



# City Research Online

## City St George's, University of London

**Citation:** Pace, I. (2024). The (mild) embrace of systematic music analysis in UK academia. Paper presented at the Royal Musical Association Annual Conference 2024, 11-13 Sep 2024, London, United Kingdom.

This is the accepted version of the paper.

This version of the publication may differ from the final published version. To cite this item please consult the publisher's version.

**Permanent repository link:** <https://city-ref-test.eprints-hosting.org/id/eprint/35743/>

**Copyright and Reuse:** Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the author(s) and/or copyright holders. Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, unless otherwise indicated, provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way. For full details of reuse please refer to [City Research Online policy](#).

**Ian Pace:**

**‘The (mild) embrace of systematic music analysis in UK academia’**

**Abstract:**

The history of music in UK universities can be divided into three periods: (a) from 1945 to the mid-1970s, which saw the emergence of most major music departments and music as an established area for academic study and research, but during which time most research took the form of textual scholarship, monographs for general readers, and teaching aimed to produce music teachers, professional organists and choir directors; (b) from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, with the growth of a humanities-inclined approach to music research, the foundation of the SMA and the journal *Music Analysis*, with important new textbooks (Cook 1987; Bent 1987; Dunsby and Whittall 1988), and a consequent growth of systematic music analysis; (c) from the mid-1990s to the present day, with major growth of academic music technology, commercial music and musical theatre, an elision of divides between academic and practical work, and latterly the closure of various more ‘musicological’ departments and programmes, as well as new ideological challenges to the traditional humanities and music analysis. In this paper I outline this history, identifying key milestones in research, and offer a range of arguments for declines in these respects during period (c), whilst drawing upon Horton 2020, Donn and Pace 2023, and Cavett *et al* 2023 to analyse perspectives on the value or otherwise of the study of musical notation and theory/analysis, and reflect on the implications for the future of the discipline.

**Introduction**

The development of a specifically analytical component in music in UK universities has not received sustained scholarly attention, unlike earlier periods. We have just been hearing James on Donald Francis Tovey, who of course died in 1940, while the late Catherine Dale traced a longer history back into the nineteenth century of which Tovey represented a culmination. In this paper, which relates to a wide range of writings, lectures, and sectoral research conducted for internal university purposes, which I have been developing for some years, I want to present to you in summary form my tripartite module for the post-1945 history of music in UK higher education, and consider the role which music analysis has played within this, both in teaching and research.

**Period 1: 1945-1976**

Music in UK universities was a very patchy affair before 1945, with only a handful of institutions offering undergraduate degrees, such as Manchester, Cardiff, Aberystwyth, Birmingham, Sheffield and Glasgow. A first wave of new post-war music UG degrees were created between 1947 and 1954, at Leeds, Durham, Cambridge, Queen’s Belfast, Newcastle (then part of Durham), Bangor, Oxford, Reading, Bristol, Nottingham and Hull. The University of Southampton followed in 1961, then there was a further significant expansion between 1964 and 1975, which saw the first music UG degrees at the University of London – first at King’s and Goldsmiths, then Royal Holloway, also new departments at Liverpool, Edinburgh, St Andrew’s, Exeter, and later Dartington College and City, as well as at the ‘New

Universities' of York, East Anglia, Sussex, Surrey, Essex, Lancaster, Keel and Salford. There were also a few music degrees offered at institutions which were not at this stage universities – as well as Dartington, there was Huddersfield College of Technology (from 1970 Huddersfield Polytechnic), and North-East Essex Technical College (later the Colchester Institute). [Don't read all of these out, just indicate them on the slides] By 1975-76 there were 1700 students in 32 university departments, over twice the number 10 years previously.

This constitutes the first period I am considering. I should say that this is the period for which in terms of teaching I've so far had least chance to inspect primary sources, so am working mostly from a range of existing secondary literature. If anyone here has such things as old prospectuses or syllabi in particular from this time, please do let me know! An important text published in 1959, Noel Long's *Music in English Education*, in particular gives considerable detail about course content up to this point, which can be supplemented by a range of subsequent articles and book sections. Many early BMus courses focused on compositional and other technique – harmony and counterpoint, especially in Renaissance and Baroque styles, orchestration, sometimes acoustics and score playing, and some general musical historical knowledge. Birmingham had a little analysis in the context of studying literature about music (I am not at this stage entirely sure which analysis was used), while Cambridge had some theory of musical criticism. BA courses, as offered at Cambridge, Durham, Hull, Leeds, Nottingham and Reading, were focused more on study of literature, without so much in the way of extended musical exercises or solo performance.

What is important to emphasise, nonetheless, is the central role of practical skills – compositional technique, orchestration, score playing and in a few places performances. Music history was a general rather than central concern, and there was hardly anything in the way of developing tools for systematic analysis, which had not yet been established as a presence in the UK. John Butt has argued that during the whole of this period, most music degrees followed the 'Kapellmeister' model, to produce 'generally competent musical organiser, director or teacher, able to undertake a whole range of expected (and indeed unexpected) leadership roles.' In this context, history in particular was 'an uncritical, factually based discipline aimed at teaching basic knowledge of the classical canon', in contrast to later developments which have encouraged much greater critical historiographical and methodological awareness. Now Butt's study is based on a very thin amount of data, less than I have found for my own research, which is at present far from yet fully comprehensive, but certainly there were departments which demonstrate what he describes.

There appears to have been something of a 'bad conscience' about intensive and rigorous musicological study in the early decades of British post-war music higher education, which extended to research. If one considers some of the leading figures who steered departments – Thurston Dart at King's College, London, Paul Steinitz at Goldsmiths, Wilfred Mellers at York or Alun Hoddinott at Cardiff – it is hard to imagine that much of their work (including Hoddinott's compositions) being submitted to the REF today. I list other figures from the period on the slide. Even Dart's thorough work on *The Interpretation of Music*,<sup>1</sup> written while he was still a

---

<sup>1</sup> Thurston Dart, *The Interpretation of Music* (London: Hutchinson, 1954).

lecturer at Cambridge, might be viewed more as a 'survey text' than a major piece of original research, while Steinitz's *Bach's Passions*,<sup>2</sup> undoubtedly a sensitive and knowledgeable piece of writing, demonstrates little in the way of sophisticated theoretical models, major new source-based information, detailed analysis, and so on.

My slides show a range of 22 musicologists working in UK departments who were prominent during this time, born between 1904 and 1937. These people largely formed post-1945 UK music academia. Largely their work consisted of text editing, or studies written for general readership, *Master Musicians* and others. I should mention that I have left out a few such as Oliver Neighbour or Stanley Sadie who did not hold sustained major academic positions, and a few others born within this period, including Brian Newbould, Arnold Whittall, Peter Williams and Ian Bent, whose major work belongs within my second period, as say does Peter Evans' vital book on Britten. Ian Kemp's 1984 study of Tippett is undoubtedly a major piece of scholarship, as is John Warrack's book 2001 on *German Opera*, but both were published later, especially Warrack's. By this time the academic climate had changed significantly. Nonetheless, Warrack's 1968 study of Weber starts to look forward to another era. There are just a small few other works published during this time by these musicologists of which I would say the same, such as David Brown's 1974 study of Glinka. A good deal of other written work combines sound biographical and other factual investigation, but musical engagement more about drawing attention to interesting details, and some forms of quite general verbal exegesis, rather than attempts to locate less self-evident aspects of the work. As such, I would say much of it amounts to journalistic or amateur enthusiastic copy – and is not easily distinguishable from the work of non-academics from the same time – rather than more rigorous musicology.

Towards the end of the period, there were a series of articles on 'The Study of Music at University' published in *The Musical Times*, by Peter Evans, Wilfred Mellers, Ivor Keys, Paul Doe, Alexander Goehr, Lewis Lockwood, Ludwig Finscher and George Rochberg. Only the first five were working in British institutions, and only the first four were musicologists. None made any particular strong mention of analysis; only Evans came close, without using the term, and it was clear that he was arguing for a type of musical engagement which was far from commonly present within the sector. Keys framed his arguments in terms of music *literacy* instead, but did stress the importance of score-based study. There was also work done by Dorothy Taylor during the 1970s to survey the range of offerings. She, like Joseph Kerman surveying the UK sector in the 1980s, noted how the range of new departments created in 1964 to 1975 had attempted to diversify from the narrower curricula in those which preceded them. Examples included Keele embracing American music, City electronic and non-Western music, Dartington contemporary and non-western, Salford music and science, but Kerman did identify Southampton and Sussex with a greater emphasis on music theory, which surely reflects the influence of Evans in the former, and David Osmond Smith in the latter, where he taught from 1973.

In 1980, as part of a multi-authored survey of Musicology in Great Britain since 1945 published in *Acta Musicologica*, Arnold Whittall contrasted the high degree of interest in Schenker's work and other forms of advanced musical analysis in the United States

---

<sup>2</sup> Paul Steinitz, *Bach's Passions* (London: Elek, 1979).

with indifference or even hostility in the UK, joining forces with his close academic ally Ian Bent, who called in 1972 for developments of this type. Whittall identified a handful of scattered pieces which at least acknowledge Schenker, from Philip Barford (who taught at Liverpool), Jonathan Harvey (who taught at Sussex from 1977) and Roger Beeson (who worked at UCL, as far as I have been able to establish, but this did not have a music department), but in each case he noted wryly of their reflecting 'the characteristic British predisposition, which is to write about analysis rather than to write analysis'. Despite 'anti-Teutonic' tendencies leading to a 'suspicion of far-reaching theories about music', Whittall did note some interest in the UK for the work of Rudolph Reti, the development of the *Gestalt* principle from Reti, in the work of Hans Keller and Alan Walker (whose *A Study in Musical Analysis* was published in 1962), and the style-based work of Deryck Cooke on the relationship between intervals and expressive properties in his 1959 *The Language of Music*, though even this was far less systematic than, say, the work in the US of Leonard B. Meyer. It is worth noting that of these, only Walker ever worked for any period in a British university, and in his case only in a junior position for 6 years, then in a conservatoire.

## **Period 2: 1976-c. 2001**

My second period, beginning roughly in the mid-1970s, and continuing through to some point in the early 2000s (exact dates are almost impossible in this context) can I believe with hindsight be seen as a 'golden age' for musicology. At the same time, it is the period in which the seeds are sown for what will become major shifts in my Period 3. I have put a timeline on the slides here, noting the first ever chair in Theory and Analysis, Arnold Whittall, created in 1982, as well as the founding of the journal *Music Analysis*, and 10 years later the SMA; various introduction of new degree courses at conservatoires as well as universities; the publication of Joseph Kerman's *Contemplating Music/Musicology*, which is generally believed to be the founding text of the 'new musicology'; the introduction of the new Research Assessment Exercise in 1986; the growth of popular music and then music technology degrees, and of private providers; and the expansion of the sector after the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act.

Now have a look at the list of early analytical publications I have on the next slide. I am certainly not claiming this as a comprehensive list, nor do I include titles from beyond the mid-1980s – as from this point there are just too many – but I believe this is a representative sample of important works which went much further in terms of their detailed examinations of music than the majority of the work produced in the previous era. The new journal *Music Analysis* created a new form and regular body of work directed from in the UK rather than the US, to establish music analysis as an important discipline in the country, heightened with the creation of the SMA in 1992. Furthermore, the new demands created by the RAE put pressure on musicologists to produce scholarship more regularly, in the knowledge it would be assessed more critically. The criteria have changed and continue to change, but I do believe the introduction of metrics of this type, for all their problems, helped move UK musicology away from the somewhat amateurish and journalist ethos which accompanied much written work, though text editing was a different matter. Then of

course there were three important books published in 1987 to 1988, all of which came to be standard textbooks on music analysis, facilitating the teaching of the subject.

Kerman's 1985 book made available in an accessible form a series of influential arguments that musicology should become less isolated from other humanities disciplines, and avoid the pitfalls of excessive positivism. Whilst some UK scholarship had already been moving in this direction, including some of that I just listed, to some extent Kerman also imported aspects of territorial wars, more potent in North America than elsewhere, into a wider context. There had long been a divide between 'historians' and 'theorists' in the US, but this divide had far less meaning in the UK. Even 'strong' theorists/analysts like Dunsby and Whittall were far from disengaged with historical concerns.

The 'new musicology' was, I believe, very strongly a product of a specifically US academic context. That is not to say that some of the issues it raised did not also pertain to academic cultures elsewhere. But I believe it was rooted in a rather Manichean battle between contextual and immanent musical study, definitely favouring the former over the latter. Yet nonetheless the work of Susan McClary, Rose Rosengard Subotnick, Lawrence Kramer and others (though not so much Gary Tomlinson) still contains plenty of work-immanent content, albeit usually linked to quite extravagant and sometimes hugely speculative hermeneutics. This work now, to my mind, seems oddly dated, in an era in which there has been a bigger shift in many cases away from work-immanent scholarship entirely, or at least that type which focuses on products of pitch, rhythm, phrasing, etc. (timbre may be another matter). McClary still thought it worthwhile to write on Monteverdi, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Chaikovsky and others; now, in the UK, as Eva has pointed out to me, the climate is such that the sorts of distinctions and qualities she elucidated in these works, relating to harmonic design and other aspects of structure, are rather meaningless to new student cohorts with little background in this repertoire, nor in even basic theory or notation. The differences between Beethoven and Chaikovsky are immaterial to many – both are just old-fashioned 'classical' composers. The circumstances which have made this shift possible have roots in the work of new musicologists, I would maintain, because of the highly loaded, politically charged, and often denunciatory language and rhetoric which the legitimised in a musicological field, very alien to earlier UK musicology, but perhaps rather too seductively exotic.

It is easier to chart what was taught in departments during this period, because of detailed information collated in the *British Music Education Yearbook*. In 1986-87, one can find in the charts, under 'course content', analysis listed in courses at Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology, Cardiff, Dartington, Durham, East Anglia, Exeter, Glasgow, Goldsmiths, Hull, King's London, Kingston, Lancaster, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Reading, the RAM, RCM, Royal Holloway, Sheffield, Surrey, Southampton, Sussex, Trinity College, Ulster and the Welsh College. [just indicate that these are on the slides]

Not Aberystwyth, Bangor, Bath College, Birmingham School of Music, City, Colchester Institute, Edinburgh, Huddersfield, Leicester, Royal Scottish, St Andrews.

It is also not listed for Oxford or York, but nor is much other detail given about these course.

In the 1997-98 issue there had been a little shift: Bangor, Birmingham Conservatoire, Bristol, Brunel, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, East Anglia, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Goldsmiths, Hull, Keele, King's, Kingston, Leeds, Liverpool, the London College of Music, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Queen's, Reading, Roehampton, the RAM, Royal Holloway, Salford, Southampton, Surrey, Sussex, Trinity, Ulster, Welsh College, Westminster and York.

Not in Anglia Polytechnic University, Bath College, Birmingham (this may be an oversight), Chichester, Christ Church College, City, Dartington, Derby, Guildhall, Huddersfield, King Alfred's College, Lancaster, Northumbria, Oxford Brookes, the RCM, RNCM, Saint Martin, Sheffield (which may be an error), Wolverhampton

Now, these descriptions are quite generalised, and some of the courses might involve some analysis within other types of modules. Nonetheless, the pattern is reasonably clear – by the mid-1980s the majority of courses had embraced analysis, and those which had not were either lower ranking institutions or, oddly, quite a few in Scotland and Wales. By the late 1990s more of the lower ranking places and conservatoires did not offer it, while some of the Scottish and Welsh departments had closed by then.

### **Period 3: c. 2000-present day**

So my third period, easily that which sees the biggest changes, begins around 2000. On the slides I have once again listed the major events. I open this with 2001, the year in which new rules make it much easier to submit practice-based submissions to the RAE, which will shift the balance between scholars and practitioners significantly, as Eva and I have written together about. Then there have been a whole range of closures of departments, cuts to programmes, and to staff, since the closure of the department in Reading in 2004. The fee cap went up first to £3K, then £9K (with loss of government funding), and are now fixed at £9250, meaning net losses for every university in real terms. The large growth area was musical theatre, though also many more popular music degrees were introduced, and more private providers (who supply exclusively pop and tech degrees) grew. Major falls in A-Level provision has limited potential applicants especially for plain 'music' degrees, and the removal of caps on numbers has created more ferocious competition.

New divides became clear, between the Russell Group and the majority of mid-ranking universities offering mostly plain Music and joint courses, and post-92 institutions featuring music technology and popular music (and occasionally music management and the like). The last decade has seen a slight shift towards more RG/mid-ranking institutions offering of the types of courses offered by post-1992 institutions. This has had an effect on the career opportunities for those seeking to work in music higher education, especially for those specialising in one or other type of musicology or ethnomusicology. Critical study of music in the humanities tradition, not necessarily linked primarily to practice, appears a diminishing and beleaguered field, and plenty of anecdotal evidence points to those pursuing this feeling ostracised and disliked in institutions of all types, with other academics

seeking to marginalise their area of study further. Some private providers, which are the furthest away from scholarly study, have achieved very high numbers, sometimes linked to very low entry tariffs. In plenty of departments, including that which I left at City, these have been held up as a model to follow. Figures publicly available from the Higher Education Standards Authority, show three private providers with total UG cohorts (across all years) of over 800, while only a small minority of universities achieve over 300 and the majority much fewer.

However, in some ways this development for a while simply reflected expansion in new directions rather than significant diminution of established forms of study. In 1975-76 there were 1700 students in 32 university music departments. As of 2020 there are 7087 in 89 departments (not including conservatoires, Colleges of HE or private providers), thus a 317% increase. With 1641 doing plain 'music' courses, which accounted for most of those in 1975-76, the numbers in this respect have not changed significantly.

In this context, Rebekah Donn and I published an article in the SMA newsletter on the representation of theory and analysis in UK undergraduate curricula today. At the time of the publication of Bent, Cook and Dunsby/Whittall, as Tim Howell pointed out, the field was largely divided into 'the three S's: Schenker, Semiology and Set-Theory'. Today the field has changed and expanded considerably, to incorporate New *Formenlehre*, form-functionalism, sonata theory, corpus studies, schema theory, the study of partimento, neo-Riemannian and other transformational theories, Fourier analysis, topic theory, and the analysis of performance and recordings. Furthermore, these and other techniques have been used for the analysis of popular music, film music, and non-Western musical traditions. Certain departments have gained concentrations in analysis relating to particular faculty expertise: Birmingham, Durham, King's College, Leeds, Liverpool, Royal Holloway and City, University of London, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Southampton. These are however all Russell Group except Royal Holloway, where the focus on analysis has diminished, especially with the departure of Paul Harper-Scott, and City, where the BMus course which had a double analysis module has now been ended, there is no notation requirement for the remaining music tech and music performance courses, and not only music analysis, but also history, anything associated with the humanities, classical music and jazz are really at an end.

Otherwise, theorists/analysts are 27 out of 314 Russell Group faculty; 1.5 out of 152 mid-ranking (counting those who combine two areas as 0.5 theorists/analysts); post-92, 0 out of 395.5

Almost all Russell Group departments still have explicit analysis modules. Amongst mid-ranking, beyond Holloway, Brunel, Hull, Bangor, Aberdeen, Ulster and the Open University feature some basic core music theory but not analysis, as to a lesser degree does Sussex. Goldsmiths and Surrey focus simply on Harmony, while neither theory nor analysis are represented at Keele, though this department, like those at SOAS and as of recently City, does not offer a plain 'Music' degree. Salford interestingly features a compulsory module in semiotic analysis in Year 1 of the BA Popular Music and Recording.

The majority of post-92 departments have at most some basic theory and/or harmony (the one exception being Huddersfield, which has a compulsory Year 1 Introduction to Analysis module). There is no theory at Anglia Ruskin, Bath Spa, Bedfordshire, Bolton, Bournemouth, Brighton, Buckinghamshire New, Central Lancashire, Coventry, the University of the Creative Arts, Derby, East London, Falmouth, Gloucestershire, Greenwich, Hertfordshire, Kingston, Leeds Art, Liverpool John Moores, Plymouth Marjon and Southampton Solent. Conservatoires are mixed, while private providers often have theory but no analysis (BIMM do include an elective Theory and Analysis module).

I have published elsewhere the following statistics for 2020-21 entrants (an unusual year because of the pandemic, but roughly in line with figures for previous years):

| <b>Institution Type</b> | <b>No. of Students</b> | <b>% of Students</b> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Russell Group           | 1778                   | 19.9%                |
| Mid-ranking             | 775                    | 8.7%                 |
| Post-92                 | 4534                   | 50.7%                |
| Conservatoire           | 1853                   | 20.7%                |

Here, it can clearly be observed that the post-92 group dominates in terms of student numbers compared to all other institution types. While private providers and a few higher/further education colleges offering degrees are not listed here, such courses are typically similar in emphasis to those found at post-92 institutions.

### **Numbers of Undergraduate Students by Type of Degree in 2020-21**

#### **University Departments (not Conservatoires)**

Music: 1381 (19.5%)  
 Tech: 2214 (31.2%)  
 Popular Music: 773 (10.9%)  
 Musical Theatre: 1558 (22%)  
 Performance: 453 (6.4%)  
 Other: 389 (5.4%)

#### **Conservatoires**

Music: 30 (1.6%)  
 Tech: 137 (7.4%)  
 Popular Music: 260 (14%)  
 Musical Theatre: 115 (6.2%)  
 Performance: 1000 (54%)  
 Other: 273 (14.7%)

#### **All**

Music: 1411 (15.8%)  
 Tech: 2351 (26.3%)  
 Popular Music: 1033 (11.6%)  
 Musical Theatre: 1673 (18.7%)  
 Performance: 1453 (16.3%)  
 Business/Management: 269 (3%)  
 Other: 393 (3%)

Systematic approaches to music analysis, then, have become almost entirely the preserve of the plain music degrees found at Russell Group and a couple of those at mid-ranking universities, and students would be unlikely to find training in this almost anywhere else. Therefore, only those who have attended such institutions would be likely to have the training to be able to practise musicology in the manner demanded by Julian Horton. As admissions to these are typically more competitive, this highlights a significant disparity in the training available to students from certain backgrounds, who are unlikely even to be able to study classical music.

Among universities, only a handful of post-92 institutions – West London, Chichester, Staffordshire, Falmouth, Southampton Solent, St Mark & St. John, Leeds Beckett, East London, Northampton, and a small few mid-ranking – Open University, Salford and Goldsmiths, also LIPA – can compete with even the lower of these numbers for the private providers and conservatoires. Others are in relatively healthy states with cohorts between 100 and 300, though the lower numbers amongst these take departments into risky territory, affecting Russell Group institutions Nottingham and Sheffield. On top of the cuts to departments already mentioned, of which Oxford Brookes and Kent are the most recent, HESA data going up to 2021-22 show various in a worse recruitment situation than these two, which had total cohorts of 60 and 80 respectively during that year. In a blog post on this, I determined the categories you can see on the slides.

*Moderately vulnerable* (cohorts of 55-65): Brighton; Bangor; Kingston; London Met; Sunderland; Wales Trinity St David;

*Vulnerable* (cohorts of 40-50): Leeds Arts; Plymouth; Rose Bruford; Anglia Ruskin; Brunel; Derby; Keele; Liverpool John Moores; University of the Arts. London; Teesside;

*Highly vulnerable* (cohorts of less than 40): Manchester Met; Suffolk; Glyndŵr; Northumbria\*; Bishop Grosseteste; Cambridge Arts and Sciences; Glasgow School of Art; Millenium Perf arts Ltd.

\*Northumbria is a new course so a few more years are needed to garner a sense of how its cohort will develop.

## Conclusion

I do believe firmly that work-immanent study is an essential component of musicology, and am strongly in sympathy with Julian's article on this, as should be clear from my contribution to the round table on this published in *Music Analysis*. Attempts to render all musical details purely as the product of external forces, social, political, ideological, or whatever, are generally very unconvincing, and require the writers to ignore much about the work in question when many aspects cannot easily be fitted into their reductive model. Other types of purely contextual study are equally problematic – the study of reception without music-specific study can only really convey the 'what', not the 'why', unless one believes reception to be almost wholly independent of aural stimuli. The study of musical institutions is a vital form of sociology, and that of cultural practices linked to music of cultural anthropology, but without music-specific study, there is nothing about these which could not be done

better by sociologists and anthropologists. The psychology of music is intimately linked to music-specific work, as is much empirical musicology, for all its problems. Substituting Sound Studies for musical study may work where timbre is primary, but in terms of other musical aspects can be comparable to trying to explain complex natural phenomena solely in terms of elementary particles. Cultural history without closer examination of those cultural creations which are at the centre once again substitutes the 'what' for the 'why', again unless one thinks their properties are no more than incidental to that history. As Charles Rosen has said, these approaches supplement the study of sounding music, but do not replace it.

The ability to probe the workings of music, and musical practices, as within the field of music analysis for which I have most sympathy, the various manifestations of *Formenlehre*, is the key skill possessed by musicologists and generally not by other types of academics. Without it, musicology is easily folded into other disciplines, and often further marginalised as a result.

What we are seeing at present in universities is another route – the progressive marginalisation of musicology as a component of music study. The vast majority of music students are on vocational courses in which scholarly study plays little if any role, and which do not require knowledge of notation (without which most analysis is impossible) or wider literacy or repertoire knowledge (which precludes any possibility of engaging with *Formenlehre*). It may not be too extreme to suggest that many university departments are simply being relegated to the role of second choices for those who cannot get into conservatoires, hardly a great advertisement. Nor is there any reason to think that a shift in the direction of ethnomusicology will save musicology, miraculously transported into a new EDI and decolonial nirvana. The example of SOAS, with chronically low numbers, unable to run music other than within tiny joint degree courses, shows this. The big populist bogeyman will swallow up ethnomusicologists as readily as musicologists.

The transformation of music in UK HE may be too far-advanced to suppose that anything akin to the situation in the 1980s and 1990s might be recaptured. Perhaps we need to accept some closures and mergers, in order for any type of music study to survive. But *scholarly* study of music also needs to survive. If this is only for the Russell Group on a small few others, and such study is simply beyond the capabilities of large numbers of students, many of whom have no prior notational or theoretical skills, then so be it. But we should not pretend that the rest of the sector is providing anything like what academic music study was here and still is in many countries – including the US. Failure to even question a race to a vocational bottom, as I have alas encountered from some, risks making the work of almost anyone attending this conference simply a thing of the past.