

Undine Smith Moore's "A Recorded Supplement to Studies in Traditional Harmony": Diverse Music Theory Instruction from a Mid-20th-Century Black Master Teacher

October 22, 2022, SEMLA Annual Meeting,
Tallahassee, Florida

Anti-racism in Music Theory



Music theorist Dr. Philip Ewell

Source: philipewell.com/contact/

2019 analysis of 7 American music theory textbooks, representing 96% of market:

96 (1.67%) of 2930 musical examples were from nonwhite composers

– Philip Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame,” Society of Music Theory Annual Meeting, November 2019; and *Music Theory Online* 26, 2 (September 2020); 3.4)

Journal of Schenkerian Studies

VOLUME 12

2019

CONTENTS

JOHN KOSLOVSKY
Schenkerizing *Tristan*, Past and Present 1

BRYAN J. PARKHURST
The Hegelian Schenker, The Un-Schenkerian Hegel, and How to Be a Dialectician
about Music 55

NICHOLAS STOIA
The Tour-of-Keys Model and the Prolongational Structure in Sonata-Form Movements
by Haydn and Mozart 79

Symposium on Philip Ewell’s SMT 2019 Plenary Paper, “Music Theory’s White Racial
Frame” 125–214

INTRODUCTION 125

DAVID BEACH
Schenker–Racism–Context 127

RICHARD BEAUDOIN
After Ewell: Music Theory and “Monstrous Men” 129

JACK BOSS
Response to P. Ewell 133

CHARLES BURKHART
Response to Philip Ewell 135

ALLEN CADWALLADER
A Response to Philip Ewell 137

2,930 musical examples in the 7 most-used undergraduate music theory textbooks in the U.S.

1.67% are by BIPoC composers

2.15% are by women

RECENT POSTS

- SURVEY: Racial and Gender Representation in Music Education
- Why expand the canon?

SUBSCRIBE FOR UPDATES

Email Address

First Name

Last Name

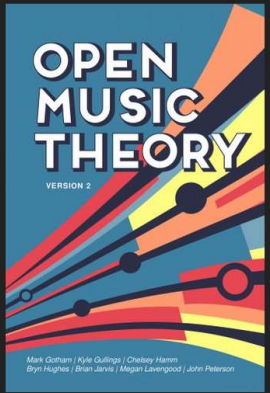
Submit

OPEN MUSIC THEORY


Version 2

Mark Gotham; Kyle Gullings; Chelsey Hamm; Bryn Hughes; Brian Jarvis; Megan Lavengood; and John Peterson

Open Music Theory is a natively-online open educational resource intended to serve as the primary text and workbook for undergraduate music theory curricula. *OMT2* provides not only the material for a complete traditional core undergraduate music theory sequence (fundamentals, diatonic harmony, chromatic harmony, form, 20th-century techniques), but also several other units for instructors who have diversified their curriculum, such as jazz, popular music, counterpoint, and orchestration. This version also introduces a complete workbook of assignments.




Download this book

 Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike

Diverse Music Theory Examples

About Theory Examples Aural Skills Examples List of Composers Contributors Links Contact



Home

The mission of the project to provide resources to teaching faculty and other curious people to produce a more inclusive curriculum by including works of composers who have worked within the common practice who are not normally encountered in music theory courses. These composers include: women composers, LGBTQ composers, composers of

- COMPOSERS OF COLOR RESOURCE PROJECT
- SCORES BY COMPOSERS OF COLOR
 - ANALYTICAL NOTES AND ANNOTATED SCORES
 - LESSON MATERIALS FURTHER RESOURCES
 - MUSIC THEORY EXAMPLES BY BIPOC COMPOSERS
 - MT EXAMPLES BY WOMEN

Welcome

PLEASE JOIN OUR [HUMANITIES COMMONS GROUP!](#)

This webpage houses resources for music by composers of color. It is not intended to be limited to (a) "traditional" music theory topics or (b) notated music in the Western art music tradition. Analytical notes are being made available, while a Google Sheet summarizes music theory topics that can be taught using the repertoire. We welcome submissions of annotated scores and lesson plans that

Colorasure:

Process by which Whiteness has consistently erased nonWhiteness from existence as unimportant

-Philip Ewell, “Philip Ewell: Erasing colorasure in American music theory, and confronting demons from our past,” *Bibliolore: The RILM Blog* (March 25, 2021)

Undine Smith Moore, 1904–1989, highlights



- 1924–1926, attended Fisk with a scholarship from the Juilliard Graduate School, majoring in piano performance; also began composing
- 1926–1927, supervisor of music in Goldsboro, North Carolina
- 1927, began teaching music at Virginia State College in Petersburg—piano, choir, theory, etc.
- 1929–1931, attended Columbia University’s Teachers College for an M.A. in music and professional diploma
- 1938, married Dr. James Arthur Moore
- 1950, began composing again in earnest
- 1968, cofounded the Black Music Research Center at Virginia State College
- 1969, Designed and taught the first “The Black Man in American Music” course at Virginia State
- 1972, retired from Virginia State, began series of visiting professorships and continued composing
- 1981, nominated for Pulitzer Prize for oratorio *Scenes from the Life of a Martyr*

“A Recorded Supplement to Studies in Traditional Harmony”

“D. Antoinette Handy, who occasionally substituted for Moore, recalled her strict and thorough instruction and her formidable theory workbook “A Recorded Supplement to Studies in Traditional Harmony,” which used examples from both mainstream European composers and black composers, which was highly praised by her former teacher at Columbia, Dr. [Howard] Murphy, and was used in her courses for many years.”

– Helen Walker-Hill, “From Spirituals to Symphonies”
(Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 2002), p. 58



Howard Murphy

Source:

www.msmnyc.edu/about/history/virtual-yearbooks-1940s

November 28, 1951

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK 27, N. Y.

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

October 24, 1951

Mrs. Undine Smith Moore
Virginia State College
Petersburg, Va.

My dear Mrs. Moore:

I note from your letter of September 29 that you are enrolled in T C Music 203X for two points and that you ask what the next step is. I would suggest that you send me a short outline of your project before making a trip to New York. After I have evaluated your outline I think that you should come to New York to discuss the project with me. If this is agreeable to you I shall look forward to receiving the outline in the near future.

Sincerely yours

Howard A. Murphy
Howard A. Murphy
Professor of Music Education

HAM/es

10/22/2022


Manuscript

Handbook: A Recorded Supplement to Studies
1957 in Traditional Harmony.


- 1959 :- Romance for Two Pianos
Reflections - Piano and Organ
Romantic Young Clown - Piano
- 1966 - Walk Thro' the Streets of The City
Spiritual arr. SATB
How I Got Over
arr SATB
O Spirit Who Dost Precede Before
All Temples (from Paradise Lost)
Unison chorus with piano
Lord Make us More Holy
arr 2 part canon or unison cho.
Piano acc.
- 1969 - Introduction and Allegro
Clarinet and Piano
Afric-American Suite
Flute, Cello, Piano
Moderato: Trouble I See
Allegro: I Heard the Preaching of the Elders
Adagio: Who Do That Yonder?
Allegro Maestoso: Skout Aft for Gods' Heaven

Examples in “A Recorded Supplement” by select composers (total: 147)

- Brahms – 19 (12.9%)
- Beethoven – 16 (10.9%)
- Chopin – 10 (6.8%)
- Mendelssohn – 6 (4.1%)
- Tchaikovsky – 6 (4.1%)
- **All Black composers – 5 (3.3%)**
- Bach – 5 (3.3%)
- Mozart – 4 (2.7%)
- Schubert – 4 (2.7%)



INTRODUCING COMPOSITIONAL DEVICES
THROUGH EXAMPLES BY
BLACK COMPOSERS



The practice of studying the structure and organization of musical compositions through listening and analysis of Music literature has been firmly established as a valuable type of pedagogical procedure.

Both technical classes in music theory and humanities courses in music need to make listeners aware of the manner in which the tonal elements in a musical composition have been organized.

Awareness of the basic principles of unity, variety, balance, etc. is especially helpful in listening to music which in so fleeting an art. Since students often gain insight from being able to verbalize with regard to what they hear.

Few anthologies or collections of scores make any reference to works by Black composers. It is the purpose of this booklet to show through a very few examples of Black composers that these pieces lend themselves well to study. Including such examples should broaden the students knowledge of literature in general. It is hoped that the teacher feeling these few examples will be motivated frequently to use examples from what is a really voluminous source of material.

appear with the third or fifth in the lowest part. The term inversion is used to describe such positions since the original relation is reversed. Because of its frequent

Example 38

Non Harmonic Tones The Pedal Point

-59-

She Van - ished. In the sound - ing town, will she re - mem - ber too?

pp

Passing chord

ap.

Passing

N

S

P

G maj. $\text{I} \frac{6}{5}$

$\text{IV} \frac{7}{5}$
over
D+G pedal point

I
or
Perhaps
 $\text{V} \frac{7}{5}$
over
Pedal on G

$\text{II} \frac{7}{5}$
over
Tonic-Dominant
pedal point

$\text{IV} \frac{7}{5}$
over
G pedal

The recurrence of this figure is a pedal point in the upper voice.

She Rested by the Broken Brook
- S. Coleridge Taylor

Additional theory examples from “Black Music in the Undergraduate Curriculum” from *Reflections on Afro-American Music*, ed. Dominique-René de Lerma (Kent State University Press, 1973)

- John Work
- R. Nathaniel Dett
- Samuel Coleridge-Taylor
- William Grant Still
- George Walker
- Howard Swanson
- Cecil Cohen
- Thomas Kerr
- Florence Price
- Olly Wilson
- John Carter
- Altona Johns
- Traditional spirituals

“A Black student who hears a beautiful passage written by a Black man has an appeal to his intuitive sense to support his intellect.”

— Undine Smith Moore, “Black Music in the Undergraduate Curriculum” in *Reflections on Afro-American Music* (1973), p.58

Program on Indiana University Instructional Television about and featuring Undine Smith Moore, 1980. Interview by Lillian Dunlap. The program also features performances of her music.

“[Do not] desert Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Mozart. But the music of Blacks...is made of the same elements: rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color, texture. The basic elements of organization—repetition, contrast, variation, unity, balance, dominance—are observable in all art works.”

– Undine Smith Moore, “Black Music in the Undergraduate Curriculum” in *Reflections on Afro-American Music* (1973), p.57

What next?

1. Unanswered questions
2. Acknowledge diversity work done by predecessors
3. More music examples by nonwhites
4. Explore and promote other music theories
5. Be proactively antiracist, and be willing to give up something to help elevate the marginalized

Questions?

Peter Shirts

Music and Dance Librarian, Emory Libraries

pshirts@emory.edu