average of 3,230 hours per week of classical music (Iyengar, 2006). This reflects a drop of more than 75% in terms of the number of radio stations providing classical music, and the amount of classical music available on air, compared to 1955. In 2014, the United States had 1,224 professional performing orchestras. Compared to the 1,436 orchestras of 1967, that is a 15% drop, not taking into account that the USA had approximately 140 million more people in 2014 than in 1967.

The reasons for the decline of live performances and record sales fall into two categories: piracy and unbundling (Papies & van Heerde, 2017). Piracy is the unauthorized use or reproduction of another's work, in any format. It occurs in music in both notational and audio formats, literary works, video games, software, and movies, among others. In its infancy, piracy would involve recording one's favorite song on the radio via a cassette recorder. The rapid availability and decreased cost of residential CD-burners increased the quality of pirated music significantly, thereby increasing the sales and distribution of pirated music. The proliferation of

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file-sharing programs and websites (Napster, BitTorrent, etc.) exponentially expanded the reach of pirated music, and despite the number of very public lawsuits that have been filed over the years, piracy continues to be a prevalent issue.

Unbundling is a relatively recent practice in the music industry, and it is also responsible for the decline of record sales in the United States (Papies & van Heerde, 2017). Unbundling is the practice of selling music not as complete albums, like you might see in a physical music store, but instead allowing consumers to purchase individual tracks for a reduced cost. While there is the opinion that unbundling might bring in new listeners, as people might be more likely to purchase a full album if they are exposed to a single track or two, research found that when consumers could only buy the tracks they wanted, they were less likely to purchase complete albums.

In addition to piracy and unbundling, and related to both, is the massive availability of music via the internet, via free services like YouTube, Spotify, Pandora, iHeartRadio, etc. These services all offer free (subsidized by advertisements) and paid plans, and they all offer libraries of millions and millions of songs. They are so easily accessible over a range of devices (computer, car, home audio, phone/tablet) and they are cloud-based, which means your library goes with you. A relatively new method of piracy involves using websites that will convert any YouTube video to an mp3 file, making just about any piece of music piratable.

We have absolutely moved into a more convenient, digital, cloud-based society. Digital books are becoming more and more popular due to their convenience and flexibility. Digital and mobile games have become similarly very popular for the same reason. A higher value has been placed on the convenience of digital media. As I have been purchasing the books for the Master

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of Music Education degree, I have seen a dramatic increase in the availability of digital textbooks, and I can see a huge appeal in purchasing books in that format. Your media, while never tangible, is always available, easily searchable, and readable in any lighting situation. From a music standpoint, the quality of digital music, both legally and illegally obtained, has increased so much over the past 20 years that you don't really lose any quality between a live and recorded musical performance.

As I began this assignment, I had not given much thought to the question of whether or not this current trend of digital media can be reversed and how to go about doing so. I assumed that an obvious answer would present itself in the marketing and historical materials I perused. As I reflect on my life and how entrenched I am in technology, and as I observe the students with whom I interact every day, I struggle to find an easy, obvious answer to this. Technology will only keep moving in the direction that it has been since its inception. To tip the balance back in the favor of live performances, the best thing we can do is educate our students and their families. We need to provide opportunities for them to see bands, choirs, orchestras and chamber ensembles perform, and when possible, invite their families to attend. For those who live out in remote areas, we need to find opportunities for our students to hear live performances via touring ensembles. Doing so will give them the live performance experience, and hopefully instill the desire to pursue more live performances in the future.

Smaller forms vs. larger: does the length and genre of a work dictate its scope and power?

Is chamber music "lesser" than symphonic to the general public? Does the modern

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American attention span play a role in this? Post two examples to support your thoughts.

I'm especially interested in shorter works/smaller forms you find powerful.

I believe that this discussion will largely be conversational, focusing on a brass quintet in three movements by Victor Ewald. Before I begin discussing this piece, I wanted to share just a little background on Victor Ewald. Ewald was a Russian composer who, like some other composers we have studied, had a career outside of music. He served as a civil engineering professor in St. Petersburg and his primary instruments were cello and horn, having played in the Beliaeff String Quartet for sixteen years. He wasn't included in *The Russian Five* (Balakirev, Cui, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Borodin), but he associated with them regularly, playing in string quartets with them on Friday evenings. *The Russian Five* were strong proponents of Russian Folk Music, and this is evident in Ewald's writing, as it was he who established the nation's first works for brass quintet. I would like to discuss his Brass Quintet No. 1, briefly covering all three movements, then discussing the work in general at the end.

The [first movement](#) of Ewald's quintet begins in Bb minor, with the melody being introduced right away in a solo tuba part. It is apparent immediately that this is the melody, and that melody is carried through each instrument over the course of the movement. I was not able to determine if this piece was inspired by any Russian folk song in particular, but it definitely feels like it took inspiration from the genre. Movement One is in Sonata Form.

The [second movement](#) is so gorgeous! It begins in Gb major and is in 5/4 time, which at first seems like it might feel unstable and rickety. The meter and tempo give the movement a lilt, and contribute to the sense of pulling and stretching, which really work well for the slow sections

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of the movement. This movement is also in Sonata Form, with the slow, melancholy beginning having a Tchaikovskian feel.

The [third movement](#) has a heroic, celebratory feel in Bb major. It uses material from the first two movements, and takes an ABCBCBA form. The melody is presented in the very beginning between the horn and trumpet 1. This movement offers a nice contrast between the fanfare sections and the less dramatic moments.

I understand that there is a degree of subjectivity to this question, but I consider this piece very powerful and engaging, which is quite impressive considering there are only five musicians performing for the entire work. Melody is always present in every movement, and the listener can almost always hear where the melody is, and where it is going. It is always clearly established, and masterfully passed around the quintet. The harmonies that Ewald uses follow an expected melodic progression. Dissonances resolve where you think they should for the most part, creating a perfect balance of tension and resolution. Dynamic variation follows the same approach in helping to add tension and resolution to the entire work. The emotional spectrum is quite vast, from the mystery and turmoil of the first movement, to the absolutely beautiful tension and resolution of the second movement, to the triumphant ending of the third movement. I believe the combination of Ewald's writing, paired with the solid performance of the Philadelphia Orchestra brass (honestly, I much prefer the Center City Brass Quintet recording of this, but that recording was not available on YouTube) create a piece that would be engaging to an audience of any musical experience. The same could be said of Ewald's other brass quintets, but this one is definitely my favorite.

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