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HISTORIES: LEADING
CHANGE THROUGH
RESEARCH AND
PEDAGOGY

CMS Emerging Fields in Music

Ayana O. Smith

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The logo for Routledge Focus, featuring a stylized white profile of a person's head and neck on a black background, with the word "ROUTLEDGE" stacked above the word "Focus".

Inclusive Music Histories

Inclusive Music Histories: Leading Change through Research and Pedagogy models effective practices for researchers and instructors striving either to reform music history curricula at large or update individual topics within their classes to be more inclusive.

Confronting racial and other imbalances of Western music history, the author develops four core principles that enable a shift in thinking to create a truly intersectional music history narrative and provides case studies that can be directly applied in the classroom. The book addresses inclusivity issues in the discipline of musicology by outlining imbalances encoded into the canonic repertory, pedagogy, and historiography of the field. This book offers comprehensive teaching tools that instructors can use at all stages of course design, from syllabus writing and lecture planning to discussion techniques, with assignments for each of the subject matter case studies. *Inclusive Music Histories* enables instructors to go beyond token representation to a more nuanced music history pedagogy.

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CMS Emerging Fields in Music

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The *CMS Series in Emerging Fields in Music* consists of concise monographs that help the profession re-imagine how we must prepare 21st Century Musicians. Shifting cultural landscapes, emerging technologies, and a changing profession in-and-out of the academy demand that we re-examine our relationships with audiences, leverage our art to strengthen the communities in which we live and work, equip our students to think and act as artist-entrepreneurs, explore the limitless (and sometimes limiting) role technology plays in the life of a musician, revisit our very assumptions about what artistic excellence means and how personal creativity must be repositioned at the center of this definition, and share best practices and our own stories of successes and failures when leading institutional change.

These short-form books can be either single-authored works, or contributed volumes comprised of 3 or 4 essays on related topics. The books should prove useful for emerging musicians inventing the future they hope to inhabit, faculty rethinking the courses they teach and how they teach them, and administrators guiding curricular innovation and rebranding institutional identity.

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Inclusive Music Histories

Leading Change through Research and Pedagogy

Ayana O. Smith

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Inclusive Music Histories

Leading Change through Research and
Pedagogy

Ayana O. Smith

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**For my sibling Maya Mesola, with love and gratitude
for their support and inspiration**



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Contents

	<i>Series Editor's Introduction</i>	viii
	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
1	Introduction	1
2	Identity in Historical Narratives	17
3	Representational Tropes in Text, Image, and Music	40
4	Caricature and Character, Appropriation and Authenticity	75
5	Signifying Meaning in African-American Music	92
	<i>Index</i>	105

Series Editor's Introduction

Music is embraced throughout every culture without boundaries. Today, an increasingly connected world offers influence and inspiration for opening our imaginations, as technology provides unprecedented access to global audiences. Communities gather around music to mourn collective hardships and celebrate shared moments, and every parent understands that music enhances their child's chances to succeed in life. Yet it has never been more of a struggle for musicians to make a living at their art—at least when following traditional paths.

The College Music Society's *Emerging Fields in Music Series* champions the search for solutions to the most pressing challenges and most influential opportunities presented to the music profession during this time of uncertainty and promise. This series re-examines how we as music professionals can build relationships with audiences, leverage our art to strengthen the communities in which we live and work, equip our students to think and act as artist-entrepreneurs, explore the limitless (and sometimes limiting) role technology plays in the creation and dissemination of music, revisit our very assumptions about what artistic excellence means, and share best practices and our own stories of successes and failures when leading institutional change.

These short-form books are written for emerging musicians busy inventing the future they hope to inherit, faculty rethinking the courses they teach (curriculum) and how they teach them (pedagogy), and administrators rebranding institutional identity and reshaping the student experience.

The world and the profession are changing. And so must we, if we are to carry forward our most beloved traditions of the past and create an audience for our best future.

Leading Change in a time of uncertainty and promise (a collection within the series) offers a comprehensive scaffolding of *why*, *what*, *how*, and for *whom* meaningful change is necessary if music schools are to equip students to invent the future they will soon inherit, offer faculty insights for rethinking the courses they teach and how they teach them, and recalibrate administrators' priorities, policies, and procedures as they paint the new landscape of the 21st century music school. The editor's premise for the collection is that institutions of higher learning in music must see their principal role as one that

prepares musicians as one-of-a-kind artists-to-the-world, equipped with the requisite knowledge, skills, and understandings to create a lifetime of artistic moments, one after the next.

The collection begins by making the argument for music's "essential" place within the human experience as the foundation of professional and career development. It then offers and examines pillars for change by addressing three fundamental questions facing the profession:

Pillar 1: Whose music matters?

Pillar 2: What might be possible if we were to reposition creativity at the center of all that we do?

Pillar 3: How might individuals and communities, through the work of career musicians and the experience of music, become more joyful, hopeful, connected, and healthy through musical experience?

Each pillar opens with an anchor manuscript that provides a comprehensive approach for imagining change. Subsequent books within each pillar offer specific ways forward.

Finally, three books examine *how* the systems and eco-systems that drive our music schools maintain inequities and obstruct innovation. Examining the academic journeys of students, faculty, and administrators, the authors decode often invisible systems that limit our growth and offer opportunities to realign our words and actions with the goals of fighting for equity, fostering inclusivity, celebrating creativity, and embracing community and the joy inherent within music-making.

In *Inclusive Music Histories: Leading Change through Research and Pedagogy* author Ayana O. Smith challenges us to move beyond increased representation when reimagining pedagogical frameworks if we are to advance musicology as a discipline that is decisively antiracist. While mapping a new approach to teaching music history to Bloom's Taxonomy, Smith unpacks how "othering" signals inferiority, illuminates how "origin myths" eclipses "shadow histories" in traditional historical narratives, and exposes the harm caused by mimicry and mockery of identities and cultures in earlier musical repertoires and primary resources.

More importantly, Smith offers flexible scaffolding, case studies, and classroom activities that are driven by inclusivity, informed by Critical Race Theory, and crafted in deep expertise that will guide faculty to choose, structure, and present all aspects of each course taught within a Post-George Floyd music history curriculum.

Mark Rabideau

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Many thanks to colleagues and collaborators, especially Arne Spohr, Devon Nelson, Miguel Arango Calle, and Deanna Pellerano, who worked with me on the Creating Real Change project, and whose feedback helped me to develop the Origin Myths and Shadow Histories material. I am also indebted to colleagues who extended invitations to speak on my Race and Representation projects at conferences and colloquia, enabling me to receive additional feedback through discussion, especially Dana T. Marsh, Emily Francomano, Mauro Calcagno, Joyce Chen, Wendy Heller, and Marysol Quevedo. My colleagues in EMRG (Engaging Music, Race, Gender), including Naomi André, Denise Von Glahn, Tammy Kernodle, Kristen Turner, and others, inspired and encouraged me to think deeply about historiography and the pedagogy of African-American music. With gratitude for Mark Rabideau, who encouraged me to write this book.

1 Introduction

Inclusive Music Histories: Leading Change through Research and Pedagogy addresses the need for serious pedagogical reform in the Western art music tradition. For decades, music scholars have broadened the scope of the repertoire and literature taught at the university level, to increase the representation of composers, performers, and authors from diverse backgrounds. These efforts have led to new special topics courses, such as Women in Music, Gender and Sexuality in Music, African-American Music, World Music, Jazz, and Popular Music. Motivated partly by the research-driven New Musicology, multiculturalism, and inclusion—which became prominent in the 1990s—such course topics have enriched the experiences of music students at all levels of the curriculum, while expanding the performance canon that audiences hear in the concert hall.

Yet several significant problems remain. For example, how does the foundational survey course represent or interact with the multiplicity of new approaches to Western art music? How do faculty “cover” an ever-increasing musical canon without losing certain long-standing favorites? Several institutions have developed new methods of presenting the traditional content of the survey class—or have redefined altogether the requirements of the music degree. New questions are surfacing, especially in the wake of racial justice protests of summer 2020 in the U.S. and throughout the world. In this new environment, our priorities have shifted to anti-racism. How can we teach a mostly white musical canon that was created through pathways of elitism and exclusion—often funded by exploitative historical practices, including slavery, colonialism, or other forms of economic and cultural oppression—now, in an ethical way? How can we avoid tokenism when our efforts at inclusion maintain imbalances in ethnic, racial, or gendered representation? How can we prepare our students for a rapidly changing professional world, in which performers and scholars are required to demonstrate competence in more than one style, repertoire, or historical field?

Inclusive Music Histories offers a new solution by transforming the role that music history plays in our students’ educational and professional lives. I argue that changing the topics that we teach cannot solve our curricular problems—we can only effect real change by reforming *why* and *how* we teach our

2 Introduction

repertory. Music history currently serves several purposes in the conservatory and liberal arts classrooms. Students learn to:

1. Recognize a core repertory.
2. Associate specific genres, styles, and forms with major composers, national regions, and chronological eras.
3. Develop critical listening, score study, research, and writing skills.
4. Examine how composers, performance practices, instruments, and musical artifacts intersect with historical, political, philosophical, religious, social, and scientific trends.

I have structured this list so that it maps onto Bloom’s well-known pedagogical taxonomy; thus, the first item on my list (core repertory) falls at the base of the pyramid (remember/recognize), while the fourth item (intersectional/historical and critical/analytical) resides near the top (analyze/evaluate). (See Figure 1.1.)

Our current method of curricular reform only addresses the issue of “core repertory” by redefining what is considered “important”—thus operating at the lowest level of Bloom’s Taxonomy. This strategy creates a competitive model, whereby—through comparative analysis—we must defend *why* we have chosen these works by these composers, *why* they should be part of the core repertory, and *why* they have value. We take pains to “figure out” *how* and *when* to discuss these works, as if shoehorning them into the curriculum. As a result, we decide what to “cut” to “make space” for this material. Students therefore receive the message, either implicitly or explicitly, that these “othered” topics are either separate from the Western art tradition (and

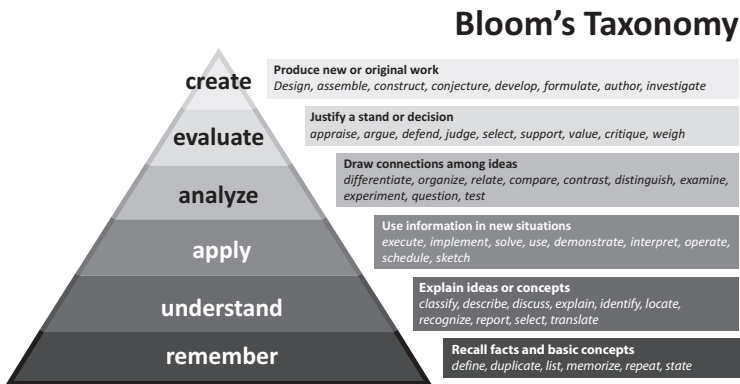


Figure 1.1 **Bloom's Taxonomy.** Courtesy of Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>.